



General Assembly

Seventy-eighth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
2 February 2024

Original: English

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 20th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 1 November 2023, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Joyini..... (South Africa)

Contents

Agenda item 51: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (*continued*)

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be sent as soon as possible, under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, to the Chief of the Documents Management Section (dms@un.org), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org/>).

23-20905 (E)



Please recycle



The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 51: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Al-Dahlaki** (Iraq) said that peacekeeping missions possessed unique strengths, such as legitimacy, burden-sharing and the ability to deploy troops from around the world in support of multidimensional mandates. The role of peacekeeping operations was not limited to maintaining peace and security, but also included facilitating political processes; protecting civilians; providing support for elections; protecting and promoting human rights; and helping to restore the rule of law.

2. Peace was threatened by the direct impacts of climate change, which imperilled security, put livelihoods at risk and threatened the peace. In fact, natural catastrophes displaced three times more people than armed conflicts, forcing millions to abandon their homes.

3. Operating with the utmost professionalism and efficiency, Iraqi security forces had played a major role in combating terrorist gangs and organized crime in the country, preserving the safety and security of civilians and limiting damage to infrastructure in areas formerly under the control of those gangs. Women had contributed heroically to that effort, in line with Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security.

4. **Mr. Blanco Conde** (Dominican Republic) said that the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions was closely related to the level of collaboration with relevant actors in the operating environment, including the affected communities. Missions should also have the capacity to strengthen mandates, particularly with a view to early warning and mitigation of violent situations. Predeployment training should be strengthened to take into account the multidimensional nature of crises.

5. Decisions regarding the transfer of responsibilities to national authorities were all too often made on the basis of financial considerations, without taking into account the longer-term capacities and conditions established. The result was often a relapse into conflict.

6. The full participation of women in peace processes was essential to achieving lasting results. For that purpose, the specific vulnerabilities of women and girls in conflicts should be identified and addressed. A greater number of experts on gender and the protection of women should therefore be deployed to peacekeeping

operations. Achieving gender equity in missions would require close work with troop-contributing countries. While more countries had increased the number of women among the ranks of their armed forces and adopted gender policies for their militaries, sexual abuse and discrimination against women persisted within many military institutions.

7. **Mr. Pierre** (Haiti) said that the success of peacekeeping operations depended on cooperation with the authorities of host countries and on respect for the basic principles of peacekeeping, namely consent of the parties, impartiality and non-use of force except in self-defence and in defence of the mandate. Those principles helped to build trust between missions and host communities.

8. Accountability of peacekeeping personnel was a major concern, with significant implications for the Organization's reputation, mission credibility among host communities and mission effectiveness. As recommended by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the Secretariat should work closely with Member States and mission leadership to raise awareness in missions and during predeployment and in-mission training of misconduct reporting mechanisms, including by providing information about conduct and discipline units, hotlines and resources for staff to access advice on how to report all categories of misconduct. Furthermore, the Secretariat and Member States should continue to promote a zero-tolerance policy toward sexual abuse and exploitation that included preventive measures, investigations to hold perpetrators responsible, support for victims and a review of paternity claims pursuant to national legislation.

9. As the host of several United Nations missions over the past three decades, Haiti was well positioned to discuss the accountability of peacekeepers. Peacekeeping personnel, including those who had served with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), had been accused of criminal misconduct and grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, including accusations of sexual abuse. Regrettably, many allegations against peacekeepers did not receive any follow-up, and victims rarely received justice. The lack of effective legal proceedings had fostered among the Haitian people a sense of impunity, leading them to lose their trust in MINUSTAH and in United Nations operations more broadly.

10. **Mr. Nadarajah** (Singapore) said that the role of United Nations peacekeepers had evolved from monitoring ceasefires to multidimensional

peacekeeping, which involved facilitating political processes, assisting with the disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants and restoring stability and the rule of law. Peacekeepers also faced greater challenges, including complex threat environments that could be worsened by climate vulnerabilities, asymmetrical attacks by non-State actors and disinformation campaigns. Against that backdrop, the Action for Peacekeeping initiative had yielded tangible improvements, including enhanced safety of peacekeepers, increased participation of women and stronger peacekeeping partnerships.

11. Despite being a small country with limited resources, Singapore had made and would continue to make meaningful contributions to peacekeeping. Singapore had deployed more than 2,000 military and police personnel to 17 peacekeeping and observer missions across the globe over the past 30 years.

12. **Mr. Hamamoto** (Japan) said that, with a view to making United Nations peacekeeping more effective, missions required the following: coherent political strategies that anchored all stakeholders, under which the host countries would lead the pursuit of political solutions to conflicts and the missions would create an environment conducive to doing so; clear, focused, sequenced, prioritized and achievable mission mandates based on a sound, realistic and frank assessment of their needs and capacities; and enhanced predeployment training, particularly in countering the spread of misinformation and disinformation and the emergence of new threats, such as improvised explosive devices. Japan remained committed to providing capacity-building support to troop- and police-contributing countries through bilateral cooperation and contributions to United Nations efforts such as the triangular partnership programme.

