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**Letter dated 27 April 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

Kenya, in partnership with Belgium, China, Ecuador, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, the Niger, Norway, Portugal, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Viet Nam, hosted a Security Council Arria-formula meeting on the theme “Protecting the peacekeeper: suppressing the deployment of improvised explosive devices against peace operations” on 26 March 2021.

The annex to the present letter contains the Chair’s summary and a compilation of some of the written statements made during the meeting.\* The compiled statements may be checked against delivery from the recording available on the Mission’s website, accessible from [www.un.int/kenya/news/arria-formula-protecting-peacekeeper-suppressing-deployment-ieds-against-peacekeepers](http://www.un.int/kenya/news/arria-formula-protecting-peacekeeper-suppressing-deployment-ieds-against-peacekeepers).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Martin **Kimani**  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

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\* Circulated in the language of submission only.



**Annex to the letter dated 27 April 2021 from the Permanent  
Representative of Kenya to the United Nations addressed to the  
President of the Security Council**

***“PROTECTING THE PEACEKEEPER: SUPPRESSING  
THE DEPLOYMENT OF IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE  
DEVICES AGAINST PEACE OPERATIONS”***

**UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL ARRIA FORMULA  
MEETING  
26 March 2021**

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## INTRODUCTION:

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya hosted an Arria-formula meeting titled, **“Protecting the Peacekeeper: Suppressing the Deployment of Improvised Explosive Devices against Peace Operations”** on 26 March 2021. Kenya partnered with China, Estonia, France, Ireland, Mexico, Niger, Norway, the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States and Viet Nam as fellow Security Council co-hosts. Belgium, Ecuador, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, and Portugal also joined in as co-sponsors of the event.

The meeting was held virtually and live streamed through UN Web Live TV. The recording of the meeting is available on the Mission’s Website and YouTube page and is accessible using the following link: <https://www.un.int/kenya/news/arria-formula-protecting-peacekeeper-suppressing-deployment-ieds-against-peacekeepers>.

The discussions were chaired by Amb. Martin Kimani, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations, New York. The panel of briefers in the order of speaking were: Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations; Lieutenant General Dennis Gyllensporre, Force Commander, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA); Brigadier Charles Lenjo Mwazighe, Director, International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC) in Nairobi; and Ms. Ilene Cohn, Deputy Director, Officer-in-Charge, United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).

Delegations from all United Nations Permanent and Observer States and Civil Society Organizations were invited to participate. All Security Council Members, 23 Member States and 1 Civil Society Organization delivered statements during the meeting.

The main objective of the Arria meeting was to debate on measures to address the increasing threat posed to peace operations through the indiscriminate use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). The meeting was informed by the fact that the use of IEDs pose a grave threat to the safety of civilians including women and children, peacekeepers, and humanitarian personnel especially in conflict zones. This is because, terrorist and armed groups continue to train, manufacture and use IEDs as a weapon of choice in conflict zones with far reaching ramifications.

Peace operations which operate in complex and dangerous environments continue to be faced by a myriad of threats, chief of which include IEDs deployed by illegal armed groups and terrorist groups. Security Council mandated Missions in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Mali, Somalia, Yemen and the Sahel region have recorded a significant rise in the number of injuries and fatalities attributed to IEDs.

The meeting offered participating delegations an opportunity to discuss these risks and threats presented by IEDs. Discussions also involved the recent UN efforts to address the threat at the mission-level in coordination with host countries. Delegations also exchanged

views on best practices and the building blocks needed to enhance the safety and security of peacekeepers in terms of training, capacity-building, equipment, technology and information-sharing.

Some of the questions addressed during the meeting included: how regional and international organizations can support affected States with technical, financial and material assistance to strengthen national capacities in countering IEDs; how to best target and impede local networks that produce and set up IEDs for terrorist groups and terrorist affiliated armed groups; how national regulations mechanisms can reinforce the control and traceability of explosive precursors and ensure accountability of all involved in the supply chains; and how intelligence and surveillance capabilities can help mitigate IED threats.

Amb. Martin Kimani opened the meeting by noting that the common concern on the safety and security of peacekeepers is one of the reasons why the meeting attracted the high level of attendance – about 150 participants joined the virtual meeting. He observed that the dynamism and complexity of peace operations including the concurrent threats require a whole of UN System approach to ensure that “Peacekeepers are adept in their mission mandates and are fit for purpose to predict, adapt and respond to mission critical developments.” He urged participants to not only reflect on the increasing indiscriminate deployment of IEDs against peacekeepers and civilians, but also, and more importantly, explore practical measures of suppressing such attacks by armed groups and terrorist groups such as Da’esh, Al-Qaida, Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram.

## SUMMARY OF BRIEFINGS

The **Under-Secretary-General (USG) of Peace Operations, Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix** gave an overview of the current and emerging IED threats to peace operations. He highlighted the actions the UN has taken to counter the IED threat to peacekeepers including the Action Plan on Security of UN Peacekeepers, and the Action for Peace (A4P) initiative.

The USG also updated on developments and efforts to ensure perpetrators are held accountable and brought to justice. He informed that the UN was strengthening casualty evacuation capabilities within field missions, data collections, situational awareness and border security in impacted areas.

USG Lacroix further highlighted the increasing number of IED incidents in peace operations in Somalia (AMISOM & UNSOM), the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), Libya (UNSMIL), Mali (MINUSMA), and the broader West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS). He reiterated that improving the safety and security of peacekeepers remains a priority objective for the Department of Peace Operations and the UN Secretary-General. He extended an invitation to Member States to participate in the upcoming A4P+ event scheduled for 29 March 2021 in partnership with Netherlands where further discussions on safety and protection of peacekeepers would be discussed with the aim of seeking members' contributions on how A4P would be improved.

In his conclusions and recommendations, he pointed to the Secretary-General's 2020 Report (A/75/175 <https://undocs.org/A/75/175>) on countering the threat posed by IEDs and requested Member States to enhance joint investigations and cooperation among customs, law enforcement and border agencies to identify and share good practices and strategies in combatting the illicit diversion and trafficking of materials for IEDs. Addressing the Troop and Police Contributing Countries (TCCs and PCCs) in particular, USG Lacroix urged the deployment of contingents with the required skills, capabilities and equipment to counter IED threats.

**Lieutenant General Dennis Gyllensporre, Force Commander, MINUSMA** informed that the majority of peacekeeping fatalities in MINUSMA occurred as a result of IEDs with a 400% increase in incidents in the last seven years. He outlined the dangerous and complex security environment that MINUSMA is operating in, characterized by armed/terrorist group attacks and the threat posed by IEDs to the Mission personnel as well as the local population. He noted that the IED threat negatively impacted the effective implementation of MINUSMA's mandate, given it restricts personnel movement which undermines the protection of civilians, stabilization efforts and support to the host country in the security sector. He observed that the danger of IEDs was due to the fact that one single incident results in a large statistical outcome in terms of losses.

In identifying the gaps and steps needed to address the threat of IEDs, Lt. Gen. Gyllensporre tabled various recommendations that the United Nations could undertake and the measures

and tools the TCCs need to comprehensively address the IED threat. Lt. Gen. Gyllensporre concluded by emphasizing that the overriding solution should be adequately training peacekeepers to operate in asymmetric threat environments, while ensuring uniformity among Member States on the training and technology required to address the IED threat.

**Brigadier Charles L. Mwazighe from the International Peace Support Training Center (IPSTC), Nairobi** began his briefing by noting that Kenya has the fourth highest number of IED related incidences in the African continent with the top three being Somalia, Mali and Burkina Faso. He noted that Somalia accounts for “more IED incidences than all the other African countries put together”. He observed that having one focused sub- regional or continental Counter-IED (C-IED) Center contributes to the consolidation of C-IED knowledge and training for much needed synergy and coordination in this area.

He noted that due to the prevalence of these incidences and given the urgency to address local and regional IED threats, some of the mitigation measures that Kenya has undertaken include the 2015 Kenya-United Kingdom Security pact aimed at the creation of a C-IED capability facility for Kenya and the East African sub-region. This facility is housed in the C-IED wing of the Humanitarian Peace Support School (HPSS) at the IPSTC, Nairobi. Brigadier Mwazighe informed that the HPSS training facilities are Kenya-led, and regionally focused under the auspices of the IPSTC- an internationally recognized Centre that delivers high-quality training in conformity with the UN peace operation curriculum. The training focuses on three main C-IED pillars namely, “Prepare the Force, Defeat the Device, and Attack the Network”.

**Ms. Ilene Cohn, Deputy Director, Officer-in-Charge, UNMAS** noted that IED response is primarily a national responsibility. She focused her briefing on available resources that the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) has developed to strengthen national capacities and support TCCs and PCCs to enhance peacekeepers’ mobility, and safety through pre-deployment and in-Mission threat-specific training and mentoring. She informed that the Department of Peace Operations has developed Explosive Ordnance Disposal specialized training materials, which are available for reference on the UN Peacekeeping Resource Hub <https://research.un.org/en/peacekeeping-community>. This training package will also be delivered by the IED Threat Mitigation Mobile Training Team in Entebbe, Uganda using the train-the-trainer format.

She further informed that UNMAS is providing Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) training to national security forces in various peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping settings. In her briefing, Deputy Director Cohn further emphasized that prevention and response will also need to go hand in hand with investment in sustained context-specific training and retention of expertise in the affected countries security services.



## MEMBERS STATES' CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Security Council Members and UN Member States acknowledged the great challenge posed by IEDs and expressed deep concern over the risk which UN peacekeepers are exposed to given that IEDs are the preferred weapon of choice for armed groups and terrorist groups. The situation is compounded by the relative ease of access and use, as well as the inexpensive nature of IEDs.

Participating Members recognized the risk posed by poor weapon and ammunition management strategies, which made it easier for armed groups to access national stockpiles. Noting that terror groups often use IEDs to leverage political power, Member States reiterated the need for an all-system approach to IED mitigation, that uses military intervention to augment political processes and organizational dialogue. Furthermore, they called for an all-inclusive approach, including strong partnerships between the UN, T/PCCs, host nations, and local citizens, as well as other stakeholders including civil society organisations.

Members commended the UN Secretariat for the development of DPKO guidelines on IED threat mitigation in mission settings as well as the UN IED disposal standards, which they noted, fill an existing gap in technical guidance for IED mitigation. They further lauded the SMART IED Threat Mitigation Technology Roadmap (SMiTMiTR) developed by UNMAS to increase safety when working in an IED threat environment and to achieve maximum synergy between the efforts to deal with the current and future threat. They called for a robust commitment by all stakeholders at all levels- international, regional, national including private sector and grassroot level.

Arising from the discussions, by the briefers and all speakers, the following recommendations emerged:

### A. To the UN SYSTEM:

- 1) Include in all peacekeeping mission mandates, IED targeted provisions to monitor and assess IED threats and target individuals or entities buying, supplying, selling, or transferring IED components including identifying illegal networks and supply chains. This approach can be considered during mandate drawings and renewals.
- 2) Include in the relevant sanction regimes, the designation of individuals and entities involved in the use of IEDs including individuals or entities buying, supplying, selling or transferring IED precursors and components through illegal networks and supply chains. It is noted that in 2019 the Security Council took this measure in the 751 Somalia sanctions regime.
- 3) Strengthen intelligence capacities and situational awareness in the field missions by deploying intelligence and surveillance capabilities for the detection of IED threat locations, including the responsible actors. In this regard, there is a need to better

implement the UN military peacekeeping intelligence doctrine across peacekeeping missions to enhance information and intelligence-led peace operations.

- 4) Undertake monitoring and analyses of IED incidents by examining armed group activities to better understand when, where and how an adversary might attack. This requires an enhanced understanding of the peace operational environment through gathering and analyzing relevant information about hostile actors and their methods, and interaction with host countries and local population.
- 5) Develop a full and comprehensive approach that entails obligatory pre-deployment CIED capacity building and training prior to the assumption of CIED responsibility on arrival at the mission area. This calls for enhanced CIED capacity building programmes through strengthened enhanced support, cooperative and collaborative arrangements with International Peace Support Training Centres in various regions. In this regard, the role of UNMAS in designing training programmes and facilitation for countries that have limited or no capacity would be welcome.
- 6) Enhance peacekeeping mission capabilities according to the specific operational contexts by ensuring that missions are facilitated with the right modern and high-tech equipment including but not limited to: CIED and explosive ordinance disposal equipment; modern technologies such as Unarmed Ariel Systems (UAS); mine-protected vehicles (MPVs)/ armored personnel carriers (APCs); signal block devices; and expert engineers to supervise anti-IED operations.
- 7) Strengthen the engagement of all stakeholders in the development of the UN strategy on the mitigation of IEDs.
- 8) UNMAS to deploy alongside T/PCC operating teams to enhance detection and elimination of IEDs.
- 9) Continued dialogue between the UN Member States and the Monitoring Team (MT) of UNSC Committees 1267/1989/2253 and of Committee 1988.
- 10) The rigorous implementation of Security Council resolutions 2365, 2370 and 2482, including their provisions on combating illegal manufacturing, possession, stockpiling and trade of explosives and IED components in the context of preventing their use by terrorists.
- 11) Work closely with Member States to implement C-34 recommendations particularly strengthening IED threat mitigation at mission level and increasing pre-deployment training including through deployment of mobile training teams.

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**B. To Troop and Police Contributing Countries:**

- 1) Improve pre-deployment and in-mission training to better mitigate IED threat including through deployment of specialized mobile training teams and training of trainers and mentoring programmes. Effective training must be consistent and persistent, based on a common standard that take into account the mission specific operational contexts. IED mitigation tactics should be systematically integrated as a core military skill.
- 2) Provide specialized pre-and post-deployment training and provide adequate resources including Counter IED and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) equipment, route clearing capabilities and electronic counter measures (ECM) capability which should cover weapon technical intelligence, post blast exploitation, and signature investigation to attack the network. This capability will be better supported by Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) assets that deploy innovative technology.
- 3) Strengthen intelligence and information sharing among peacekeeping units in order to enhance proactive force deployment and preemption of imminent and potential IED threats.
- 4) Strengthen the security of temporary operating bases by ensuring compliance with applicable standards and defensive measures at time of deployment.
- 5) Ensure that they have thorough knowledge of the mission area including the armed groups operating in the country, their modus operandi, their motivation, intention, and IED use capability for pre-emptive preparedness.
- 6) Work closely with host communities to build trust in order to enhance early warning.

