

UN leaders vow to stamp out workplace sexual harassment

Leaders from across the UN system on Friday pledged to increase efforts to stamp out sexual harassment within their ranks; ensuring a zero-tolerance approach where abusers are held accountable, and staff feel safe to report incidents.

UN [Secretary-General António Guterres](#), according to a [note to correspondents](#) issued by his Spokesperson, “reiterated that he was seriously concerned by all allegations of sexual harassment at the United Nations and has made addressing this issue a top priority.”

“Harassment of any kind offends the principles of what we stand for as an organization and undermines our core values and our work,” Mr. Guterres told the Chief Executives Board (CEB), which has been meeting this week in London, and brings together 31 chief executives of UN agencies, funds and programmes.

The board meeting, which began in the UK capital on Wednesday, included a special session on addressing sexual harassment, led by the UN chief.

He restated his personal commitment to uphold a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment.

In a CEB statement, the chiefs said that sexual harassment results from a culture of discrimination and privilege, based on gender inequality, and that it has no place in the UN system.

They also reiterated their collective commitment to zero-tolerance of harassment cases; to strengthen victim-centred prevention and response efforts; and to foster a safe and inclusive working environment.

They also pledged to drive action in three key areas – reporting, investigation and decision-making. Measures include providing mechanisms such as 24-hour helplines for staff to report harassment and access support; as well as instituting fast-track procedures to receive, process and address complaints and providing mandatory training.

The Secretary-General, the note said, “is putting greater power into the hands of women” throughout the UN, with more women than men now in the [Senior Management Group](#).