13. **Mr. Savadogo** (Burkina Faso) said that his country had been contending with attacks by armed terrorist groups for eight years, which had created a climate of insecurity that had hindered development efforts and resulted in the mass displacement of civilians. With assistance from bilateral and multilateral partners, the Transitional Government of Burkina Faso had worked to support vulnerable groups, including displaced persons, and to recruit, train and equip its defence and security forces. Despite those security challenges, Burkina Faso actively supported the international community's global peacekeeping efforts. For instance, it had maintained a presence in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) until September 2023, when it had begun to withdraw its last contingent.

14. Full-fledged coordination between the United Nations and regional mechanisms would strengthen peacekeeping activities and make them more effective. The United Nations should provide regional initiatives with political, financial and material support to enable them to proactively address threats to peace in their regions. Burkina Faso was willing to participate in any regional effort aimed at driving terrorist groups out of the African continent.

15. **Ms. Evstigneeva** (Russian Federation) said that United Nations peacekeeping must respect the sovereignty of the host country and be carried out in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the basic principles of peacekeeping. Peacekeeping operations required clear and realistic mandates, taking into account the local conditions on the ground. Efforts to facilitate political settlements and national reconciliation must be prioritized. Goals pertaining to human rights, gender and climate-related issues were subsidiary in nature and must not be promoted as priorities. The lack of clear prospects for the drawdown of peacekeeping operations seriously undermined the trust of local populations. Constructive cooperation with the host countries was crucial, as they bore the primary responsibility for protecting civilians, eradicating the root causes of crisis and achieving post-conflict recovery.

16. Trilateral cooperation among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat should be fine-tuned to strengthen cooperation and mutual trust. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations provided a unique platform for that purpose. Cooperation with regional and subregional organizations should also be strengthened. In recent years, the African Union and subregional organizations had stepped up their efforts to prevent and resolve local conflicts and establish an architecture for peace and security on the African continent. The Russian Federation was ready to discuss initiatives with African partners with a view to making financing for such efforts more predictable and more sustainable.

17. The security of peacekeepers must be strengthened, including by improving logistical support and vocational training. The introduction of new technologies could also enhance security but must take into account the need to preserve the sovereignty of the host country and its neighbouring States, and to protect the privacy of civilians. Such data must not be accessed by third parties, and any information circulated must be credible.

18. The Russian Federation attached great importance to its participation in United Nations peacekeeping

activities. In addition to contributing troops to peacekeeping operations in Africa, Europe and the Middle East, the Russian Federation offered high quality training for Russian and foreign peacekeepers. It was prepared to make further contributions to developing United Nations peacekeeping, and its participation in global peacekeeping remained an important part of its foreign policy.

19. **Mr. Habashneh** (Jordan) said that Jordanian peacekeepers had long performed their duties in a professional and disciplined manner, demonstrating a high level of competence and readiness. Women played a key role in the Jordanian military and had participated in several peacekeeping missions, including in Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Jordan was conducting a comprehensive review of its policies to increase the number of female members of United Nations peacekeeping forces.

20. Given the challenges and difficulties facing peacekeeping operations, success did not depend on troop-contributing countries alone. Missions must be given clear, realistic and achievable mandates and be adequately funded and staffed with trained personnel. Continuous triangular cooperation among the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries had an important part to play. There was a need to establish a framework for international and individual criminal responsibility for the perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers.

21. **Mr. Choque Rosario** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that, in certain cases, peacekeeping operations had not been able to fulfil their mandates and thus had needed to continue their operations indefinitely, leading to mistrust in host communities and the perception that United Nations operations were ineffective. Conflict prevention was not enough on its own; efforts must be made to achieve social justice and address the root causes of conflicts. Therefore, measures to promote the development of conflict-affected communities should be implemented and properly funded. Coordination between United Nations peacekeeping operations and regional organizations strengthened actions in the field. Increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping operations helped to foster a better understanding of, and closer cooperation with, various population groups in conflict areas. Peacekeeping operations must remain neutral and must not be politicized.

22. **Mr. Kedar** (Israel) said that Israel was located in a region marked by persistent instability and violence, as shown by the terrible acts of 7 October 2023, when Hamas terrorists had entered Israel and massacred 1,400

people. In the light of the volatility along its borders, Israel welcomed the presence of United Nations peacekeeping forces in the region as they promoted regional stability.

23. In recent years, peacekeeping operations had faced a new reality in which non-State actors and terrorist organizations deprived people of their basic human rights; exploited civilian resources to strengthen their military capabilities, using schools, mosques, United Nations facilities and hospitals for weapons storage and for military positions; operated under the guise of non-governmental organizations or non-profits to deceive the international community; and disregarded the safety and well-being of not only civilians but also of United Nations peacekeepers, acting in full violation of international law and Security Council resolutions. It must be recognized that wearing a blue helmet no longer guaranteed protection in many parts of the world.

24. Israel valued the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), despite its limited contribution to peace and security in the region, and remained committed to the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#). Regrettably, actors on the ground, notably the internationally designated terrorist organization Hizbullah, continued to violate all relevant Security Council resolutions, endangering the stability of Lebanon, Israel and the region. Hizbullah, backed by Iranian support and financing and operating under the guise of Green without Borders, was fortifying its presence along the Blue Line. Since the 7 October 2023 attack, it had been firing on towns and villages in Israel and had attempted to infiltrate Israel's borders. The Government of Lebanon bore full responsibility for anything happening in its territory, and Israel would take all necessary actions to defend its citizens and protect its sovereignty. In southern Lebanon, UNIFIL was regularly denied access and subjected to violent restrictions on its movements. Over the past year, several uniformed peacekeepers had been forced out of their vehicles, stripped of their weapons and attacked. Tragically, an Irish peacekeeper had lost his life in one such attack in December 2022. Peacekeepers had also been targeted by disinformation attacks.