**C. To Host Governments:**

- 1) National governments have the primary responsibility in management of munitions. The accumulation of conventional ammunition can pose a big challenge if not well managed. In this regard core competencies in ammunition stockpile management and explosive ordnance disposal should be strengthened.
- 2) Improve transparency and accountability across supply lines to manage the traceability of IED components and to mitigate their illicit transfer across porous borders. This can be achieved through a regional approach in: tracking of the movement of substances that could be used for making IEDs; enforcing tight controls on materials or components used for making IEDs such as detonators; controlling the production of IED components; and cracking down on IED manufacturing facilities.

- 3) Enhance national regulation of individuals and entities involved in the sale, supply, purchase, transfer and storage of explosive precursors and components that could be used to make IEDs.
- 4) Expand and deepen collaboration in sharing information and joint investigation among States.
- 5) Involve private sector and civil society in national CIED efforts including disrupting the networks and tracing supply chains fueling the growing use of IEDs by armed actors.
- 6) Holding to account perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers. This requires thorough investigation and prosecution of crimes against personnel in peacekeeping operations and special political missions.
- 7) Train national security forces in IED mitigation strategies to deploy alongside UN peacekeepers.

**D. To the Multilateral System:**

- 1) Cooperation in building capacity in terms of developing relevant expertise to include tactical and forensic intelligence as well as route clearance.
- 2) Determine and apply a unified action in support of safety of peacekeepers, including a system-wide approach with a long-term commitment to sustainable funding in countering IEDs.
- 3) Collaborative action in attacking the IED networks through enhanced intelligence collection analysis and timely dissemination on a need-to-know basis.
- 4) Cooperation and coordination among international, regional and sub-regional organizations, including civil society organizations alongside other players who might have the right tools and capacity in countering the IED menace through intelligence information sharing and use of new technology including UAVs.
- 5) Monitoring and analysis of IED incidents pattern, to enable classification of different IED events for better prediction and pre-emptive measures.
- 6) Encourage regional collaborative efforts to strengthen border controls with a view to preventing trafficking of materials and explosive precursors.

- 7) Build on existing infrastructure such as the Global Shield, INTERPOL and UNODC to enhance national, regional and international cooperation in the control of IED components and precursors.
- 8) Provide necessary victim assistance to casualties of IEDs including medical evacuation and post trauma support, noting that victims of IED attacks often require long-term medical and rehabilitation needs including treatment for physical injuries and psychological harm.
- 9) Call for strict adherence to international humanitarian law noting that peacekeeping forces are not combatants thus entitled to protections granted by IHL and attacks against them are prohibited.
- 10) Call on parties to implement the binding instruments such as the provisions of Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), its Amended Protocol II on Mines and Anti-Personnel Landmine Ban Treaty which has established norms against indiscriminate weapons.
- 11) Encourage States that have not yet done so to join the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, and the 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings.
- 12) Support countries, particularly those in conflict or emerging from conflict, in effective management of weapons and ammunition. This will ensure that these weapons and ammunition do not land in the wrong hands of illegal armed groups.

## STATEMENTS



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya

United Nations Security Council

2021-2022

### REMARKS BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARTIN KIMANI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF KENYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

We are all here because we have a common concern on the safety and security of peacekeepers. Peace operations have become more dynamic and are increasingly being conducted in complex environments that expose the peacekeepers to evolving safety and security threats.

This requires a whole of United Nations system approach to ensure that peacekeepers are adept in their mission mandates and fit for purpose to predict, adapt and respond to mission critical developments.

Today's debate focuses primarily on the growing threats associated with deployment of IEDs against peacekeepers. Peacekeepers have, while executing their mandates, increasingly fallen victim to IED attacks, deployed by armed groups and terrorist groups such as Da'esh, Al-Qaida, Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram.

Terrorist groups have continued to learn and adapt, constantly evolving with new and sophisticated ways to operate undetected and forestall counter IED measures. Not only have they improved their production and deployment capabilities, but also, employed innovative approaches including online and social media platforms to train and issue instructions on the deployment of IEDs.

We therefore want to reflect on this increasing indiscriminate deployment of IEDs against peacekeepers and civilians, but more importantly, explore practical measures of suppressing such attacks.

We are honoured to have with us a distinguished panel of briefers, who will share their insights, knowledge and first-hand experience in addressing this challenge.

We are particularly grateful that Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations found time to join us today. It is my great pleasure to invite you USG Jean-Pierre Lacroix to share your in-depth knowledge and strategic insight on the matter at hand.

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**REMARKS BY MR. JEAN-PIERRE LACROIX, UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL,  
DEPARTMENT FOR PEACE OPERATIONS**

**A. Introduction**

Distinguished Chairman,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be with you today. I would like to thank the Permanent Mission of Kenya and all of the co-hosts for arranging this important and timely meeting.

Improvised explosive devices (IED) pose a serious threat to international peace and security. Not only do they hinder freedom of movement, development and socioeconomic activities. They also seriously harm United Nations staff and peacekeepers. I therefore welcome the opportunity to take stock of our work in countering the IED threat as well as to examine what more we can do collectively.

**B. Overview of the current and emerging IED threat to our political and peace operations**

First, I would like to provide a brief overview of the IED threat environments our missions are operating in and how it affects our work.

Several Special Political Missions and peacekeeping missions operate in such environments, including UNSOM, UNSMIL, UNOWAS, MINUSMA, and MONUSCO. The overall trend of IED threats, casualties and damages have been on the rise.

In Somalia, 2020 data collected by our colleagues in the United Nations Mine Action Service - UNMAS - whose current OiC Director Ilene Cohn will brief shortly - shows a drop in overall IED casualties reversing a historic trend of year-on-year increases. Total casualty numbers were down from 1,865 in 2019 to 1,255 in 2020, mainly due to military operations and mitigation efforts by the UN. Nonetheless, total number of IED incidents in Somalia remained high. On average, 39 IED incidents were recorded every month in 2020.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has seen an increase in incidents involving improvised explosive devices, in particular in the region of Beni. The escalation of conflict in Libya in 2020 has seen the systematic use of devices in and around civilian residences in Tripoli, resulting in a growing number of casualties. The United Nations for West Africa and the Sahel, UNOWAS, has observed the trend of IED use spreading from Mauritania, through Mali and into Burkina Faso and Niger.

In Mali, as surely my colleague MINUSMA Force Commander Gyllenspore will explain later, IEDs have been a main cause of fatalities among the local population, local and international

security forces, as well as among UN peacekeepers. The sustained increase in IED attacks threatens the conduct of MINUSMA operations, and hampers mandate implementation by restricting peacekeepers freedom of movement and access to communities.

Non-State armed groups continue to rely on the use of established supply routes to maintain a constant flow of the resources required to support an effective improvised explosive device campaign.

Although our field missions operating in IED threat environments have adopted mitigation measures, the flow of mines and IED components into the countries where our missions operate cannot be easily interrupted. Expanded and deepened collaborations in sharing information and joint investigation among States, and with the private sector, are key to disrupting the supply flows fueling the growing use of IEDs by armed actors.

### **C. Actions taken to counter the IED threat to Peacekeepers**

Second, I will update you on the actions we have taken to counter IED threats to peacekeeping.

As I recently stated when I briefed the Security Council on performance, improving the safety and security of peacekeepers is a priority objective for the Department of Peace Operations and the Secretary-General. It will continue to feature prominently as we start a new phase of Action for Peacekeeping, entitled A4P+. The Secretary-General and I will speak in greater detail on A4P+ during the event that we are co-hosting with the Netherlands this coming Monday. We hope you can all join us.

The Secretariat, field missions and T/PCCs have put in place considerable mitigation measures to reduce the impact of IEDs on our peacekeepers and on mandate implementation.

Over the past three years, we have made notable progress reducing the fatalities of peacekeepers due to malicious acts. These efforts have focused on several fronts, including:

- Deployment of specialized equipment and mine-protected vehicles,
- Deployment of dedicated Combat Convoy Companies and Explosive Ordnance Disposal units,
- Improved medical trauma care, and
- Improved and better targeted training, especially to counter- improvised explosive devices (IED).

But a recent spike in fatalities highlights that we have more to do and must keep pace with evolving threats. We are updating the Action Plan to Improve the Security of UN Peacekeepers in response to the recent loss of lives, and putting in place specific measures in MINUSMA and MINUSCA. Some of the changes include:



- Enhancing ongoing efforts to strengthen tactical and operational peacekeeping-intelligence as well as situational awareness.
- Reviewing missions' requirements for forward surgical capacity,
- We are in the process of deploying more helicopter units to MINUSMA and MINUSCA.
- We are also looking to upgrade IED detection equipment, and call on T/PCCs to deploy units that are fully trained and equipped to face the threat.

#### **D. Developments on accountability to bring perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers to justice**

Holding perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers accountable must also be a key priority for all of us. Fortunately, some progress has been made since 2018. Our focus has been on fatalities as a result of malicious acts since 2013 in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali, where 80% of such peacekeeping fatalities (224) have occurred since 2013 and where IED attacks are escalating against peacekeepers.

This focus has resulted in an increase in the number of alleged perpetrators identified and detained, an increase in the percentage of cases with confirmed national investigations and a number of convictions.

In December 2020, we issued Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on the prevention, investigation and prosecution of serious crimes against United Nations personnel in peacekeeping operations and special political missions. It outlines responsibilities and procedures to support national authorities on the investigation, prosecution and adjudication of cases.

Increased political and technical support by the United Nations to host countries for the investigation and prosecution of such cases also continues. In order to support the Secretariat's efforts, action from Member States, in line with Security Council Resolution 2518 (2020) on safety and security of peacekeepers, will also be essential.

#### **E. Strengthening casualty evacuation capabilities within field missions**

Timely first aid and casualty evacuation save lives. The Secretariat has made significant progress in strengthening casualty evacuation capabilities.

A series of guidance development efforts and CASEVAC stress tests since 2018 enhanced casualty care, streamlined the evacuation process and reduced delays. Since 2020, despite the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact, efforts have continued to further implement the key elements of the CASEVAC Policy and to expand use of telemedicine, particularly for remote diagnostics and mental health support.

To address the traumatic and potentially long-lasting effects on the uniformed personnel, the Staff Counselling Units have intensified efforts to engage with troops after IED attacks and other critical incidents.

Going forward, the Secretariat will continue dialogue and efforts to ensure an integrated approach of medical services, strengthen forward medical support capabilities, accelerate the implementation of the COE manual requirements about Individual/Buddy First Aid Kits and reinforce in-mission training, particularly on Buddy First Aid and alert messaging. We will welcome any support to help implement new series of CASEVAC stress tests, develop a casualty tracking system, design an online self-paced training on CASEVAC policy, and accelerate the release of a Field Medical Assistant Course.

#### **F. Data Collection, situational awareness and border security**

Progress is also being made in enhancing peacekeeping-intelligence and situational awareness. In updating the Action Plan on Security of UN Peacekeepers, we will go beyond passive defensive measures to conduct prompt incident analysis and disseminate lessons learned quickly among contingents. We also plan to improve C-IED analysis capability in missions and explore engagement with Member States to identify IED networks with a view to neutralize the armed actors.

As mentioned earlier access by terrorists to precursor materials for improvised explosive devices can be facilitated by weak border control. Under the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, Member States are obliged to improve border and customs controls to prevent and detect the illicit traffic of, inter alia, conventional ammunition and explosives.

#### **G. Conclusions and recommendations**

Improvised explosive devices remain a significant concern to the international community and are a cross-cutting challenge that requires a multifaceted approach. This challenge also requires that solutions be sought to the factors motivating armed groups to manufacture and employ such devices.

I recall the recommendations made in the Secretary-General's Report A/75/175 on countering the threat posed by IEDs, and would like to stress the importance of the Security Council supporting the United Nations in addressing this cross-cutting issue from multiple angles, including through supporting the political resolution of conflict.

- Over the next few years,
  - We request member state support to promote cooperation among customs, law enforcement and border agencies to identify and share good practices and strategies in combating the illicit diversion and trafficking of materials for IEDs, as well as to

consider joint investigations and other enforcement activities related to illicit shipments of such materials;

- We encourage T/PCCs to deploy contingents with the required skills and capabilities, including surveillance, night-vision, counter-IED, counter-UAS equipment and mine-protected vehicles;

Thank you.

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**REMARKS BY LT. GEN. DENNIS GYLLENSPORRE, FORCE COMMANDER,  
UNITED NATIONS MULTIDIMENSIONAL INTEGRATED STABILIZATION  
MISSION IN MALI (MINUSMA)**

Mister Under-Secretary-General,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you very much for the invitation to this high-level panel on a crucial issue for peacekeepers' safety and the ability of peacekeeping operations to implement efficiently their mandates.

**INTRODUCTION**

MINUSMA operates in a very dangerous and complex security environment characterized by attacks by terrorist armed groups and improvised explosive devices (IED). IEDs are not only a **threat** to the **Mission** and the **personnel** but also to the **local population**. **This threat impedes MINUSMA's safe movement of its personnel, protection and stabilization efforts.** With respect to the Action for Peace initiative, we need to ensure that all the stakeholders involved address these complex and diverse threats to **protect our personnel** but also to **effectively implement our mandate**, especially in relation to the **protection of civilians and the security sector reform**.

The majority of peacekeeping fatalities in MINUSMA occur as a result of improvised explosive devices. The vast majority of IED incidents in Mali take place in the centre of the country; in the North and the East MINUSMA is harassed by IEDs in direct vicinity of its camps.

The trend we have seen in Mali is an **increase of IED incidents**: in 7 years, we have seen a rise of 400% (from 34 IEDs in 2013 to 169 in 2020, with the highest number recorded in 2019 with 194 IEDs.) Since January 2021, MINUSMA has suffered a total of 50 casualties due to five IED attacks. An explanatory fact to is the one single event that had a large statistical outcome: the recent suicide vehicle borne IED attack on Temporary Operating Base in Kerena, Mopti region, that resulted in 27 wounded and one killed in action.

**However**, the trend when it comes to the number of killed and wounded in action has been **decreasing the past years**, especially since 2019 (22 in 2019; 6 in 2020). This should also be seen in the light of more lethal IEDs being employed and an increased number of incidents. It is to be marked that today, **almost half of IEDs encountered, are now detected and neutralized before they can explode**.

Due to the Mission's **increased operational activity** and **enhanced flexibility** and **agile posture**, we assess that this has contributed to disrupt the IED threat.

