ZERO TOLERANCE ON SEA
Strengthening accountability on sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel

WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS
The United Nations Secretary-General has a strict ‘zero tolerance’ policy on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by United Nations personnel.

Working in partnership with Member States, there has been a marked reduction in the number of reported SEA allegations over the last decade: From a high of 357 reported SEA allegations in 2006, to a low of 51 in 2014. As of 31 October, 54 allegations have been reported in 2015.

WHAT WE ARE DOING
One case of SEA is one too many. The UN has already taken steps to address the issue, including:

- Adopted an accountability policy and framework for conduct and discipline.
- Strengthened SEA rules and regulations, enhanced monitoring and reporting, and introduced an SEA risk assessment framework.
- Developed a DNA protocol to enhance resolution of paternity claims with engagement from Member States.

WHAT’S NEW
Together with UN Member States, more can and will be done. In 2015, the UN Secretary-General outlined ambitious proposals to strengthen the response to SEA, which are at varying stages of implementation:

ACCOUNTABILITY
- Providing country-specific information on credible allegations being investigated by Member States in future reports to the General Assembly.
- Providing a section on conduct and discipline, including issues of SEA, in all the Secretary-General’s reports on country-specific situations to the Security Council.

PREVENTION
- Strengthened vetting of candidates.
- Enhanced training on SEA targeting all personnel, including managers and commanders.
- Increased efforts to raise awareness of zero tolerance for SEA among UN personnel and local populations, including community-based reporting mechanisms.

REMEDIATION
- The creation of a trust fund for victims, to be funded in part by financial penalties imposed on personnel in cases of substantiated allegations.

ENFORCEMENT
- Repatriating contingent or unit commanders where there is a documented pattern of SEA, banning them from future service in peacekeeping.
- Terminating the deployment of uniformed personnel of a Member State where there is a documented pattern of non-compliance with UN standards of conduct.
- Creating SEA immediate response teams in peacekeeping to preserve and gather evidence.
- Adopting six-month timelines for completion of investigations of SEA and calling on Member States to do the same.