25. To ensure their effectiveness, peacekeeping operations must provide the Security Council with detailed, impartial reports reflecting the realities on the ground. Perhaps when such information was shared in line with Security Council resolution [2589 \(2021\)](#), the international community would understand the threat that Hizbullah posed to United Nations peacekeepers.

26. Similar developments had unfolded along the Syrian border, including through the continued violation

by Syria of the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian Forces. The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was a tool for the international community to prevent friction along the border. Non-State actors and terrorist organizations were not only destabilizing that border but were also present across the Middle East, Latin America and Africa and were used by the Iranian regime to spread its weapons, terror and murderous ideology.

27. Achieving genuine security and sustainable peace required the direct involvement of women, who must be part of conflict prevention and peace processes worldwide. Their inclusion in peacekeeping missions was therefore imperative. Israel actively contributed to peacekeeping through knowledge-sharing and the provision of training and capacity-building to peacekeepers. It had also forged partnerships aimed at enhancing medical care in peacekeeping, including mental health support.

28. **Mr. Kiboino** (Kenya) said that the politicization of peacekeeping diminished peacekeepers' latitude of action. Media and social media were increasingly undermining peacekeepers' ability to effectively execute their critical mandates, in particular the protection of civilians. Enhanced cooperation and collaboration with host nations and regional security mechanisms could lead to a better understanding of the operational environment, generate more effective solutions and build a sense of ownership among host countries and host communities.

29. Region-led, Security Council-mandated operations were an innovative approach to peacekeeping that had been implemented in Africa with remarkable success. The missing link was the political will to secure adequate and predictable funding and resources. It was unrealistic to assume that partners could bear the high cost of peace operations undertaken on behalf of the United Nations; thus, region-led peace operations should be funded through assessed contributions.

30. Kenya continued to support peacekeeping through training under the triangular partnership project. The country had strengthened its training capacity to address the threat of improvised explosive devices and was ready and available to provide training in that area at its Humanitarian Peace Support School.

31. **Mr. Bhalla** (India) said that his country was the largest cumulative troop contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations. More than 6,000 Indian peacekeepers were currently deployed across 10 United Nations missions. The country's experience had shown that, in most cases, conflict resolution depended on social and political engagement. Peacekeeping could

create the conditions for that engagement but could not replace it.

32. Peacekeeping missions needed achievable mandates matched with adequate resources. Mandates drafted without consulting troop- and police-contributing countries were likely to be unrealistic, setting missions up for failure. The deployment of operationally proven, cost-effective, widely available, reliable and environmentally friendly technology was vital, but technology use must be ethical and take into account host countries' and their neighbours' sensitivities. Mission performance also depended on close coordination between military, civilian and police components. Existing peacekeeping procedures were suited to simple, stable Chapter VI operations but were unable to respond to the changing demands of complex missions. Effective peacekeeping would require procedures that were more nimble and more operationally oriented.

33. Women played a vital role in peacekeeping. India had deployed its largest all-women contingent since 2007 to Abyei. Those peacekeepers were fully involved in mandate implementation, especially community outreach.

34. The international community should provide sustainable and adequate financial and logistical support to regional security initiatives, particularly in Africa, but should not expect regional partnerships to be a panacea for all conflicts.

35. Despite the fact that all ongoing multidimensional missions had a protection of civilians mandate, most were grossly underresourced, which placed unrealistic demands on peacekeepers. At the same time, it would be unreasonable to expect States emerging from conflict to take on such tasks without support; therefore, security institutions in host countries needed to be strengthened.

36. The safety and security of peacekeepers was paramount. Troop- and police-contributing countries had a responsibility to adequately provision peacekeepers, and missions needed to ensure that local communities did not have false expectations. Perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers must be held accountable.

37. Exit strategies should be built into peacekeeping missions from their inception. Peacekeeping missions that existed for political purposes were a drain on limited resources and should be reconsidered.

38. India looked forward to working with the other Member States to ensure that the memorial wall for fallen United Nations peacekeepers, to be installed at a prominent location at Headquarters, would be

established in a manner befitting its sanctity and purpose.

39. **Mr. Mabeba** (South Africa) said that, regrettably, anti-United Nations peacekeeping sentiments were on the rise in some host countries, which could endanger the safety and security of peacekeepers. More needed to be done to raise awareness about the achievements and successes of peacekeeping and the sacrifices made by peacekeepers. In that connection, South Africa welcomed the establishment of a memorial wall for United Nations peacekeepers pursuant to General Assembly resolution [77/297](#). At a time when the United Nations and the Secretary-General were being attacked by some Member States, it was especially important for other Member States to reaffirm their support.

40. Mistrust in peacekeepers and peacekeeping operations was perpetuated by continued misconduct by some peacekeepers. South Africa therefore supported a zero-tolerance policy for sexual exploitation and abuse and would take necessary measures under its national law to address any misconduct from its peacekeepers.