This slow yet **positive evolution** proves that **Force adaptation** and the **measures** we have undertaken do have an **effect**, and most importantly save lives. Nonetheless, our goal is 0 wounded or killed in action.

## ACTIONS TAKEN

MINUSMA through **UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS)** provides **threat mitigation support through technical advice and delivery of in-mission and pre-deployment training to the troops**. Moreover, UNMAS has been strengthening its support to address these gaps through a **counter-IED support package**.

Some TCCs, such as **Benin** and **Niger**, have demonstrated capacity to provide pre-deployment training on IED threat mitigation awareness courses **autonomously** through **training of trainers and mentoring**. The training provided by MINUSMA has also demonstrated that Training of Trainers in an effort to create **self-sufficiency and sustainability of TCCs, is bearing fruit**.

In the face of the threat, we have decided that **more needs to be done**. MINUSMA's Force has conducted operation a specific operation to support convoys, Operation Toolbox, aiming at three goals. The first one is to **maximize the unpredictability of convoy movements** and thus disrupt complex attacks. The second is to make use of all available **intelligence assets**, including unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), to provide the best possible intelligence picture for the troops conducting the convoys. Finally, during the execution, to **dominate the terrain** to hamper or detect the presence of IEDs where they are likely to be emplaced.

In February 2021, within MINUSMA's Force, we have set up the **"Counter IED Task Force"**: a working group with representatives from UNMAS, FAMa and Barkhane that meets once a month. The task force aims at, within the framework of respective mandates, exchanging information and best practices from tactical level and up. The task force convenes both in Bamako and in the regions. The objectives of this task force are to exchange C-IED products and information between the partners; to determine common issues, develop a partnership to increase cooperation and contribute to the common CIED Strategy by reinforcing the three C-IED pillars: prepare the force; defeat the device, disrupt the network.

The last meeting of the task force from this month facilitated the exploitation of IED events through an **improved cooperation** between MINUSMA and Barkhane's Counter IED Exploitation Laboratory (level 2) and develop standard operating procedures allowing the exploitation of IED evidence collected by FAMa MINUSMA's facilities in Gao.

The next steps are the development of a **common IED strategy** (while taking into account the constraints of all the actors), the **extension to other partners** such as EUTM an G5 Sahel, and the development of tools, such as **common maps and databases**.

## MEASURES / TOOLS NEEDED

In order to strengthen MINUSMA's operational capacity to prevent and counter IED threats in Mali, we have identified eight measures.

1. The first one is to employ **Explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams** in every **operation**,
2. The second one is to ensure appropriate **route clearing capabilities** and **technology** ahead of convoy movements,
3. The third one is that all TCCs should be equipped with **electronic counter measures (ECM)** capability.
4. The fourth one is that every infantry battalion, combat convoy company and mobile task force units has at least two unarmed Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), so-called **drones**, to be able to detect movements of hostile elements ahead of convoys and patrols.
5. The sixth one is to strengthen the **security of temporary operating bases** by ensuring compliance of prevailing standards and defensive measures when deploying into field.
6. The second one is to encourage all TCCs to provide **Weapons Intelligence Teams (WITs)** to increase the intelligence collection and exploitation capacities of MINUSMA. These WITs could also be incorporated into the Mobile Task Force units as part of Force adaptation.
7. The seventh one is the **disruption of network and tracing supply chain**. Over the long term, a successful C-IED strategy requires disrupting the supply-chain network for IED components. Today, within MINUSMA, we don't have the capabilities nor the mandate to trace the origin and the smuggling routes of items. Moreover, one sustainable condition for a C-IED strategy is the effective restoration of state authorities throughout the territory.
8. The last one, and not the least: the TCCs must ensure that the deployed peacekeepers have the **adequate training to operate in asymmetric threat environment**. Tailored training and mentoring are imperative and have proven effective at reducing casualties. Adequate pre-deployment enables the peacekeepers to reach full operational capacity swiftly, hence requiring less in-mission training once deployed in Mali. This allows the Mission to increase its efficiency.

I cannot stress enough the importance for the TCCs, and the national armed forces more specifically, to take **accountability for the pre-deployment** of their troops, against the **Standardized Unit Requirements and MOUs**. This is about the peacekeeper's safety and lives. A very simple and effective mean at a national level, is to use of the experience gained in theatre by using the units that recently deployed to Mali for the predeployment training of the new units.

## CONCLUSION

The current security environment in Mali poses a serious threat to all: the local population, the Malian Defense and Security Forces and the international forces, including MINUSMA. IEDs will highly likely remain the main threat to MINUSMA and other peacekeeping missions. Therefore, peacekeeping must **continuously adapt to the evolving threat**.

While MINUSMA has improved its counter-IED capability, there are still **gaps that need to be addressed**. The goal should be to achieve a certain **uniformity** among member states on the **training and technology required** to address the IED threat. Also, we need to ensure that deployment of certain counter-IED technology **becomes the rule in UN peacekeeping missions**.

This risk can be reduced by enhancing troop and police contributor capabilities and putting mitigation measures in place. The integration of technology into operations is one part of the solution. For that, policies and systems must be revised and strengthened.

MINUSMA has undertaken several measures to mitigate the threat of IEDs but **we can and must do more to save our peacekeepers' lives, implement our priority tasks more efficiently and be trusted by the local population and our personnel**. Thank you for your attention!

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## **REMARKS BY BRIG. CHARLES MWAZIGHE, DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL PEACE SUPPORT TRAINING CENTRE (IPSTC)**

Kenya has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest number of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) incidences in the African Continent (1. Somalia, 2. Mali, 3. Burkina Faso) Somalia has more IED incidences than all the other African Countries put together, circa 55% of all Africa IED incidences. Note that Somalia has had 2053 IED incidences between 2017 and 2021. While Kenya has had 139 during the same period. The latest IED incident in Kenya occurred on 24 March 2021 where civilians were targeted and lost lives.

It is because of such incidences that the United Kingdom and Kenya entered into a Security pact in 2015 to create a Counter-IED (C-IED) capability for Kenya and the region. This capability is centred on the C-IED Wing at the Humanitarian Peace Support School (HPSS), which is part of the International Peace Support Training Centre (IPSTC). Through this partnership, the HPSS has greatly enhanced its capacity and although the UK plans to hand over the helm to Kenya soon. We continue to partner with the UK in many other areas of security, especially through the British Peace Support Team Kenya. IPSTC also works in close coordination with United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in training C-IED experts and on pre-deployment training for Kenyan AMISOM troops.

HPSS has the most advanced training facilities in both the East African region and indeed, the African Continent. The training conducted in HPSS is saving civilian and military lives on PSOs in Somalia and elsewhere.

The training is Kenyan led, regionally focused, in an internationally recognized Centre delivering high quality C-IED training that conforms to the United Nations curriculum. Indeed, under the UN Triangular Partnership Programme (TPP), IPSTC continues to conduct training for international participants beyond the continent on C-IED and other programmes.

Our C-IED training focuses on the three main C-IED Pillars i.e., Prepare the Force, Defeat the Device, and Attack the Network.

**Prepare the Force:** In Prepare the Force the institution focuses in training Explosive Hazard Threat Awareness Training (EHAT), IED Search techniques and C-IED Mobile Training Teams (MTTs).

**Defeat the Device:** In Defeat the Device the Scope covers training for high threat Improvised Explosive Device Disposal operators.

**Attack the Network:** In Attacking the network, the institution focuses on training both the Military and Police on the ability to successfully conduct basic level 1 post blast site investigations on IED explosion sites and Sensitive site exploitation.



Training at the HPSS has thus far achieved the following:

1. Over 2000 personnel from 22 countries have received training through the centre since 2016, ranging from basic awareness to specialist IED disposal, many on a Training of the Trainer (ToT) model that spreads skills further.
2. HPSS instructors have also trained the Border Police Unit, aviation security personnel, and anti-terrorist police in Nairobi and elsewhere, including on IED forensics and investigations to find and prosecute bomb-makers.
3. IEDs found and destroyed by AMISOM personnel in Somalia has increased by 5% from 2018 to 2019.
4. IED-related casualties to AMISOM personnel dropped by 11% over the same period.
5. There is evidence of the ongoing positive operational impact that the development of this capability has had in dealing with IEDs.

To consolidate the gains and enhance our capability further, the German government through GIZ is sponsoring the construction of a C-IED school of excellence at the HPSS. Construction is set to commence at the beginning of April 2021.

For the time being, the main C-IED gap in East Africa (indeed all of Africa) is the limited ability to exploit intelligence 'left of the bang'. This is an area we are working on developing, that also requires investment. Any partnership to build this capacity is highly welcome.

In conclusion, IPSTC appreciates the continued support of partners in the various training conducted in the centre. We are at the level we are at owing to these partnerships and we seek more of them going forward. There is a requirement to consolidate C-IED knowledge and training in one location for synergy and databasing. Regional and international organisations can and should coordinate C-IED effort, which can avoid replicating capability.

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**REMARKS BY MS. ILENE COHN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OFFICER-IN-CHARGE,  
UNITED NATIONS MINE ACTION SERVICE**

Distinguished Chairman,

Excellencies,

Under-Secretary-General,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

**INTRODUCTION**

Thank you for the inviting me to discuss the terrible threat that the increased use of improvised explosive devices poses to peacekeepers, UN personnel, national security services and civilians.

**UNMAS/DPO RESPONSE TO IEDS**

You have been briefed on the threat, so I will give you a sense of how the UN Mine Action Service enables peacekeeper mobility and safety, primarily through pre-deployment and in-mission, threat-specific training and mentoring **to Troop and Police Contributing Countries**.

DPO has developed **Explosive Ordnance Disposal specialized training materials**. The materials are available on the UN Peacekeeping Resource Hub, and include a suite of lessons that (1) teach troops how to recognize signs of IED use and take preventive measures and (2) explain to EOD and IEDD units how to render safe and dispose of explosive devices.

Our IED Threat Mitigation Mobile Training Team – based in Entebbe – will deliver this training package to TCCs in train-the-trainer format.

The **MINUSMA** Force Commander described efforts to strengthen IED threat mitigation in Mali, and our coordinated efforts yield results: MINUSMA has seen increased its ability to detect and neutralize IEDs. As Gen Gylenspore said, almost half of IEDs are now detected and neutralized before they can explode.

In Somalia, since **2017 UNMAS has trained over 50,000 African Union troops, including members of the Kenyan Defense Forces, that have deployed to AMISOM**. In addition to pre-deployment training, we are embedding technical advisors and mentoring units in all mission sectors across Somalia. The AMISOM casualty rate per incident has decreased since 2017, but the threat remains high.

## STRENGTHENING NATIONAL CAPACITY

IED response is primarily a national responsibility. Consequently we are providing EOD training to national security forces in several peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping settings. To prevent **armed group access to explosive precursor materials**, in CAR, DRC and Mali we construct weapons storage facilities and provide weapons and ammunition management training for national security forces.

## THERE IS NO SILVER BULLET

Despite all these efforts, the challenges to prevention, mitigation and response are daunting.

- Pre-deployment and in-mission training reduces the threat to peacekeepers.
- But **prevention** will depend on efforts to degrade the IED network and trace the supply chain.
- Prevention and response will also require TCCs and affected countries to invest in sustaining their ability to train their forces and retain the necessary expertise in their security services.

**Technology** is part of the response, but upgrading equipment is **not enough**; advanced detection and mitigation measures, including Electronic Counter Measures, require a strong commitment to full life-cycle management, and there are associated costs. Equipment must be complemented with continued threat mitigation training as part of a context-specific, comprehensive response.

**Because the construction and use of IEDs is constantly evolving, training, equipment** and other mitigation measures must also constantly adapt. Widespread access to the internet allows for the swift dissemination of information on IED construction. UNMAS has observed initiation methods in Afghanistan that were previously seen in devices in Mali. The sophistication of some devices seen in Libya confirms that knowledge has been transferred from other conflict areas. In 2020 and early 2021 there were signs of an emerging threat to peacekeepers and humanitarians in the Central African Republic. While there were no casualties, we observed that the devices clearly mimicked “Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures” prevalent in neighboring countries.

Over 15 UN entities have mandates related to IED prevention, mitigation and/or response - including attempting to trace and control the flow of precursors; ‘degrading’ the IED-network; gathering evidence for judicial processes; and developing regional security frameworks. We work together in the framework of **an interagency IED task force** to strengthen the whole-of-system approach to IEDs. We are eager to cooperate with member states and regional organizations, particularly the African Union, to counter the use of these insidious devices.

I'd like to close by **appealing to member states** to support the TCCs serving in high threat environments, for example by providing bilateral equipment support – including costly, but life-saving mine protected vehicles and their maintenance or providing bilateral training through the Light Coordination Mechanism or by providing trainers who can deliver EOD training through our Mobile Training Team.

Thank you.

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**Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya**

**United Nations Security Council**

**2021-2022**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARTIN KIMANI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF KENYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Knowing that I was going to be making this statement, I recently signed into the New York Times' archives and typed 'UN peacekeeping' into the search bar. I picked dates between 1947 and my birthday, hoping to have a sense of what my predecessors said about this precious assignment. There were about 500 entries. Too many to read through, but even skimming the titles gave me a sense.

For those of you curious about what they may learn from my shallow research, I can assure you the more things change, the more they remain the same.

There appeared to have been plenty of disputes about financing peacekeeping, and the UN itself. The Secretary General at the time seemed to have spent a lot of time urging members to pay up. And there were plentiful arguments on assessments and debts. Crisis is a word that comes up time and again.

Even as the diplomats argued, peacekeepers were sent forth into danger for the sake of our global community. So much danger that according to the website of UN Peacekeeping, four thousand and sixty-one (4061) have lost their lives while in the blue helmet. I then looked up fatalities by year and incident type, and you know what jumped out at me?

That other than 1961, the greatest fatalities were suffered in the years following the end of the Cold War.

It seems to me from my own amateurish efforts that we who develop and agree mandates, particularly the member states in the Security Council, have a special responsibility to ensure that they are designed to achieve operational success.

UN peace operations have over the decades been instrumental in ensuring the success of peace processes across the world despite the challenging environments they often operate in. It is thus important to take into consideration the safety and security of peacekeepers whenever mandates are being reviewed or drawn.

In this regard, I reaffirm Kenya's unequivocal support, as a troop-contributing country, for the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) declaration that seeks to inter alia strengthen our shared commitment on the safety and security of peacekeepers.

We also support every effort aimed at securing the safety and security of peacekeepers including the unanimously adopted Security Council Resolution 2518 (2020).

We pay special tribute to the gallant men and women both uniformed and civilian, who continue to put their lives in line in the service of peace in spite of this threat of IEDs.

Allow me to suggest a few actionable points that can be considered in efforts to diminish the threat of IEDs to UN peace operations:

- Adequately resourcing specialised pre- and post-deployment training and provision of Counter IED equipment;
- Strengthening intelligence and information sharing in order to enhance proactive force deployment and preemption of imminent and potential IED threats. Peacekeepers should work closely with host communities to build trust in order to enhance early warning;
- Monitoring and analysis of IED incidents pattern, to enable classification of different IED events for better prediction and preemption;
- Include in Missions mandates, IED targeted provisions to monitor and assess IED threats and target individuals or entities buying, supplying, selling or transferring IED components including identifying illegal networks and supply chains;
- We need to enhance national regulation of individuals and entities operating in their respective territories that are involved in the sale, supply, purchase, transfer and storage of explosive precursors and components that could be used to make IEDs;
- Encourage and support countries, particularly those in conflict or emerging from conflict, in effective management of weapons including ammunition and explosive stockpiles;
- Encourage regional collaborative efforts to strengthen border controls with a view to preventing trafficking of materials and explosive precursors;
- Build on existing infrastructure such as the Global Shield, INTERPOL and UNODC to enhance national, regional and international cooperation in the control of IED components and precursors.

Let me reiterate, in conclusion, that we must always remember to provide necessary victim assistance to casualties of IEDs including medical evacuation and post trauma support. We note, in this regard, that Victims of IED often require long-term medical and rehabilitation needs including treatment for physical injuries and psychological harm.

I thank you for your attention.



**THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM**  
**PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR DANG DINH QUY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM**

Chair,

I would like to thank the five briefers for their informative presentations.

Protection, safety and security of peacekeepers is of crucial importance to the effective implementation of mission mandates, maintenance of international peace and security and realization of hope for the people on the ground.

Despite efforts by the international community, deplorable attacks against peacekeepers have been on the rise and continue to be a pressing challenge, particularly with the recent deaths and injuries among peacekeepers in Mali and the Central African Republic since the beginning of 2021. These tolls show a concerning trend towards the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) against peacekeepers, in addition to civilian casualties and destruction of vital infrastructure.

We strongly condemn all attacks against peacekeepers and civilians, including through the use of IEDs.

IEDs by nature can be volatile and their deployment unrecorded, which adds more difficulties to detection and disposal even long after conflicts.

I would like to stress the following points:

First, all parties to armed conflicts have to strictly abide by international humanitarian law and immediately stop targeting UN peacekeepers and civilians.

Second, we call on the UN and the international community to take a comprehensive approach to counter the risks posed by IEDs, protect the safety and security of UN peacekeepers and personnel and ensure a safe environment for sustainable peace and development of countries concerned. This should focus on multilateral cooperation efforts, especial in terms of technical and funding assistance to affected countries in all aspects of mine action relating to IEDs. Capability of missions should also be enhanced in accordance with specific context.

Third, national governments have the primary responsibility for managing all types of weapons, munitions and explosive to prevent their diversion into the hands of terrorists and illegal armed groups.

Viet Nam has made great efforts in this regard. As one of the countries most affected by explosive remnants of war, we are ready to contribute more to UN peacekeeping with engineering units as well as demining capability.

To conclude, we reiterate the importance of the safety and security of our peacekeepers. As agents of peace, they must be protected against targeted hostilities by any groups, any means and methods of warfare.

I thank you, Chair

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**UNITED STATES MISSION  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR RICHARD MILLS UNITED STATES DEPUTY  
REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Thank you, Ambassador. And first, let me begin by saying that Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield, who has participated in the first part of this and learned a great deal, unfortunately has had to depart for another event. She extends her regrets. I'm honored to offer these remarks on the Ambassador's behalf. And let me begin by thanking the briefers for their remarks and again thanking you, Ambassador and your delegation, for organizing and hosting this event, which the United States was pleased to cohost in our national capacity.

Let me begin by saying we very much appreciate Kenya's leadership as a regional promoter of peace and security.

The Kenyan Defense Forces, along with other Kenyan security services, have responded to numerous terrorist incidents, while also disrupting al-Shabaab and ISIS attack planning, recruitment, and travel. These Kenyan security forces have made East Africa and the broader continent a safer place for its citizens.

The United States understands the threat IEDs pose for your civilian and security populations, and we appreciate your proactive leadership to ensure a more effective and coordinated response.

Last month in Mali, a suicide vehicle with improvised explosive devices killed a Togolese peacekeeper and injured 27 others. That devastating attack followed another in January, where one Egyptian and four Ivoirian peacekeepers were killed by IEDs, and five Togolese were seriously injured.

These are just the latest examples of the terror that our heroic peacekeepers face in the field, especially those serving in Mali, Somalia, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In many cases, those involved in IED attacks against peacekeepers may meet the criteria to be designated for sanctions.

It's clear the Security Council has a serious responsibility here. And the fact that nearly every member of this Council is co-hosting this meeting shows that, in theory, we all agree. But we owe it to our slain and injured peacekeepers to turn these words into action.

This Council has highlighted several key areas – and concrete actions – to make peacekeepers safer in Resolution 2518. The Secretariat has also outlined specific steps that can be taken in its Action Plan to Improve the Security of UN Peacekeepers.

I want to highlight three of those action areas today: strengthening situational awareness in the field; enhancing training; and ensuring that missions are equipped to protect themselves against this threat.

First, we must increase situational awareness to combat IEDs.

Intelligence and surveillance assets can help address the IED threat by ensuring that missions know where IEDs are located and which are the actors responsible. But we need broader and better understanding and implementation of the UN's Military Peacekeeping Intelligence Doctrine across missions and across troop-contributing countries. This would help support proactive, information-driven operations that are better protected against threats.

Second, we need to better train peacekeepers to handle IED threats.

Effective training must be consistent, and it must be persistent, based on a common standard and include the mission-specific realities of the operational environment. To take action on this front, I'm very pleased to say that the Biden-Harris Administration has prioritized peacekeeper training through the U.S.' Global Peace Operations Initiative. Under this initiative, the United States has invested more than \$1.6 million in the UN's development of standardized IED trainings.

In July 2019, the United States officially presented the curricula to the UN Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations. We also introduced the curricula during U.S. Africa Command's third annual Counter-IED working group at Kenya's Humanitarian Peace Support School. And we will continue to look for and find ways to partner with interested member states on IED training.

With the standardized curricula now ready, the next step, we believe, is for troop-contributing countries to integrate these trainings into their pre-deployment and then apply that training on the ground.

Member States and UN agencies should work together to ensure all personnel searching for and disposing of IEDs have appropriate skills to do the job. The aim should be to ensure the safe, effective, and efficient disposal of IEDs.

Third and finally, the United States supports these efforts through the provision of much needed equipment in the field – and we call on others to do the same.

For example, we're providing Counter-IED and Explosive Ordinance Disposal deployment equipment to a number of partner countries, both in support of their battalions and specialized units.

We have also provided armored personnel carriers to a number of partners for missions and pre-deployment training. And we are augmenting training centers to improve soldier skills on vehicle capabilities, operations, and maintenance prior to their deployments.

Our peacekeepers are the extension of the Security Council – and they require our full support.

So, let me end by saying, we look forward to working with everyone here today to do whatever we can to combat the threat of IEDs and protect our peacekeepers.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

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**MISSION PERMANENTE  
DE LA FRANCE AUPRÈS  
DES NATIONS UNIES  
À NEW YORK**

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR NICOLAS DE RIVIERE, PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF FRANCE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr. Chair,

First, I thank the panelists for their presentations. I would like to start by saluting the courage of the blue helmets and of humanitarian personnel who carry out their mission under the threat of improvised explosive devices and to pay tribute to those who lost their lives.

It is imperative to acknowledge the level of the threat posed by improvised explosive devices.

They caused nearly 170 000 casualties in the world in the past ten years, with roughly 80% of civilian victims, including children and humanitarian personnel. In peacekeeping missions, MINUSMA is today the most affected.

Improvised explosive devices have structural consequences for all the peacekeeping chain, from the capability of the missions to deliver on their mandate to the will of member states to provide troops. It is likely that peace operations will be increasingly confronted with this threat, both in their civilian and military components.

The United Nations has started to adapt accordingly. The UN mine action service is developing the expertise, resources and has the mandate to counter IEDs, to support peacekeeping operations and to raise awareness of civil society. Peace operations have started acquiring new technologies such as detection systems. Medical evacuations processes have improved, becoming faster, thanks to a revised decision-making process.

Yet countering IEDs is a permanent challenge and the first results must be consolidated. It requires continuous efforts to mobilize complex and rare know-how, the development of intelligence capabilities, the mobilization of high-tech equipment and efficient medical evacuation procedures.

Our responsibility today is to go further.

We must provide the United Nations with the necessary means of action, with the best equipment and improved intelligence capacities. Of course, each troop-contributing country must continue to train and equip its contingents before deployment. Partnerships are important to support these efforts. France is very much involved in terms of capacity building

of African troop contributing countries and also through the operational cooperation between the Barkhane Force and MINUSMA. In particular, France supports a network of two regional demining schools in Benin and Lebanon.

I would like to conclude with questions to our speakers:

To Ms. Cohen: what are the priority needs of the United Nations to better counter IEDs?

To USG Lacroix: what structural changes are necessary to ensure that all the contingents have the necessary means of action?

To General Gyllensporre: what are the lessons learned at the mission level to maintain the mobility of the Force and continue to conduct robust operations in spite of the IED threat?

Thank you.

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**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR GERALDINE BYRNE NASON, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRELAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Thank you very much indeed, dear Martin, and I also want to say thank you very much to you and the briefers today for bringing our attention to this really important topic.

For Ireland, keeping safe the women and the men we deploy as peacekeepers is paramount and that's why we are delighted to be with you now, co-hosting today's discussion.

As we know from our own experience one fatality is one fatality too many. This year regrettably, 10 noble UN peacekeepers have been killed, many more injured, the majority caused by IEDs. We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of all who gave their lives in the cause of peace. We condemn such attacks unequivocally, calling for the perpetrators to be brought to justice.

Mr Chair,

Ireland has developed significant expertise in the area of countering landmines, IEDs and explosive remnants of war. We are committed to sharing this experience and working to build capacity among other troop contributing countries. We see working together to enhance TCC and host nation capacity as central to increasing the safety of all our peacekeepers. This has inspired us also to contribute to UN IED Survivability doctrine and to the related training capability development.

Mr Chair,

As we know, armed groups are becoming ever more innovative in their use of IEDs. We need to be equally innovative in how we mitigate this threat. This includes examining how armed groups exploit the accessibility of information and technology. Here, effective export controls are crucial.

Knowing when, where, and how an adversary might attack our peacekeepers is the most effective mitigation measure of all. This requires an enhanced understanding of the peacekeeping operational environment, we have heard almost every speaker say that. As a former co-chair of the Peacekeeping Military Intelligence train-the-trainer working group, Ireland knows the importance of building an intelligence picture of peacekeeping environments, both to mitigate this risk and - more broadly- to enhance mandate implementation.

We welcome the revised UN peacekeeping intelligence policy, which we believe provides a strong framework for enhancing situational awareness in UN Peacekeeping Operations. Operations should be intelligence-led, and Ireland calls for the full implementation of UN Peacekeeping Intelligence policies on the ground, where they matter.

The recently adopted C34 report sets out a number of recommendations relevant and important to this discussion today. These include strengthening IED threat mitigation at the mission level, and increasing pre-deployment training, including through the deployment of mobile training teams, to enhance skills among troop contributing countries. We strongly support these recommendations. Martin, women peacekeepers play an increasingly important role in UN Peacekeeping responsibilities globally. We see it as critical that they are also upskilled in this regard. We believe that women peacekeepers should have the opportunity to serve right across the full range of roles in their deployments.

Mr Chair,

Many IED attacks occur in populated areas, causing indiscriminate horrific harm to civilians, including children, and damaging critical civilian infrastructure, also interrupting the delivery of humanitarian aid. These impacts can have immediate and long-term consequences. Our approach, we believe, should be to recognise the multifaceted challenge IEDs pose, including the gendered impacts of their use. Ireland is chairing the consultation process to agree a Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas in order to address the humanitarian impact of explosive weapons, and to deliver important behavioural change to strengthen compliance with IHL. We look forward to working on this with all stakeholders.

Mr Chair,

The use of IEDs poses a serious threat to the safety and security of our peacekeepers on a daily basis and it poses a threat to those they seek to protect. We must do more to mitigate the threat, including through sharing expertise, and building greater capacity among troop contributing countries. As a long-standing troop contributor, Ireland, with decades of experience in this field, Ireland assures you of Ireland's continued commitment to provide leadership in this area.

Thank you.

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**STATEMENT BY MR. ENRIQUE OCHOA, COUNSELOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF MEXICO, TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr. Chairman:

First of all, I would like to thank Kenya for convening this meeting.

The beginning of this 2021 has been marked by tragic attacks with IEDs that took the life of MINUSMA and MINUSCA peacekeepers. Mexico condemns these acts of violence in the strongest terms and pays tribute to the courage of all peacekeepers.

The continued use of IEDs compel us to keep raising awareness on this challenge, and that is why we are very proud to co-sponsor this Arria-formula meeting.

Mr. Chairman:

IEDs continue to be widely and increasingly used in several conflicts in the world from Afghanistan to Somalia. Mexico condemns the use by whomever of improvised explosive devices in all circumstances.

As USG Lacroix just mentioned, it is crucial to promote an integrated response from the UN system to address the cross-cutting challenges in terms of situational awareness. The upcoming UN Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference in the Republic of Korea could be a key opportunity to share good practices to enhance the safety and security of peacekeepers from the IED threat in terms of training, information, capacity, equipment and technology.

As peacekeeping forces are not combatants, they are entitled to the protections granted by International Humanitarian Law, and it should be underscored once more that attacks against them are prohibited.

Any attack on peacekeeping operations, regardless of the instrument of war used, may constitute a war crime, and therefore, should be investigated and prosecuted accordingly.

For decades, Mexico has promoted restrictions and prohibitions to all weapons of indiscriminate nature, including those activated by the victims, or the ones that, due to their own characteristics, cannot fulfill International Humanitarian Law principles. This is the case of IEDs.