41. Regional arrangements were increasingly taking on the responsibility of maintaining peace and security, a primary responsibility of the Security Council, through enforcement operations such as the Southern African Development Community mission in Mozambique. Those operations required adequate, predictable and sustainable financing. South Africa hoped that the Security Council would urgently adopt a resolution supporting the proposed options for financing African-led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council.

42. **Mr. Tommo Monthe** (Cameroon) said that in order to face the challenges on the ground, the international community should adopt a coherent vision that took into account the complexities of peacekeeping operations. Progress had been made in several areas, including in terms of the safety and security of peacekeepers; the promotion of lasting political solutions and peace in certain countries; the improved conduct of peacekeepers; and the enhancement of peacekeeping partnerships, notably between regional organizations and the African Union.

43. Challenges persisted, notably with regard to the withdrawal of peacekeeping operations, which should be conducted in accordance with an agreed timeline with clear steps to prevent harm to the parties and to the credibility of the United Nations. In active peacekeeping operations, further efforts were needed to strengthen the decentralization process that had commenced in 2017. In particular, monitoring tools should be improved, and

the roles of mission chiefs and administrators should be more clearly defined.

44. Partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations should be strengthened, and adequate assistance should be given to troop-contributing countries to improve the preparedness of their peacekeepers and other components of peacekeeping operations. Cameroon hoped that, by the end of 2023, the Security Council would pass the resolution on the financing of African Union-led peace support operations with the United Nations budget.

45. As a troop-contributing country, Cameroon had demonstrated a consistent commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security, including through the establishment of two schools to provide capacity-building for peacekeepers. It also hosted the African Standby Force Continental Logistics Base. His country was grateful to the countries and institutions that had assisted with those programmes.

46. **Mr. Novicio** (Philippines) said that, as the Philippines marked the sixtieth anniversary of the first deployment of Philippine peacekeepers, it continued to take proactive steps to enhance its readiness to take on peacekeeping assignments and leadership positions. The country remained committed to supporting the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy and its victim-centred approach to all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse. Troops must be fully vetted and trained before deployment, and national investigation officers should be included in all military units deployed to field missions.

47. The United Nations should strengthen its collaboration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including through the implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on Comprehensive Partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations (2021–2025) for capacity-building, exchanges of best practices and efforts to increase women's participation in peacekeeping.

48. Predeployment training efforts should be tailored to respond to the specific challenges of particular countries, and more investment should be made in local political solutions, which should be reinforced and not supplanted by United Nations peacekeeping. Troop- and police-contributing countries should prioritize the protection of civilians under imminent threat by all necessary means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, mission mandates and international law.

49. Enhancing the safety and security of peacekeepers was a high priority. The Special Committee on

Peacekeeping Operations should ensure that peacekeeping operations had rules of engagement that were attuned to the realities on the ground. The Philippines remained committed to increasing the participation of women at all levels of peacekeeping, including in uniformed roles, and supported the mainstreaming of the gender perspective to all aspects of peacekeeping.

50. **Mr. Radović** (Serbia) said that his country's engagement in United Nations peacekeeping missions was an important element of its foreign policy. Members of the Serbian Armed Forces and the Ministry of Interior served in four such operations. According to the latest Secretariat data, Serbia was ranked seventh in Europe and forty-ninth out of 125 contributing countries worldwide. In addition, Serbia made significant contributions to European Union operations and missions under the auspices of the Common Security and Defence Policy.

51. In addition, Serbia was planning to host courses conducted by the Integrated Training Service and provide mobile training teams and medical instructors. It would also support the United Nations in achieving the highest possible level of accountability to peacekeepers, including by improving their security and conditions for engagement, providing better medical care and preventing, investigating and prosecuting crimes against peacekeepers, as well as improving discipline among peacekeeping personnel and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. It would continue to advocate for the meaningful participation of women in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

52. Serbia was committed to improving cooperation with host countries of United Nations peacekeeping operations, as it was the host of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). That Mission must consistently adhere to Security Council resolution [1244 \(1999\)](#) and maintain the same level of engagement with an unchanged mandate.

53. **Mr. Mao** (Cambodia) said that a thorough review of peacekeeping operations should address mandates, resources, civilian protection and partnerships, taking into account evolving factors such as technological advances, climate change and gender issues. There was a particular need to reassess mandates centred around safeguarding vulnerable groups, and there should be zero tolerance of any form of exploitation of women and children.

54. More sustainable and predictable financing mechanisms were needed to address significant strains in the current funding model. It was important to have an adequate pool of qualified and experienced police

and civilian personnel ready for deployment. Furthermore, there was a pressing need to develop better methods of measuring and assessing the performance of peacekeeping operations, which would help to pinpoint areas for enhancement.

55. Since 2006, Cambodia had deployed more than 9,200 troops, including 728 women. It was committed to promoting the role of women in leadership, peace and security. Women made up 16.4 per cent of its deployed military personnel in 2022, placing Cambodia in twelfth place among 121 troop-contributing countries and second among ASEAN countries.

56. **Mr. Hachem** (Lebanon) said that the international community should focus on conflict prevention by addressing the short-term and longer-term causes of conflict. Moreover, peacekeeping operations should not become permanent; they should eventually give way to political solutions. He expressed concern about the uptick in attacks against peacekeepers in recent years, and called for the perpetrators of such attacks to be held accountable as quickly as possible. Member States and the Secretariat had a responsibility to deliver the resources and capacity necessary to identify weak points and to ensure safety and security. In addition, while the number of women peacekeepers and police officers participating in peace operations was increasing, there remained a need for greater representation of women and for an environment that would incentivize their contributions.

57. The ongoing Israeli attacks against Lebanon had targeted peaceful towns and cities along the Lebanese border, displacing more than 20,000 people. Some had sought refuge at UNIFIL posts to request protection. However UNIFIL posts and headquarters had themselves been targeted several times, most recently on 28 October 2023. Attacks against peacekeeping posts and personnel was a crime under international humanitarian law. The presence of UNIFIL was crucial to preserving stability, monitoring the implementation of Security Council resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and maintaining international peace and security in the region, specifically given the current heightened tensions on the border.

58. He thanked UNIFIL for the logistical support provided to the Lebanese Armed Forces in the operations sector south of the Litani River in recent years, as had been stipulated in the Security Council resolution renewing the mandate. With the conclusion of that mandate, he called on friendly countries to continue to deliver bilateral support to the Lebanese Armed Forces and security institutions. He emphasized the importance of cooperation with both the Government

and the Lebanese Armed Forces for the effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), while respecting national sovereignty and the guiding principles of peacekeeping operations.

59. **Mr. Hwang** Won (Republic of Korea) said that it was vital to implement and follow up on the pledges made at the 2021 United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference in Seoul. The medical capacities of peacekeeping missions, including mental health support for peacekeepers, should be strengthened, and technological capacities to combat misinformation and disinformation campaigns by armed groups scaled up. In that regard, the Republic of Korea had contributed \$1.2 million to the Department of Operational Support in 2022 to develop telemedicine capabilities among peacekeeping missions and \$600,000 in extrabudgetary funding in support of implementing the Strategy for the Digital Transformation of United Nations Peacekeeping.

60. He expressed regret that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in its statement, had made false claims regarding the United Nations Command in Korea which had nothing to do with the agenda of the current meeting. He strongly urged that country to cease making such baseless claims. In its resolution 84 (1950), the Security Council had officially recognized the Command as responsible for maintaining peace and security on the Korean Peninsula. Therefore, the allegation that the Command had nothing to do with the United Nations was both false and baseless, as it continued to contribute to maintaining peace and security on the Korean Peninsula. The unilateral call of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the dissolution of the Command simply did not hold up.

61. **Ms. Campos** (Brazil) said that tensions between missions and host countries, along with recurring violent incidents, pointed to an increasingly challenging environment for peacekeeping, as evidenced by worrisome events involving the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), as well as the decision to withdraw MINUSMA. In the Sudan, deteriorating conditions had also affected the capacity of United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) to discharge its mandate.

62. Efficient peacekeeping must include abiding by the basic principles of United Nations peacekeeping. Furthermore, mandates must be both realistic and fit for purpose. They should be implemented in a systematic manner and adjustable in the light of changing

situations. Missions needed appropriate tools to effectively discharge their duties, and it should be possible to detect in a timely manner when conditions on the ground no longer required, justified or allowed for their presence.

63. Filling the gap between peacekeeping mandates and what missions could actually deliver was the most pressing task. In an increasingly hostile environment for peacekeepers, strategic communications were an important tool for improving the overall performance of United Nations operations, not only in countering disinformation, but also in promoting engagement with local communities. Lastly, any vision related to peacekeeping operations needed not only to include investment in the security pillar but also to lay the groundwork for sustainable development initiatives.

64. **Ms. Panteli** (Cyprus) said that peacekeeping operations needed to be sufficiently equipped to fully implement their mandates, address violations of the military status quo and prevent the creation of faits accomplis on the ground that might hamper conflict resolution. Decisions related to those operations should not be based on political expediency or financial constraints, but rather on the situation on the ground. Her delegation continued to support the work of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations in promoting a better operational structure and cooperation with other partners, such as the European Union and other regional actors with knowledge of local circumstances.

65. As one of the longest-running peacekeeping operations in the world, UNFICYP retained its significance in maintaining the ceasefire on the island, preventing escalation and protecting civilians. The continuous occupation of over a third of the territory of Cyprus and the constant violations by the occupation army of its sovereignty and territorial integrity underscored the need to maintain a peacekeeping force that prevented both the recurrence of fighting and further advancements by the occupying Power. The attacks perpetrated by the occupation forces against peacekeepers in August 2023 had demonstrated the need for a lasting political settlement. Given that deliberate attacks against peacekeepers might constitute war crimes, it was also necessary to caution against double standards in seeking accountability for such attacks, to avoid setting a dangerous precedent.

66. The mandate of UNFICYP, as agreed to by Cyprus, was aimed at upholding the Charter of the United Nations, implementing the relevant Security Council resolutions and acting as a bulwark against consolidation of the effects of aggression by

contributing to the restoration of law and order and ensuring a return to normal conditions. The success of UNFICYP was currently being jeopardized by the acceptance of faits accomplis, such as the violations in the fenced area of Varosha. Peacekeeping operations must have unimpeded access and freedom of movement in the areas defined under their mandate so that they could, among other things, fulfil their responsibility of reporting to the Security Council.