In our view, the prohibitions of the CCW, and of the Antipersonnel Landmine Ban Treaty apply to IEDs. Thus, we call all the parties of these instruments to redouble their efforts to fulfill their obligations under these treaties, as well as relevant UNSC resolutions. We call on those States that are not Parties to these Treaties to consider signing and ratifying them. Furthermore, we reiterate the importance of common Article 1 to the Geneva Conventions regarding the obligation to respect and ensure the respect of IHL.

National controls of materials that could be used to make improvised devices as called by relevant UN Security Council resolutions must also be strengthened, bearing in mind that some sanctions regimes have already started to look more closely into this situation.

Beyond military and security concerns, IEDs cause devastating humanitarian impacts on civilians, and become a socioeconomic and developmental challenge for affected communities and hamper the achievement of sustainable development goals. Therefore, there is a clear need to enhance international cooperation for the clearance, as well as for victim assistance.

Last but not least, we commend the role of UNMAS, especially through its IED threat mitigation programs, which aid both civilians and peacekeepers.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

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**MISSION PERMANENTE DU NIGER**

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**STATEMENT BY MR. SAMADOU OUSMAN, COUNSELOR, PERMANENT MISSION  
OF NIGER TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**I thank you Mr. Chair,**

As the death toll rises from cowardly attacks on civilian population in the Sahel, with the latest having claimed the lives of 205 innocent civilians last week in Niger, we are, at the same time, witnessing a new trend of Improvised Explosive Devices lethal attacks on United Nations peacekeepers and their allied regional forces. This underscores the importance and timeliness of this event today, which Niger is happy to cosponsor.

My appreciations go to our briefers Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Lieutenant General Dennis Gyllensporre, Brig. Charles L Mwazighe, and Ms. Ilene Cohn, for their necessary contribution to today's discussion.

**Mr. Chair,**

As we pay tribute to the UN peacekeepers, who have managed to conduct their mission despite this current pandemic, it must be acknowledged that these missions operate in large countries with harsh terrain, lack of roads or other transportation infrastructure, and porous borders. Taking advantage of this situation, non-state armed actors, have stepped up their attacks by means of improvised explosive devices. This new sustained use of these devices, as well as their attractiveness for the terrorists, compels us to rethink our strategies and adjust to this ubiquitous threat.

It is therefore imperative that we develop a strong, coherent, and holistic approach to tackle this issue, one that not only promote the information sharing and collaboration, but also allows for coordination among all the actors involved, to protect the lives of the peacekeepers and the population at large.

In this regard, we welcome the many initiatives of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) such as the Smart IED Threat Mitigation Technology Road Map (SMiTMiTR), which aims at “getting the right information to the right people, at the right time to help them share experiences and insights to improve the safety in the IED threat mitigation working environment”.

The nature of this threat, and the fact that IEDs are mostly produced outside of any government supervision or knowledge, requires us to develop effective information sharing tools that would allow us to build databases of designs, components, and place of origin of the material used to manufacture them, readily available to be shared across countries and relevant agencies.

I would like to take a moment to commend and highlight the excellent support that UNMAS is providing, in terms of IED avoidance training safety and management of explosive threats, compliance with International Mine Action Standards, and weapon and ammunition storage, to the national defense and security forces and to the infantry contingents deployed with MINUSMA. As recent incidents have shown, a more robust technical assistance is needed to empower all contingents to navigate the very dangerous areas of operations.

Mitigating the threat of IEDs to peacekeepers, must also extend to the humanitarian actors and civilian populations as the security of those peacekeepers is inextricably connected to that of the populations they serve and protect. To that effect, it is important that humanitarian personnel as well as civilians be trained in IED recognition, reporting and awareness, and victim assistance, in areas heavily contaminated by Explosive Remnant of War.

**Mr. Chair,**

As mentioned earlier, the strengthening of capacities to counter the IED threat, must pass through collaboration, whether be it at the regional, international level, or through the inclusion of international financial institutions.

As most of the peacekeeping mission are on the African continent, it is essential to support UN entities, affected states and the African Union with predictable, sustainable, and flexible funding, as the success against the deployment of Improvised Explosive Devices against Peace Operations depends on the continued commitment of donors.

Equally important, is the development of synergy between agencies such as UNMAS and the African Union. We welcome the close collaboration between those two institutions in implementing the African Union Mine Action and Explosive Remnants of War Strategic Framework with the aim to support AU Member States in reducing the threat posed by conventional weapons, mines, explosive remnants of war, cluster munitions and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in accordance with the relevant international instruments and best practices.

**I thank you,**

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PERMANENT MISSION  
OF NORWAY  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MONA JUUL, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF NORWAY TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

I want to thank Kenya for organising this Arria meeting on a sadly relevant topic. Like others, Norway has lost personnel in IED-related attacks, and we welcome this opportunity to engage in discussion on how we can deal with this scourge.

IEDs are simple, cheap, and deadly. “Improvised” does not mean that they are not sophisticated. Indeed, the internet has been a great enabler. Hostile actors quickly adapt to new situations and technology. And the means, methods, and purposes, of the use of IEDs varies in- and across- conflicts.

This all points to the fact that protecting our peacekeepers from the threat of IEDs is a complex task, requiring a comprehensive approach. And Norway fully supports the development of a ‘counter-improvised explosive device strategy’ by the UN Secretariat.

We need to understand the threat situation. This includes being able to gather, and analyse relevant information about hostile actors and their methods. And interaction with host countries, and the local population is key.

Colleagues,

We must be prepared for the threat. Our peacekeepers need to be properly trained and equipped. And in this regard, Norway supports the deployment of specialised mobile training teams, in partnership with the UN Mine Action Service.

We must also strengthen our ability to detect and defeat the threat. It is important that we explore the use of new technology - such as Unmanned Aerial Systems - to detect activities in the area of operations, and along routes of transportation.

Continued support for the Mine Ban Convention is also fundamental. The convention has established a norm against indiscriminate weapons such as anti-personnel mines. And we must pursue all relevant avenues to ensure that those using IEDs in violation of international humanitarian law are held to account.

Colleagues,

There is no easy solution, but we owe it to our peacekeepers to minimize the risks they run in the pursuit of the safety of others.

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PERMANENT MISSION OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR. HALIMAH DESHONG, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Thank you Chair,

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines commends the Republic of Kenya for convening today's discussion and we are pleased to join as a co-host of this event. We also thank our esteemed briefers for their remarks on this important topic.

Against the backdrop of a continually evolving global context, in which cross-border challenges like terrorism, organised crime, health crises, and climate change threaten the social fabric of fragile states, peacekeeping engagements have become increasingly complicated. Peacekeepers are mandated to carry out difficult tasks in increasingly harsh environmental, political and security conditions. The presence of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) add further complexity to these operational difficulties by impeding the performance of peacekeeping operations, confounding situational awareness, and threatening the lives of peacekeepers, humanitarian personnel, and civilian populations. Peacekeeping missions must therefore be equipped with the necessary expertise and resources to detect and counter these threats. These capacities must also be transferred to host countries to strengthen national ownership and responsibility for explosive ordnance.

The indiscriminate use of IEDs against peacekeepers, humanitarian actors and civilians must be thoroughly investigated and perpetrators held to account. When the guiding International Humanitarian Law (IHL) principles of distinction, proportionality, and precautions are ignored, states should spare no effort in ending impunity for the resulting crimes. All states and the regional and sub-regional organisations within which they are situated must work diligently together to improve transparency and accountability across supply lines; to manage the traceability of IED components; and to mitigate their illicit transfer across porous borders.

At the field level, there is an urgent need for capacity-building, through both technical and financial assistance in all regions, particularly to conflict-affected countries in fragile regions across the Sahel, Central Africa and the Horn of Africa. Core competencies in areas such as ammunition stockpile management and explosive ordnance disposal should be incorporated into Security Sector Reform (SSR) programmes, and modern technologies that enhance IED

awareness and facilitate route clearance should be transferred to affected states. Our delegation also emphasises the importance of information-sharing among States, regional and international organizations and the private sector to tackle the interconnected challenges of transnational organised crime and terrorism that have enabled the proliferation of IEDs.

To conclude, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines extends its gratitude to, and reaffirms its support for, all troop and police contributing countries and their uniformed personnel. We commend their ongoing commitments and sacrifices, and we welcome all efforts to enhance their safety and security. I thank you.

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البعثة الدائمة للجمهورية التونسية  
لدى منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
بنيويورك

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALI CHERIF, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
TUNISIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to the Permanent Mission of Kenya for organizing this very timely meeting. I also thank the briefers for their very instructive and insightful presentations.

The United Nations peacekeeping missions are increasingly operating in hostile environments, featuring armed groups, terrorists and organized crime, as well as IEDs, which exposes them to significantly high risks.

The unanimous adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2518, one year ago, is very indicative of the growing awareness about this major challenge. In fact, ensuring the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel has become vital. It has become also crucial for mandate execution and equally essential for sustaining the relevance of the UN in the maintenance of international peace and security.

While appreciating the efforts undertaken by the Secretary General to mobilize all partners and stakeholders to promote stronger safety and security for peacekeepers, especially in the framework of his “Action for Peacekeeping” initiative, we believe that, in light of the continuing threats targeting UN peacekeepers in the field, there is a strong need today to work closer with the Secretariat, Troop-and Police-Contributing Countries and host countries in order to ensure that UN peacekeeping missions are adequately resourced, trained and informed, and that all deployed peacekeepers are equipped effectively to implement their mandate safely. If fatalities are raising in field missions, this means that we are not taking enough measures to operate securely and to adapt fully to increasingly risky operational environments.

Mr. Chair,

Improvised explosive devices are among those threats causing a growing number of casualties among peacekeepers especially operating in mobile convoys, convoy escorts, and quick reaction forces (QRFs).



Cheap and relatively easy to construct, IEDs have increasingly become the weapon of choice for non-state actors, terrorists and armed groups.

Personnel are killed and seriously injured by IEDs when they lack the equipment training and discipline needed to detect IEDs and avoid an explosion.

Troops should not be deployed without the necessary and appropriate equipment and training.

TCCs and PCCs selected to be deployed in missions with IED risk should be fully equipped with appropriate mine-protected vehicles (MPV). The presence of Military engineers to supervise anti-IED operations would highly useful.

The United Nations should update and adapt SURs to the threat environment.

Member States need also to ensure that pre-deployment training establishes IED mitigation skills and mindset of troops.

Counter-IED training should continue during the deployment and IED mitigation tactics should be systematically integrated as a core military skill.

Furthermore, UN Missions and battalions should enhance intelligence capabilities for IED detection, including human intelligence.

In the same vein, we need to work on improving the system of medical support and casualty evacuation for injured peacekeepers and to ensure that adequate medical facilities and qualified personnel are deployed to provide the essential response at all times within the mission area.

In conclusion, Mr. Chair,

Peacekeepers are deployed in deteriorating and complex political and security environments and face asymmetrical and complex threats and attacks. Host countries have also an important responsibility in ensuring their safety and security. Perpetrators of crimes against peacekeepers must be held accountable hosting countries peacekeeping operations must investigate and prosecute the responsible. We underline that all parties should cooperate and provide every possible assistance to the competent national authorities investigating or prosecuting any crimes committed against deployed United Nations peacekeepers.

I thank you

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United Kingdom  
Mission to the  
United Nations

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JONATHAN ALLEN, DEPUTY PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr Chair, thank you for convening today's Arria meeting on this important aspect of peacekeeper safety and security. The United Kingdom is proud to act as a co-host. Thanks also to our briefers for their insights.

The spate of fatal attacks against peacekeepers in MINUSMA earlier this year serves as a sad reminder of the threat posed by IEDs. We pay tribute to those brave peacekeepers killed and injured, and I would ask Force Commander Gyllensporre to convey our condolences and our gratitude to the mission's personnel.

These latest events should serve as a call to action for us all to continue efforts to counter IED attacks, as well as to prevent such threats emerging in the first place.

One important element in tackling these threats is strong preparation before personnel deploy. If peacekeepers have, and use, the right skills and training, when paired with the appropriate equipment, this can provide a strong defence against mines and IEDs. Through our partnerships with TCCs and training centres, the UK provides training and support that focuses on building awareness and counter-IED skills.

As Brig. Mwazighe noted, since January 2020, the UK has provided over \$1.3m of support to the Humanitarian Peace Support School in Nairobi, which has delivered courses to personnel from 12 UN Police- and Troop-Contributing Countries, including in IED related skills. IED awareness training has been an integral part of UK-delivered pre-deployment training for contingents deploying to MONUSCO and MINUSCA, and in the year ahead we plan to support Ghana in providing awareness training to all its peacekeepers.

More widely, the UK is strongly committed to supporting the UN's collective efforts to remove mines and other explosive ordnance. The UK has been the largest national donor to the UN's Mine Action Service for the last three years, with more than \$165m committed.

As well as defending against IED attacks when they emerge, it is vital that missions have an accurate picture of the IED threat environment in order to anticipate and mitigate risks. Effective intelligence collection, analysis and dissemination is key – including sharing information with humanitarian and civilian actors.

The UK is proud of its contributions to MINUSMA which help support these capabilities, through our deployment of a reconnaissance task group, Military Staff Planners and Intelligence specialists. And we have delivered Peacekeeping Intelligence courses, and intelligence training and mentoring, for other TCCs to help build partners' skills.

In addition to countering IEDs in the field, we also recognise the importance of tackling such threats before they emerge. We need to act in a joined up way to disrupt the networks that provide the raw materials and technical know-how used to perpetrate IED attacks.

In 2019, the Council acted to restrict the transfer of IED components to Somalia, following the rise in attacks by Al-Shabaab. This is one example of how the Security Council can and must use the different tools available to us to ensure we take a coherent approach to tackling the IED threat and improving safety.

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PERMANENT MISSION  
OF ESTONIA TO THE UN



## **STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR SVEN JÜRGENSON, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ESTONIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

I would like to thank Kenya for organizing today's meeting and the briefers for their insights. I believe it has clearly demonstrated our common strong concern at the serious harm that improvised explosive device attacks have caused to United Nations peacekeepers, staff and humanitarian workers, by threatening their lives, increasing the cost of their activities, limiting their freedom of movement and hampering mandate delivery.

Around the world, UN peacekeepers operate in a multitude of different conflicts which have them face a variety of threats. As the nature of conflict evolves, so does the nature of warfare and the weapons that are used. Deliberately targeting the UN has become an approach for those not interested in peace, those who profit from instability, the spoilers. This, however, makes the job of peacekeepers so much more important. Because for millions of people around the world, our blue helmets represent the last, best hope for peace and stability.