67. **Mr. Mukongo** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that the system of collective security had been founded on the idea of a community in which all members respected basic principles and would respond collectively if any member violated those principles. The Charter of the United Nations did not provide much detail on the nature of such a response, however, which had led to various interpretations. The Security Council had deviated from the coercive measures envisioned in Chapter VII and, instead of using armed forces, had resorted to the backdoor method of deploying peacekeeping operations. Initially constituted as peace observation missions, those operations had evolved over the years to become peace consolidation missions tasked with organizing elections, disarmament and humanitarian assistance and, more recently, missions that actually did include the use of force under Chapter VII.

68. MONUSCO was an example of the latter type of mission. Its predecessor, the United Nations Observer Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), had been mandated to develop plans for observing the ceasefire and the disengagement of forces and to maintain liaison with all of the parties to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. In 2010, MONUC had been replaced by MONUSCO, a force of 16,000 military and police personnel supporting the Government, with a mandate to contribute to the country's post-conflict stabilization during a defined period of transition, in particular through the protection of civilians and support for governance and security reforms. MONUSCO had made a reasonable contribution, notably with regard to electoral processes, the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Congolese National Police and humanitarian action.

69. However, 25 years since the deployment of its predecessor, MONUSCO had a mixed record and its effectiveness was increasingly being called into question. Its presence had not put an end to the vicious cycle of massacres of civilians, massive human rights violations, crimes against humanity and the flagrant illegal exploitation of the country's natural resources by national and foreign armed groups, including the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23), which operated in the

shadow of the regular army of Rwanda, as verified in the well-documented reports of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, international non-governmental organizations such as Human Rights Watch and the white paper published by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in December 2022.

70. In his most recent letter to the Security Council, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and la Francophonie of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had highlighted the massacres perpetrated between November 2022 and July 2023 in Rutshuru territory by M23, backed by Rwanda Defence Force soldiers, during which MONUSCO had been powerless to ensure the protection of civilians. The growing discontent and frustrations felt by the people of Ituri and Nord Kivu had erupted in deadly public demonstrations in June and July 2022, during which demonstrators had demanded the withdrawal of MONUSCO from the country, resulting in the tragic deaths of 30 civilians and five peacekeepers.

71. The rejection by the Congolese people of MONUSCO had been further exacerbated by the fact that the Nairobi and Luanda peace processes had been blocked by Rwanda and M23, which were refusing to comply with the international community's demands and implement the peace plan that had resulted from those processes, and neither United Nations peacekeepers nor the regional forces of the East African Community in North Kivu were forcing them to do so. Rwanda was not seeking peace, as had been demonstrated by the images captured by MONUSCO drones between 18 and 24 October, which showed columns of Rwandan troops that had crossed the border to sow death and misery among the people of his country.

72. **Mr. Geisler** (Germany) said that a shared vision of peacekeeping and necessary adjustments to specific missions were essential for peacekeeping to succeed. Existing processes and practices should be optimized and new frameworks and approaches developed. He welcomed in that regard the New Agenda for Peace of the Secretary-General and noted that the Summit of the Future provided a perfect framework for Member States to consider the recommendations of the Agenda and work jointly towards A Pact for the Future.

73. Germany supported a stronger role for regional and subregional organizations in dialogue, mediation and peace enforcement, as well as discussions on adequate, predictable and sustainable funding for African-led peace support operations. It commended the leadership of the African Union and was looking

forward to further steps by the Security Council under the stewardship of its African members. In that context, Germany welcomed the leadership of Kenya on the Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti, which promised to be a much-needed example of international solidarity. Germany was ready to contribute to improving the security environment in that country, including by providing financial support for the basket fund for security assistance for Haiti.

74. Germany was the fourth-largest contributor to the peacekeeping budget and had been the largest supporter of extrabudgetary projects, providing more than \$30 million over the past six years. It was pleased to be able to continue that support at a similar level, despite a challenging budgetary situation, and would continue to contribute troops, police and civilian personnel and engage in the policy dialogue on peacekeeping, including through the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

75. **Ms. Efon** (Mozambique) said that peacekeeping missions, especially on the African continent, faced long-standing challenges driven by complex domestic, geopolitical and transnational factors. The recent request by the transitional Government of Mali for the withdrawal of MINUSMA and anti-MONUSCO sentiments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo illustrated the limitations of ambitious mandates when sufficient political will among the main stakeholders was absent or when the support of the host Government and parties to the conflict for the presence of peacekeepers was questioned.

76. It was important to continually review the design and structure of peacekeeping missions, which required adequate resources and equipment. A common and clear understanding should be reached with host countries on mission mandates. Strategic communication should help to manage expectations among local communities, combat misinformation and disinformation and build trust between peace operations and the areas they served.

77. It was imperative to rethink partnerships with regional organizations in general and with the African Union in particular, to develop modular and flexible mission models. Peacekeeping missions must fully leverage data and digital technologies to effectively track conflict trends, understand sentiments, enable inclusive dialogue, monitor impact and assist in guiding evidence-based decisions. Investments in training were needed, including on early warning, data analysis, strategic communications and the timely collection, assessment and dissemination of peacekeeping information. His delegation strongly recommended full

and effective implementation of the policy of zero-tolerance for misconduct, especially sexual exploitation and abuse. A gender perspective must be incorporated and strengthened in all missions.

78. **Mr. Mutabazi** (Rwanda) said that the United Nations should assess how it managed the consent of host countries for peacekeeping missions and how current global geopolitics, over which the Organization had a strong influence, affected the missions. It was imperative to tailor peacekeeping mandates to current global and regional dynamics, which could be accomplished by reviewing each mission outside the Charter of the United Nations and, if necessary, using unorthodox approaches to address specific problems. A comprehensive study was vital to understanding when a peacekeeping mission could be inserted and how long it should stay, including how to manage the trust of the host country if the security situation continued to deteriorate.

79. If some host Governments preferred regional or bilateral approaches, then the wisdom of multilateral ones should be revisited. Supporting the regional concept of peacekeeping would be one solution in that regard, as it had proved effective on the ground, depending on the political will of the parties to a conflict. He requested the Security Council to provide funds for the African Union regional security mechanisms, as they aligned with the New Agenda for Peace of the Secretary-General.

80. Rwanda was committed to continuing to deploy troops and police personnel who were capable of serving with no caveats whatsoever. Its approach to community engagement in dealing with human security issues had helped to create bonds with the local population, build trust and improve collaboration with local leaders. Scaling up such an approach at the national level would yield tangible results for United Nations peacekeeping.

81. In response to the statement just made by the Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he said that the Government of that country had failed to embrace the peace process set out by regional leaders. Instead, it had continued to scapegoat Rwanda. Later, it had decided to form a coalition with the genocidal Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda and had violated the ceasefire supervised by the East African Community regional force, resumed the conflict and engaged in killings of Rwandan forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Rwanda would never accept being scapegoated in such a way.

82. **Mr. Quirighetti** (Observer for the Holy See) said that it was crucial to uphold the principle of consent as

the basis for the deployment of peacekeeping operations, which must operate with fairness, absolute impartiality and dedication to the common good. In promoting stability, peacekeeping operations must always uphold the inherent dignity of the human person, including by limiting the use of force while fulfilling their mandate. Furthermore, protection of civilians was a top priority and included not only physical protection but also the monitoring of human rights violations, while ensuring that civilians could fully enjoy their fundamental human rights and freedoms.

83. Moreover, adequately protecting civilians obligated peacekeeping operations to ensure that their own personnel did not harm civilians or the environment. His delegation reiterated its call for increased efforts to eliminate all forms of sexual abuse or exploitation and to hold perpetrators of those heinous acts accountable, while providing the necessary support to the victims, including children conceived as a result of those crimes.

84. His delegation urged peacekeeping operations to increase engagement with all segments of society in host countries, especially with faith-based organizations, which had the unique capacity to provide spiritual support to conflict-affected populations and further motivation for forgiveness and reconciliation. It also called on the Secretariat to promote an active role for women in peacekeeping operations.

85. **Ms. Kontoleon** (Observer for the International Organization of la Francophonie) said that even though it did not deploy troops, her organization had steadily become a peacekeeping actor over the past two decades, one that was determined to strengthen French-speaking capacity in peacekeeping and promote respect for linguistic and cultural diversity in peace efforts.

86. Initiatives undertaken in partnership with the United Nations included several outputs produced in French for the first time: a senior mission leadership course, a United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) course for women military officers, training for military advisers responsible for issues related to gender in peacekeeping operations, and a practical guide used to provide training for French-speaking countries on the process of recruiting United Nations officials. The International Organization of la Francophonie had continued to deepen cooperation with the United Nations Police Division on raising awareness of professional opportunities and recruitment processes for police components of United Nations peace operations. It had also supported non-francophone contributors by providing French courses for uniformed personnel and

was developing, with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the first online course on intercultural competencies in peacekeeping operations.

87. She recalled the recommendations made by her organization during preparatory consultations on the New Agenda for Peace, namely, to ensure respect for multilingualism in the United Nations and in field operations, to place interculturality at the heart of peacekeeping mechanisms and to ensure the full participation of women and young people in peacekeeping processes.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

88. **Mr. Reza Sahraei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that he wished to respond to the unfounded accusations made against his country by the representative of the Israeli regime. It was a well-known fact that the three United Nations peacekeeping missions in the Middle East, namely, UNDOF, UNIFIL and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), had been established in response to the Israeli regime's aggression against the countries of the region. Those facts further demonstrated that the Israeli regime was the root cause of all crises, instability and terrorism in the region and around the world. Therefore, it was not in a position to blame other countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran.

89. There had been consensus in past decades that the continued occupation of Palestinian land by the Israeli regime, and its aggressions and unabated atrocities against the Palestinian people, lay at the core of the Palestinian question. In that connection, atrocities such as the killing of innocent women, children and journalists in the Gaza Strip by Israel in recent weeks, which had outraged the entire world, were examples of what those under Israeli occupation had endured for several decades.

90. Against that backdrop, it was absurd and appalling that the Israeli regime was now attempting to hide its ongoing atrocities against Palestinians in Gaza, particularly women and children, by using empty rhetoric against other countries. It was obvious that the propaganda against the Islamic Republic of Iran had always served as a smokescreen to mask the heinous crimes of the Israeli regime and to divert international public opinion from its brutalities and other crimes against Palestinians.

91. It was high time for the international community to take every measure necessary to hold the Israeli regime accountable for its crimes against Palestinians, particularly the ongoing brutal attack on the defenceless people of Gaza.