To be able to protect civilians and also themselves, UN peacekeeping must constantly adapt. Adapt to different conflicts and adapt to changing conditions. Focusing on developing a culture of performance and accountability will improve the ability to do so. We're hopeful that the recent roll-out and implementation of tools such as CPAS will help missions speed up necessary adjustments.

It is also important to focus on training and preparation. Troops that enter into a particular conflict must possess the prerequisite capabilities and equipment to face its particular challenges. I would be glad to hear more of how initiatives such as the Light Coordination Mechanism and triangular partnerships have supported the developing of specialized capacities and capabilities.

We also welcome initiatives to better integrate modern technology and peacekeeping intelligence capabilities into peace operations. By helping to improve the situational awareness of troops in real time, this contributes to the protection of civilians and the security of personnel and the implementation of missions' mandates. New technologies, including UAVs, are by no means a silver bullet to the threat of IEDs, but they can be a valuable additional tool in the arsenal of well-prepared and trained peacekeepers.

I would finish with this question: is there some common pattern or threshold of when and why armed groups or other peace spoilers turn to using IEDs against UN peacekeepers?

would you say it is related more the spoilers developing the capacity for making IEDs, or getting access to required required materials, or more due to the role of the UN in the conflict changing?

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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR GENG SHUANG, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr. Chair,

China is pleased to join Kenya and other members to co-host this meeting. I would like to thank USG Lacroix and others for their briefings.

Improvised explosive devices constitute one of the main causes of peacekeeping casualties. This year, nearly 30 peacekeepers of MINUSMA were seriously injured and one killed in IED attacks. It shows once again the grave threat of IEDs to blue helmets. We call for joint efforts of the Security Council, the Secretariat, TCCs, PCCs and host countries to collectively address this challenge.

Peacekeeping missions should be provided with adequate equipment, including signal block devices and mine-protected equipment based on regular risk assessment.

Host countries should take concrete measures to reduce the production and use of IEDs, including putting IED components under strict control, cracking down on IED manufacturing facilities, etc. We encourage host countries to share information on IEDs with peacekeeping missions, which is helpful for the missions to prevent IED attacks and reduce casualties.

Security Council Resolution 2518 should be fully implemented. Security training, including mine clearance training, should be strengthened to enhance peacekeepers' overall capability of self-protection.

China attaches great importance to the safety and security of peacekeepers. We have trained peacekeepers from many countries on the prevention and disposal of IEDs. In 2017, China co-chaired the drafting of the IED disposal standards of the UN.

China is ready to work with the international community to improve the safety and security of peacekeepers and further contribute to the protection of blue helmets.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR KAKANUR NAGARAJ NAIDU, DEPUTY  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

At the outset, let me thank the delegation of Kenya and other co-sponsors for organizing this meeting on a pertinent and relevant topic. I also thank USG for Peace Operations Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Force Commander of MINUSMA Lieutenant General Dennis Gyllensporre and other briefers for their remarks and useful updates. Let me also reiterate our views on the Arria format of meetings, which are well known, that we do not wish to see this platform being misused for narrow political interests.

India pays tribute to the men and women who have served and continue to serve in peacekeeping operations for their professionalism, dedication and courage. We remember those who have lost their lives in serving the cause of peace. I join in extending our condolences to the peacekeepers who have paid the ultimate price in the cause of UN peacekeeping.

Being a leading contributor to UN peacekeeping operations, India accords topmost priority to the safety and security of peacekeepers. India has always advocated for more proactive measures by the UN system to protect the protectors. Today, UN peacekeepers operate in a complex security environment involving armed groups, non-state actors and terrorists, be it in Mali, DRC, Central African Republic or Somalia. The ever-expanding mandates of peacekeeping missions with limited resources has only added to the challenges and complexities that peacekeepers face on the ground. These challenges are compounded further by the increasing use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by terrorists and armed groups against peacekeepers.

Easy access to components for fabricating an IED continue to be a cause of concern for security and law enforcement agencies. Advancement of technologies, including those related to signal communication, electronics, sensors, remote operating capabilities have added more complex dimensions to the already evolving threat. While simple and commonly used household tools and commercial explosives used in construction and mining can be used to make IEDs, lack of proper stockpile management and security of military and commercial explosives make them susceptible for diversion into wrong hands in zones of armed conflicts. We have seen this manifested in several peacekeeping missions.

Among all UN peacekeeping missions, MINUSMA has been seriously affected by IED attacks in the recent years. Since 2018, MINUSMA has lost 22 peacekeepers to IED attacks. IEDs and explosive hazards are having a detrimental impact on the safety and freedom of movement of peacekeepers in the central and northern parts of Mali. In Somalia, IEDs are the weapons of choice for Al-Shabaab, which has acquired the capacity to manufacture them. There have been incidents of IED attacks against peacekeepers in DRC as well. In November 2016, 32 Indian peacekeepers from the 16 Punjab Regiment in MONUSCO were injured by a suspected IED.

India appreciates the Secretary-General's close attention to the issue of improving safety and security of UN peacekeeping personnel. While a number of initiatives have been taken to incorporate Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD) measures in the field, we are of the view that this problem needs more attention.

We believe that missions facing IED threats should have dedicated resources for countering IED threats. The training of UN personnel on IED threats, both in-country and prior to deployment, need to be more context specific. The advance patrol parties in affected areas along with the involvement of concerned State security authorities, whenever it is feasible, should become the norm. There should also be concerted efforts to upgrade the security infrastructure of camps of UN peacekeepers as a number of casualties have been related to direct attacks on security camps. Timely and reliable medical evacuation and casualty evacuation, including the use of helicopters with night flight capability and night retrieval operations, is essential. Also, to respond in a timely manner to crisis situations or accidents, Force Commanders should be given the direct authority for commanding such air assets in the mission. Peacekeepers need to be provided full access to medical facilities, in accordance with the golden hour principle, throughout the mission area. Medical capabilities in all missions need to be reviewed to identify gaps that currently exist.

There is also an urgent need to adopt a multi-pronged strategy to support host states in discharging their primary role to fight the threat. In this regard, I would like to make following observations:

- Strengthening the institutional and regulatory capacity of the host countries, on their request and identified national priorities, is particularly important. In this regard, the UN Missions, whenever such a request is sought, should assist the host country, to strengthen the capacity to counter IED threats, including basic explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) response capacity.
- The regional and sub-regional initiatives focusing on curbing the flow of explosives and other components to fabricate IED should be supported with adequate human and financial resources, besides sharing technical expertise, lessons learnt and best practices.



- Besides safeguarding the stockpiles of explosive substances, close coordination among all the concerned authorities of member states in the region and tracking of the movement of substances that could be used for making IEDs is vital.
- Strong vigilance and tighter controls over materials or components used for making IEDs including national ammunition stockpiles, industrially produced detonators, detonating cords and industrially produced explosives are important.
- Full involvement of the relevant industry and authorities in the regulation of pre-cursor and prefabricated components is crucial. Effective information sharing on designs and components of IEDs between Member States has the potential to shorten the response time to identify and develop counter measures.

Madam President,

India has extended assistance towards international de-mining and rehabilitation efforts. In the recent years, India has undertaken specialist training on Counter IED, bomb disposal and de-mining with numerous partner countries including Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia and Uzbekistan. Our 12-member team of experts participated in a joint counter explosive threat task forces training exercise Ardent Defender-2019 in Ontario, Canada. About 130 personnel from 13 African States participated in exercise AFINDEX, a multinational exercise on demining and unexploded ordinance held in India in March 2019.

On the occasion of the 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi, in October 2018, India launched the 'India for Humanity' initiative and conducted 13 artificial limb fitment camps and fitted more than 6500 artificial limbs in the last two years in Malawi, Iraq, Nepal, Egypt, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Syria, Vietnam, Tanzania, Senegal and Namibia. In view of its success and recognition by partner countries, this initiative has now been extended up to March 2023.

India has been cooperating and providing assistance to various countries and stands ready to contribute towards capacity building, victim assistance and victim re-habilitation, upon request from countries under the UN mandate.

Thank you, Madam President.

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**Permanent Mission  
of the Russian Federation  
to the United Nations**

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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ANNA EVSTIGNEEVA DEPUTY PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF RUSSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr. President,

No doubt, ensuring safety and security of peacekeepers is a vital task during the whole life-cycle of any mission. It is especially important in challenging security environments, where peacekeepers could face asymmetrical threats. Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are one of the major types of weapons at the disposal of non-state entities, including terrorists.

UN peacekeepers are not mandated to combat terrorist threats, and the primary responsibility for safety and security of the UN personnel rests with the Host State. In this regard, it is important to enhance cooperation and dialogue between the UN missions and the Host State authorities on these issues. International assistance in strengthening host governments capacities to address the proliferation of weapons and ammunitions, to prevent loss of military equipment, including of possible precursors for IEDs is in a great demand.

There are peacekeeping operations that are specifically prone to such threats. The situation in Mali and in the Sahel region remains extremely difficult. We support measures adopted by MINUSMA to protect civilian population and its personnel.

Somalia is a country where the federal government and AMISOM continue to face an increasing threat of IEDs in its fight with Al-Shabaab. We call upon the international community and the relevant UN agencies to step-up their support to mitigate the IED threat.

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) plays an important role in global mine action. For years, Russia has been its consistent supporter. In 2019, we donated to UNMAS \$1 million. Our experts have been engaged with the UNMAS colleagues on demining in Syria and elaboration of international standards to counter the IED threat.

The Russian Armed Forces have been actively engaged in demining in a wide range of countries. We reaffirm our readiness to share best practices and experience in humanitarian demining and countering IED threats, including through the International Mine Action Centre of the Russian Ministry of Defense. We closely cooperate with the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining.

Mr. President,

There is a pressing need to strengthen mechanisms of inter-state cooperation in the area of preventing and countering crimes committed with the use of IEDs. We wish to highlight the importance of rigorous implementation of Security Council resolutions 2370 and 2482, including their provisions on combating illegal manufacturing, possession, stockpiling and trade of explosives and IED components in the context of preventing their use by terrorists. The Russian Federation initiated and sponsored the first ever capacity-building project on the nexus between arms, crime and terrorism under the auspices of UNOCT.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its Amended Protocol II on mines also provide an important venue to discuss the issue of IED threat.

We would like to call on all States that haven't done so to join the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, and the 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings.

It is also vital to continue the dialogue between the UN Member States and the Monitoring Team (MT) of UNSC Committees 1267/1989/2253 and of Committee 1988 in order to have the experts informed of the facts and circumstances of terrorists using IEDs. We should also engage the capacity of Interpol.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me reconfirm that protection of civilians in conflict, as well as the safety and security of the Blue Helmets remain among the top priorities for the Russian delegation. It is of critical importance that the Secretariat works closely with Member States, including through C-34, in a transparent manner in improving the security of peacekeepers. UN people on the ground should possess all necessary capabilities, adequate medical support, relevant training, and other tools to implement their mandates even in very hostile environments. At the same time, it is clear that all these efforts cannot solve the problems, posed by terrorist and IED threats alone. The fundamental thing is to help the host countries, weakened by conflict, not only to become capable to fight these threats, but also to be able to extend effective control over their national territories and establish the rule of law. Any peacekeeping operation is first and foremost an essential UN tool in pursuit of sustainable political solutions.

Thank you.

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# KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

Statement delivered by

H.E. Ms. Karen Van Vlierberge,

Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative

**Arria formula meeting of the Security Council**

**“Protecting the Peacekeeper: Suppressing the Deployment of  
Improvised Explosive Devices against Peace Operations”**

New York, 26 March 2021

Thank you, Mr. President,

It is an honour for Belgium to co-sponsor this important meeting and to participate in this discussion on a topic that is a high priority for my country.

Let me first thank the briefers, and particularly commend UNMAS for its extraordinary work in the development of standards and policies as well as in the management of demining operations and in explosive ordnance threat mitigation.

Mr. President,

As the briefers have demonstrated, attacks with improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are a threat to security and development. They can also strongly impact the work of peacekeeping operations. Too many lives have been lost among peacekeepers. The recent wave of IED attacks in Mali targeting Minusma is of particular concern. We would like to take this opportunity to honour the memory of the victims and present our condolences to their families.

Belgium is convinced that a more integrated and broader approach is necessary to enhance our capacity to tackle the threat of IEDs. In our view, the following elements could improve our response:

*First*, we should ensure the safe management of ammunition stockpiles and the swift disposal of explosive remnants of war, which often provide the base material for IED production. In this regard, we should not lose track of the need to decontaminate legacy minefields.

*Second*, we should gain better insight in the trafficking routes for explosives precursor material. Legitimate trade or mining activities sometimes serve as starting point for this illicit trafficking. Peacekeeping operations and Panels of Experts can help gather knowledge on the IED supply chains. They should work closely together and consolidate information.

*Third*, on the basis of knowledge gained, we should take measures to prevent the diversion of precursors for the manufacture of IEDs.

*Fourth*, peacekeeping operations and other actors in the field should set up a system for the effective exchange of information on all incidents involving IEDs. This way, a shared knowledge base can be created which will help to adopt appropriate defensive measures and allow to remain up to speed on the rapidly evolving techniques used in IED-attacks.

During its mandate as non-permanent member of the UNSC in 2019-2020, Belgium undertook to incorporate this approach when renewing the mandates of peacekeeping operations, including MINUSMA and MINUSCA.

In April 2019, my country organised, together with Poland and Germany, an Arria-formula meeting of the SC entitled “Explosive ordnance threat mitigation: For the implementation of a coherent and comprehensive response”. At that meeting our fellow citizen Major General Deconinck, former MINUSMA Force Commander, called for a broad “Counter-IED” strategy encompassing global control on ammunition, weapons, explosive ordnance and IED components and precursors. The UN Secretariat also formulated concrete proposals to improve pre-deployment training of peacekeepers, to consider mine action at the earliest stages of mission planning and to enhance the technical capabilities and techniques to address the threat of IED’s. These policies are sound and their implementation should be regularly evaluated in reports to the SC on peacekeeping operations.

Finally, Mr. President, more recently, during the negotiation of the C-34 report this month, my country stressed the importance of proper weapon and ammunition management by peacekeeping operations in line with the safety standards of the relevant UN manuals, policies and standard operating procedures. We also encouraged Member States and the Secretariat to better equip peacekeeping operations on weapons and ammunition management, to strengthen host government capacities, to address the proliferation of weapons and ammunition, prevent loss and other diversion of military equipment, including of possible pre-cursors for improvised explosive devices, and prevent accidental explosions. These elements were introduced in the C-34 report that has just been adopted by consensus.

My country also walks the talk, Mr. President, as Belgian Mobile Training Teams (MTT) work in support of MINUSMA, providing education and training in, among other things, Counter-IED and medical skills. Belgium also contributes to the equipment of the Group of Five Sahel Joint Force (FC-G5S) in C-IED material with 1.000.000 € (2018-2022). Furthermore, we support (200.000 EUR) the NATO Defense Capacity Building Package for UN Peacekeeping Training, specifically the Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices project.

I thank you.



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**STATEMENT BY LT. COL. RONALD BRUNSTING, DEPUTY MILITARY ADVISOR,  
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF NETHERLANDS TO THE  
UNITED NATIONS**

Thank you Ambassador Kimani for conveying this meeting and thanks to USG Lacroix, Lieutenant General Gyllensporre, Brigadier General Mwazighe, and Ms. Cohn for their very informative briefings on this important topic.

Our ability to secure the safety and security of UN peacekeepers is a prerequisite for mission performance and effective mandate implementation. An IED is an indiscriminate weapon. IED's do not only pose a threat to peacekeepers but also to the local population. The proliferation of the threat of IED's is therefore a serious concern that needs to be addressed with urgency.

To counter this threat is a shared responsibility between the host-states, the Troop and Police Contributing Countries and the United Nations.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands commends the DPO and UNMAS for their continuous efforts to address the threat of IEDs through the development and execution of in-mission training. However, It is important to underline that in-mission training cannot be a substitute for pre-deployment training and is only complementary to the training the peacekeepers at home.

We, Troop and Police Contributing Countries, share the responsibility with the UN to prepare our peacekeepers for the hostile environment they will operate in and must make sure the soldiers we deploy have received the training they need. We recognize counter-IED training requires knowledge and skills that might be not widely available. We therefore very much encourage member states to partner with UNMAS and deploy specialized mobile training teams to assist where needed.

Countering the threat of IED's requires an integrated approach and combined effort of all components in the mission together with the host state and security partners that are active in the region. It is especially important to understand and degrade the systems that facilitate and sustain the IED threat. We therefore encourage missions to strengthen their counter IED

response through the development of a common IED strategy together with the host state and other security partners operating in the area of operations.

Netherlands troops have operated in theaters where IED's posed the number one threat. Important lessons that have been drawn from that experience are the need for good intelligence on threats, and the realization that technology can significantly enhance safety and security but also requires soldiers to understand the functioning and limitations for proper usage.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands will continue to support the efforts of the UN to address the IED threat. I'm happy to announce we recently decided to continue our contribution of a subject matter expert to the UNMAS - Threat Mitigation Advisory Team with another two years. I also like to draw your attention to the preparatory conference the Netherlands will co-host with Pakistan in October where we will also address this important topic.

We encourage the UN, with support of the member states to:

- Further strengthen IED threat mitigation, including through well-coordinated pre-deployment training and capacity development.
- Ensure implementation of IED disposal standards and to support the UNMAS-Threat Mitigation Advisory Team.
- Strengthen centralized knowledge and analysis capabilities to better identify emerging threats, and enhance UN response and mitigation measures.

Finally, (as others have done before me) I would like to draw your attention to the high-level virtual event we are co-hosting with the UN this Monday. The event which marks the third anniversary of A4P will see the SG together with USG Lacroix tell us a little more about the plans for A4P plus. For your information, we already have over 300 registered participants and hopefully many more joining us through UN Webtv.

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Permanent Mission of Ecuador  
to the United Nations

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CRISTIAN ESPINOSA PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF ECUADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Excellencies,

Ecuador is honored to cosponsor this Arria Formula Meeting and thank Kenya as well as the other sponsors for their leadership on this matter. I also wish to express my delegation's appreciation to the briefers for their valuable presentations.

The efforts to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers are not only fundamental for their own protection but also for the protection of civilians and for the success of the United Nations Peace Operations.

For that reason, Ecuador cosponsored the Security Council Resolution 2518 adopted on 30 March 2020, which identified the security threats and targeted attacks against peacekeepers in many peacekeeping missions as a major challenge to the United Nations peacekeeping operations, including threats posed by improvised explosive devices.

Ecuador reiterates the need to strengthen uniformity of standards on performance through enhanced and in-depth training for peacekeepers to counter improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and to mitigate their threats.

Modern equipment and technology are also needed for the peacekeepers but need to be complemented with capacity building of governmental security forces at the national level. We cannot have one without the other.

Building partnerships and sharing good practices can help bridging capacity gaps.

Furthermore, an appropriate intelligence panorama of peacekeeping contexts can also provide preventive tools to better detect IEDs.

Dear colleagues,

Safety and security of peacekeepers would not be sufficiently preserved without providing a particular focus on IEDs and without addressing sufficiently the global threat posed by terrorism, in full compliance with international law.



Mine action should also continue to be mainstreamed into discussions, planning and mandates.

This challenge requires a collective response. Synergies from all principal Organs of the United Nations are needed. I therefore commend the report presented by the Secretary General as requested by the General Assembly periodic resolution on “countering the threat posed by IEDs” supported by Ecuador.

Ecuador will also address this threat during the Seventh Biennial Meeting of States on the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all aspects, whose preparatory process is also being very ably led by you, esteemed colleague, Ambassador Martin Kimani (Permanent Representative of Kenya).

To conclude, while we continue as an Organization working for a more robust response to IEDs, Ecuador underlines that the best way to ensure the protection of peacekeepers as well as of civilians is through additional and permanent efforts to implement the global ceasefire.

Ecuador is a country of Peace. However we have also suffered in the past from the use of IEDs by transnational organized crime. We understand their devastating effects and for that reason we are committed to support every effort of the Security Council to suppress the deployment of IEDs against peace operations.

Thank you very much.

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*Permanent Mission of Portugal  
to the United Nations*

**STATEMENT BY MR. PAULO GARCA, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF  
PORTUGAL TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to thank you for convening this meeting, which Portugal is proud to co-sponsor. I thank, as well, all of today's briefers.

Peacekeeping is one of the most effective tools available to the United Nations in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security. We all know that it comes at a heavy cost, and I would like to pay tribute to all the fallen and injured Blue Helmets.

In recent years, Improvised Explosive Devices have become the weapon of choice for many non-state armed groups across different conflicts, becoming one of the most serious threats to a considerable number of peacekeepers.

Inexpensive and easy to produce, IEDs allow lightly armed and barely trained militants to engage with better equipped forces, at minimum exposure.

We need to address this issue. Concurring with many of the concrete suggestions already put forward in this meeting, I would like to focus on training and information.

Knowledge of the country, the conflict, the groups involved and respective *modus operandi*, especially regarding the IEDs more commonly used, are essential to enhance safety and security in a peacekeeping operation.

Appropriate equipment, appropriate training before the deployment, information sharing and lessons learned during the induction training, once deployed to the Theatre of Operations, are vital for peacekeepers to identify and assess the threat posed by the IEDs and to take appropriate measures to improve this specific aspect of situational awareness.

A multidisciplinary strategy should be adopted. Alongside the ability to identify and inactivate the devices, we need also the capacity to foresee these threats – by gathering and sharing information regarding the agents, their intentions, capacities, motivations, techniques and tactics employed.

Similar training should also be provided to local and national authorities, developing the technical capacity to safely manage explosive's threat. The development of a nationwide

cooperation network, allowing joint actions to gather intelligence, monitor and dismantle the network of such disruptive operations across the country, should also be encouraged.

Mr. Chairman,

Portugal has a longstanding participation in peacekeeping operations. The safety and security of peacekeepers is a priority to which we will keep dedicating our full support.

I thank you.

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Permanent Mission  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
to the United Nations  
New York

**STATEMENT BY MR. MATHIAS LICHARZ, POLITICAL COORDINATOR,  
PERMANENT MISSION OF GERMANY TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Let me start by first thanking the Permanent Mission of Kenya [Amb. Dr. Martin Kimani] for organizing this ARRIA meeting on this crucial topic. Secondly, I would like to echo the previous speakers in thanking all briefers for their valuable inputs to the discussion.

Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) pose serious threats to UN missions as well as the local population. The high number of IED attacks is extremely concerning, specifically as these attacks are often being conducted by terrorist and criminal networks. The example of MINUSMA demonstrates that some peace operations have to deal with IEDs directed against civilians and our UN personnel on a daily basis. IEDs are a serious threat to the safety and security of peacekeepers; they hamper the movement of mission personnel and have a negative impact on the execution of the mission's mandate.

To counter these threats we must not focus on military and technical issues alone. We need to overcome organizational silos. We must think and act in a more coordinated and cooperative manner by including the capabilities and expertise of humanitarian, development, stabilization and peacekeeping actors.

I would like to stress some points from the operational perspective.

First, we want to mitigate IED threats at mission-level: Germany deploys a Weapons Intelligence Team (WIT) to MINUSMA (Gao, Mali). These experts investigate ammunition, weapons and IED incidents and provide standardized tactical, technical and forensic intelligence.

These insights feed back into the analysis of IED networks and help understand and counter these networks more effectively. The WIT also supports the United Nations Mine Actions Service (UNMAS) Counter-IED capacity building efforts by training and preparing peacekeepers.

In addition, Germany supports research into the sources and trade routes of IED components, e.g. in the Sahel region.

Second, we need to strengthen training efforts. For several years Germany has been providing Mobile Training Teams for Train-the-Trainer Counter-IED pre-deployment training for UN

Peacekeeping Operations. As an A4P Champion for Training and Capacity Building, Germany continues to support efforts to improve peacekeeper's safety, security and performance by training activities enabling fellow troop contributing countries to mitigate the threat of IEDs. We will continue these important training efforts as soon as the COVID-19 situation allows us to.

Third, when facing the imminent threat of IEDs, an integrated response to IED-threats is needed and decentralized embedded EOD teams in contingents are crucial to address the IED-threat on operations.

Lastly, we need to improve Ammunition Safety and Security. Ammunition is an important source of components for IEDs. The need to improve Ammunition Safety and Security has been recognized in numerous UNGA-Resolutions sponsored together by Germany and France.

UNGA 72 established a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus. The GGE will resume its work in 2021 under German chairmanship.

We are confident that the outcome of the GGE will contribute to improving Ammunition Safety and Security and thereby also to prevention of misuse of ammunition as source for IED components.

In addition, Germany supports many measures on Physical Safety and Stockpile Management (PSSM) of Arms and Ammunition in various affected regions, including Africa.

Beyond specific operational aspects, let me reaffirm Germany's strong commitment to addressing the threat of improvised explosive ordnance:

Having been among the top 5 donors in recent years, Germany contributed more than 55 million USD in funding to humanitarian mine action and stabilization in 2020 in 12 countries including those most affected: Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq and Syria.

As the host of this year's International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations Advisers and as the current Chair of the Mine Action Support Group, Germany's agenda is broad with a focus on how to prevent harm, protect civilians as well as ways to support victims of landmines and IEDs.

Beyond projects and programmes in the field, it is equally important to keep mine action on the agenda of the decision-making bodies of the United Nations, in particular the Security Council. Mine awareness and mine action are prerequisites to ensure the protection of people in need, quite often the most vulnerable. Effective mine action is a precondition for building lasting peace and sustainable development.

The International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action next week should serve as a reminder that we all must increase our efforts in striving for a world free of mines and improvised explosive devices.

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Permanent Mission of  
the Republic of Korea  
to the United Nations

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHO HYUN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

I want to thank you, Mr. Chair, for convening this timely meeting. My appreciation also goes out to all the briefers for their hard work addressing the pernicious challenge posed by Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

Mr. Chair,

The recent surge of IED attacks against UN peacekeepers is deeply concerning. Because of their unpredictable nature, IEDs constrain our peacekeepers' movement and complicate the mission environment. As such, we must respond collectively to mitigate this multifaceted threat. In this regard, I commend the Co-Chairs' effort in bringing much-needed international attention to an issue that is so urgent and daunting. Against this backdrop, I will briefly highlight the following three points.

**First**, we need to address the drivers of these IED attacks rather than merely managing their symptoms. Armed groups and terrorist organizations are using IEDs to leverage their political power. I would like to strongly emphasize the importance of accountability mechanisms. Anybody who carries out IED attacks should be held accountable. Investigations must be conducted swiftly and thoroughly to serve justice. Additionally, the UN should support the judicial process to prosecute perpetrators to the fullest extent possible and assist victims as appropriate.

**Second**, we must take an integrated and coherent approach to enhance the safety and security of UN peacekeepers. As a short-term measure, we need to improve situational awareness and immediate response capabilities. In this regard, I would like to reiterate the critical role of technology in identifying potential threats through surveillance and information gathering, as well as mitigating the effects of an attack through enhanced equipment. At the same time, longer-term strategic guidance should be put in place. In this vein, I look forward to the finalization and prompt implementation of the IED strategy by the Secretariat.

**Last but not least**, it is crucial to foster strong partnerships with key stakeholders. Our holistic efforts to counter the scourge of IEDs can only be successful when we develop and advance host countries' national capacity as well. Considering how civilian casualties far outnumber

those of uniformed personnel when it comes to IEDs, host countries and local communities should be able to address such threats.

Moreover, the UN should work closely with Troop and Police Contributing Countries to ensure that peacekeepers receive better equipment and training. For instance, pre-deployment and in-mission training should focus on mitigating IED threats. All Member States should also continue supporting such endeavors.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, the Republic of Korea highly commends the leadership of the Secretariat and the contribution of the troop and police-contributing countries. I would like to reaffirm our dedication to protecting our peacekeepers. As the host country of this year's Peacekeeping Ministerial and a troop and police-contributing country, the Republic of Korea is strongly committed to supporting our collective efforts throughout the preparation process and enhancing the safety and security of UN peacekeepers. Thank you. /END/

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**Permanent Mission of Sweden  
to the United Nations**



**Permanent Mission of Iceland  
to the United Nations**



**PERMANENT MISSION  
OF NORWAY  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**



**PERMANENT MISSION  
OF DENMARK TO THE UN**



**Permanent Mission of Finland  
to the United Nations**

### **STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARTIN BILLE HERMANN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF DENMARK TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Chair, Dr. Kimani,

On behalf of the Nordic countries – Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark – I want to thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Lieutenant-General Gyllensporre, Brigadier Mwazighe and Deputy Director Cohn for their insightful briefings this afternoon

New actors and new conflict dynamics have emerged and the use of improvised explosive devices, IEDs, has increased. The threat from IEDs is present in many conflict zones whether in the shape of a homemade landmine, a boobytrap inside a building, or a suicide bomber.