92. **Mr. Jardali** (Lebanon) said that it was absurd for the representative of Israel to express concerns about the security of peacekeeping operations and the exercise of the UNIFIL mandate. Those statements were at odds with the deadly attacks perpetrated recently by the Israeli regime against UNIFIL. Since the beginning of the Israeli attacks against Gaza, and the expansion of the aggression, which was currently also targeting the south of Lebanon, the central headquarters of UNIFIL in Naqurah and other areas had been targeted by bombing on several occasions, most recently four days earlier, resulting in injuries among UNIFIL personnel and physical damage to buildings. It was certain that the bombs had originated from sources south of the Blue Line, which showed that the Israeli side held the legality and the legitimacy of the United Nations in contempt. That had been confirmed by the statements given by several Israeli political officials, most recently in the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations in the halls of the Organization when he had attacked the Secretary-General and criticized the legitimacy of the United Nations and cast doubts on its legitimacy.

93. Israel had deliberately attacked UNIFIL many times. Its attack on the mission's compound in Qana in 1996 and the resulting casualties had been clearly described in the letter dated 7 May 1996 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1996/337), while the General Assembly, in its resolution 77/313, had included a demand for payment to the United Nations as a result of the incident. In addition, Israel had attacked UNTSO on 25 July 2006, and several reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) clearly pointed to deliberate attacks by the Israeli army on UNIFIL. He drew attention to paragraph 17 of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) during the period from 19 February to 20 June 2022 (S/2022/556) regarding incidents on 6 and 7 June of that year involving the Israeli Navy and a UNIFIL Maritime Task Force vessel.

94. **Ms. Ouazzani Chahdi** (Morocco) said that the content of the statement of the representative of Algeria at the nineteenth meeting of the Committee (see A/C.4/78/SR.19) was incompatible with the topic of the current debate. That country's insistence on bringing up the issue of the Moroccan Sahara among all of the other points discussed by the Committee showed that Algeria was indeed a main party to that regional dispute. Her delegation found it regrettable that the ignorance of Algeria about peacekeeping, which was matched only by its hatred for Morocco, should pollute a debate of

such importance to most Member States present, mainly troop- and police-contributing countries and host States. It was all the more regrettable as Algeria did not fall into any of the aforementioned categories. According to data from the Department of Peace Operations, Algeria made no contribution to United Nations peacekeeping other than two experts on mission. It was not the workforce or the resources that were lacking on the Algerian side but political will and the belief in the role of the United Nations in maintaining peace and security. Algeria should therefore show some humility and avoid inserting itself into a debate on an issue to which it contributed nothing when it probably also did not even grasp what was at stake for those States committed to supporting it, as demonstrated by their concrete contributions and the sacrifices of their brave peacekeepers.

95. The representative of Algeria seemed to be unaware that the mandates of peacekeeping missions were defined by the Security Council. In the specific case of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the Council had reaffirmed its position and that of the international community earlier in the week with the adoption of resolution 2703 (2023), in which it not only did not call for the establishment of any human rights monitoring mechanism, but also welcomed, in its twentieth preambular paragraph, the steps and initiatives taken by Morocco to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights in its Sahara, as well as its interaction with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council.

96. Indeed, the human rights situation in the Moroccan Sahara was far better than in Algeria and its Tindouf camps. If Algeria was truly concerned about the promotion and protection of human rights, she wondered why it not only did nothing to improve the situation in the camps, for which it was the host country, as requested by the Security Council, but also violated the basic human rights of the populations held against their will there. She wondered why, worse still, Algeria allowed an armed group to recruit children from among those populations, and permitted sexual abuse and the rape of women and girls in the camps by Polisario leaders, including Brahim Ghali. She asked why its army was committing extrajudicial and summary executions against those populations and allowing the arrest and torture of dissidents of the corrupt Polisario leadership in the camps. She also wondered why Algeria was still refusing the registration of the population of the camps, in violation of Security Council resolutions under provisions of international humanitarian law, and why Algeria and Polisario continued to steal and embezzle humanitarian aid intended for the population

sequestered in those camps, as highlighted by the World Food Programme in its January 2023 report. She asked why Algeria, in violation of the norms and provisions of international law, notably the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, had devolved its sovereignty and prerogatives, including its jurisdictional powers, to Polisario in the camps, depriving the victims of violations of any possibility of recourse to justice, or the option to seek reparation and prosecute the perpetrators of those crimes. The answer to all of those questions was clear and simple: Algeria did not care about human rights, and it was also one of the worst violators of human rights.

97. **Mr. Kedar** (Israel) said that the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran had been as outrageous as it had been predictable, containing false accusations, distortions and blatant lies. More importantly, actions spoke louder than words, and the actions of Iran continued to destabilize the Middle East and threaten global peace and security. Iran was the world's primary terror-sponsoring State, and it did so in the name of promoting a radical agenda aimed at destabilizing the entire Middle East and beyond. Its proxies, among them Hamas and Hizbullah, were a clear and present danger to all peace-loving people and peacekeepers worldwide. It was not surprising that the representative of Lebanon, in his statement and right of reply, had espoused the narrative of Hizbullah, as that terrorist organization in effect held the Lebanese people and State hostage. Israel did not target civilian areas. That was the expertise of Hizbullah. Israel exercised its right of self-defence when it was attacked and only when it was attacked, and it did so by returning fire to the sources of the shooting. If there had been any damage done to civilian or United Nations facilities, it was solely due to Hizbullah deliberately firing at Israel in their close vicinity. The use of such a human shield should be condemned by the entire international community.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.