The Nordic countries believes in the necessity of practicing multilateralism through contributions to UN peace operations and supports reform efforts to improve this crucial part of our common toolbox.

We support improving the safety and security of peacekeepers as one of the Action for Peacekeeping's central priorities, and we commend Lieutenant- General Gyllensporre's implementation of this in MINUSMA. We are following up on this commitment in the field: One example is Norway's contribution to the strengthening of MINUSMA's capacity to investigate IED incidents through its specialized police team.

The challenges stemming from IEDs are complex and multifaceted. Mitigating this threat requires a broad spectrum of integrated efforts.

From adequate pre-deployment and in-mission training of peacekeepers, survey and clearance operations, stockpile management, to development of standards and guidance on risk assessment and threat mitigation, to victim assistance and the prevention of violent extremism.

Getting rid of this complex challenge will require a long-term commitment from donors and affected countries. The Nordic countries have a long tradition for contributing to such efforts.

The Nordic countries support the efforts of UNMAS to protect UN peacekeepers from explosive threats and direct attacks, and Nordic humanitarian NGOs are at the forefront of global mine action, both through the survey and clearance of explosives from the ground, and by setting standards for the entire sector.

IEDs form a long-lasting and severe humanitarian threat even after the actual hostilities have ended. They are difficult and slow to clear even for the most

experienced demining actors. Several Nordic countries thus pay special attention to mitigating this threat through their donor funding.

Persistent and predictable donor commitments are essential. There will be no “finishing the job” without “financing the effort”.

The Nordic countries contribute financially to system-wide UN mine action in many countries.

In Somalia, Finland directs part of their funding to safe and secure stockpile management in order to prevent the proliferation of materiel to terrorists and armed groups, and Sweden supports UNMAS’ work on IEDs through the UNSOS Trust Fund. And, I am proud to mention that for more than a decade, Denmark has hosted an annual international explosive ordnance disposal course, conducted in cooperation between a civil society organisations and the military.

In Kenya, Denmark and Sweden have for years partnered with Brigadier Mwazighe’s International Peace Support Training Centre to bolster the Centre’s efforts.

Curbing the deadly impact of IEDs on UN peace operations will require determination, innovation and unified efforts. Let me assure you that this will

continue to be a Nordic priority. Thank you.

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# Costa Rica



MISIÓN PERMANENTE ANTE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS / PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

## STATEMENT BY H.E MARITZA CHAN, AMBASSADOR, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COSTA RICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Thank you, Mr. President

Costa Rica joins others in thanking the speakers for their presentations and reiterates that addressing Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), is a multidimensional and complex challenge –with both security and humanitarian dimensions– and one which States and the UN have a common interest to contribute and seek effective responses.

In this regards, Mr. President let me reiterate two aspects of importance:

First, Costa Rica recognizes that the best means of countering the threat of IEDs lies in prevention through addressing IED networks. Defeating the device itself only represents the last line of defence. If we are unable to break the attack cycle before the IEDs are emplaced, we have already lost much of the fight. Simply increasing passive protection, including vehicle armour, also makes a limited impact and often leads to an endless escalation of IED potency, often exposing civilians to greater risk of harm.

Attacking the IED network is paramount, but requires enhanced intelligence collection and analysis capabilities, as well as efficient information sharing. Developing a post blast investigation and exploitation capability, both within UN missions and host nations, is a critical part of this enhanced information capability and would greatly support bringing war criminals to justice. The United Nations and States with a long history of C-IED culture could greatly facilitate the development of this capability. Deploying route clearance units and the use of jamming equipment for UN vehicles operating in high-risk areas should also be considered, particularly where Radio Controlled IEDs are prevalent.

Second, Costa Rica is concerned that a full and comprehensive approach to addressing IEDs has been lacking. We are also troubled by the deficiencies in equipment, medical capacities and training shortfalls, which can increase the risks for the safety and security of peacekeepers. We strongly recommend C-IED Awareness training as a mandatory part of pre-deployment training. In keeping with the principle that everyone is a sensor, we suggest that training be obligatory for all mission staff, regardless of rank or position. Further, additional in-country training should be provided within 2 weeks of staff arrival to assigned posts. This serves in providing mission-specific, up-to-date training and supports standardized practices and force integration. The UN should facilitate partnership and collaboration among T/PCCs,

pairing States who require C-IED training specialists and can provide Mobile Training Teams to support pre-deployment and in-country training for those in need.

Mr. President,

In closing, Costa Rica reiterates the need to provide PKO with on-demand specialized training and mentoring, capacity-building and guidance, enhanced security threat assessment and appropriate equipment such as armored vehicles and medical kits, combined with reliable and cost-effective technologies that are constantly reviewed and upgraded.

I thank you.

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**STATEMENT BY COLONEL HOSOKAWA YOSHINOBU MILITARY ADVISER,  
PERMANENT MISSION OF JAPAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I thank the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya and the other co-hosts for convening this important meeting.

Today I would like to highlight two critical elements to mitigate the threats of IED in Peace Operations: capacity-building and ISR.

First, adequate training and capacity-building in the areas of counter-IED and EOD should be provided to host state authorities as well as to troop and police contributors.

In this regard, we highly value the role of national peacekeeping centers including IPSTC, which are serving as regional hubs of training and capacity-building for peacekeepers.

In addition, the role of the UN Mine Action Service, UNMAS, is critical. We have supported the efforts of UNMAS to provide capacity-building support to the relevant authorities in the countries which are hosting UN Peace Operations, including Somalia, Afghanistan and South Sudan.

For example, in February this year, Japan decided to contribute over 4 million US dollars to UNMAS for enhancing the counter-IED and EOD capabilities of the Somali Police Force. We hope this support will improve the safety and security of UN and AU personnel, the Somali government's security officers, and the people of Somalia.

Second, UN Peace Operations should have adequate capabilities to conduct ISR.

In particular, enhancing situational awareness by utilizing innovative technologies and integrated analysis and planning across civilian, military and police components is essential to better handle the threats of IEDs.

Japan stands ready to support the strengthening of ISR capabilities of troop and police contributors including through our 1.3-million-dollar contribution to the UN C4ISR Academy.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.

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AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

E-mail [australia@un.int](mailto:australia@un.int)150 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, New York NY 10017-5612 Ph 212 - 351 6600 Fax 212 - 351 6610 [www.australia-unscc.gov.au](http://www.australia-unscc.gov.au)**STATEMENT BY H.E. THE HON. MITCH FIFIELD, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRALIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Thank you to Kenya and the many co-hosts for convening this Arria formula meeting today.

Australia remains gravely concerned by the increasing prevalence of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in peacekeeping settings. The indiscriminate use of IEDs, including in complex attacks on peacekeeping personnel and infrastructure, poses a serious threat to safety and security. It also hinders the ability of missions to achieve their mandates and reduces access to political participation, detracting from efforts to find peace and stability.

Civilians also continue to face devastating impacts from the use of IEDs – causing death and disability and limiting access to education and healthcare. These impacts have been felt even more sharply in the context of the pandemic.

For Australia, our operational experiences have made us keenly aware of the physical and mental health impacts of IEDs on victims and their communities. These operational experiences also inform Australia's sponsorship – with Afghanistan and France – of the regular General Assembly resolution Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices.

Too often, peacekeeping missions with an IED threat are not adequately equipped with the capabilities and expertise needed to mitigate that threat. For this reason, we must continue to employ new technologies, apply a gender-sensitive approach and strengthen peacekeeping intelligence, to prevent and respond to the use of IEDs.

Australia is proud of our ongoing partnership with the UN Mine Action Services (UNMAS), and I want to recognize the critical work it does in both peacekeeping and humanitarian contexts.

Since 2019 Australia has provided over \$25m (AUD) to mine action projects with UNMAS and other partners. We supported the development of the UN's first IED Disposal Standards in 2018 – an important step towards a common understanding of requirements in the field. Australia also supported the development and translation of UN guidelines on gender in mine action, and monitoring and evaluation tools.

Since 2019, Australia has also provided funding to the development of an IED-Threat Mitigation Advisory Team (TMAT). This team is designed to strengthen the capacity of peacekeeping missions to detect and rapidly respond to IEDs, particularly in Mali and Somalia. We are encouraged by recent progress in Mali, where the percentage of IEDs detected and cleared by UN peacekeepers has steadily increased in recent years.

In closing, colleagues, Australia remains strongly committed to countering the threat posed by IEDs. We reiterate the importance of holding to account perpetrators of attacks and bringing them to justice. As asymmetric threats grow, we must continue to improve the tools and capabilities available to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers and the civilians they are mandated to protect.

Thank you.

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**STATEMENT BY MR. MARTIN MAINERO, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY,  
PERMANENT MISSION OF ARGENTINE REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

My delegation notes with concern that improvised explosive devices continue to pose a major threat to the execution of mandates and to peacekeepers. We acknowledge the efforts of the Member States and the Secretariat in developing a United Nations strategy to mitigate improvised explosive devices. In this sense, we value the development of the “DPKO Guidelines on improvised explosive device threat mitigation in mission settings” and the “United Nations improvised explosive device disposal Standards”. However, we consider that these initiatives need to be complemented.

In this regard, we encourage the Secretariat to provide a comprehensive risk analysis to the Security Council so that the Council can help design realistic mandates that are appropriate for the threat environment. In addition, to assist in the development of a strategy to combat improvised explosive devices, we encourage the Secretariat to include troop and police contributing countries.

During the 2021 substantive period of sessions of the United Nations Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the negotiating group ABUM (Brazil, Uruguay, Mexico and Argentina) proposed, in the chapter on "Safety and Security", to establish a new methodology to counteract the use of IEDs. The proposal was reflected in paragraph 164 of the Committee's report (document A / 75/19). This methodology involves the deployment, in cooperation with UNMAS, of mobile training units whose objective is to develop the capacities of troop and police contributing States, where relevant and upon their request, for the detection and elimination of IEDs.

We strongly support this recommendation of the Special Committee and we highlight the need to make it effective, by encouraging the participation of UNMAS and Member States with relevant experience in the field of combating IEDs.





Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

**STATEMENT BY MR ADRIAN HAURI, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr. President,

I thank Kenya and the other co-sponsors for convening this meeting and the briefers for their insights. The beginning of 2021 was indeed bleak for UN peacekeepers. Switzerland joins the Security Council and Member States in condemning the killing of and all acts of violence against UN personnel and calls for appropriate accountability measures. Such attacks may constitute a war crime.

Let me highlight two priorities for Switzerland to reduce the threat posed by IEDs:

First, safe and secure management of ammunition is critical. Host government ammunition stockpiles are often a source of explosives for IEDs. Switzerland pursued a political initiative on this issue already in 2015, and provided technical support to countries such as Mali and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Host governments need more support to identify and dispose of surplus ammunition and develop sustainable national capacities. In this regard, the *UN International Ammunition Technical Guidelines* provide a useful framework.

Through ammunition leaks, Contingent Owned Equipment can equally become IEDs targeted at peacekeepers. Swiss experts contributed to develop and currently support the implementation of the *UN Manual on Ammunition Management*. Switzerland calls on the Security Council to strengthen ammunition management measures when mandating and implementing peace operations.

Second, in the aftermath of recent conflicts, abandoned explosive ordnance has fallen into the hands of armed groups and become a source of IEDs. Explosive ordnance, mines and IEDs found in the theatre of operation must be safely and rapidly cleared. Switzerland provided expertise to elaborate the *UN Military Engineer Unit & Counter Explosive Threat Search and Detect Manual* and currently supports the development of training material. We call on the Security Council to consider the rapid control over abandoned stockpiles and clearance of explosive ordnance in peace operation mandates.

In line with resolution 2518 (2020), Switzerland supports UN standardization efforts as well as robust pre-deployment training. In this regard, we would be interested in hearing from the Force Commander of MINUSMA how these Manuals are being implemented in Mali.

Mr. President,

Peacekeeping missions are one of the most effective tools of the Security Council, and force protection is in this regard of paramount importance. Switzerland remains committed to enhancing the safety and security of peacekeepers, and will continue to highlight its importance in our first-ever bid for a seat on the Security Council.

I thank you.

Monsieur le Président,

Je tiens à remercier le Kenya et les autres co-parrains pour l'organisation de cette réunion ainsi que l'oratrice et les orateurs pour leurs présentations. Le début de l'année 2021 a effectivement été sombre pour les casques bleus de l'ONU. La Suisse se joint au Conseil de sécurité et aux États membres pour condamner les assassinats et tous les actes de violence visant le personnel de l'ONU, et demande des mesures de reddition des comptes appropriées. De telles attaques pourraient constituer un crime de guerre.

Permettez-moi de souligner deux priorités suisses afin de réduire la menace posée par les engins explosifs improvisés (EEI):

Premièrement, la gestion sûre et sécurisée des munitions est essentielle. Les stocks de munitions des gouvernements hôtes sont souvent une source d'explosifs pour les EEI. Dès 2015, la Suisse a entrepris une initiative politique sur cette question, et a fourni un soutien technique à des pays comme le Mali et la Bosnie-Herzégovine. Les gouvernements hôtes ont besoin de plus de soutien pour identifier et éliminer les munitions excédentaires et développer des capacités nationales durables. À cet égard, les *Directives techniques internationales de l'ONU sur les munitions* constituent un cadre utile.

En cas de fuites de munitions, les matériels appartenant aux contingents peuvent également devenir des EEI visant les casques bleus. Des experts suisses ont contribué à l'élaboration du *manuel de l'ONU sur la gestion des munitions*, et soutiennent actuellement sa mise en œuvre. La Suisse appelle le Conseil de sécurité à renforcer les mesures de gestion des munitions lorsqu'il mandate et met en œuvre des opérations de paix.

Deuxièmement, à la suite de conflits récents, des munitions explosives abandonnées sont tombées entre les mains de groupes armés et ont servi à l'élaboration d'EEI. Les munitions explosives, les mines et les EEI trouvés sur le théâtre d'opérations doivent être éliminés rapidement et en toute sécurité. La Suisse a fourni une expertise pour l'élaboration du *manuel de l'ONU de recherche et de détection de l'unité du génie militaire et de la lutte contre les menaces explosives*, et soutient actuellement le développement de matériel de formation. Nous demandons au Conseil de sécurité d'envisager le contrôle rapide des stocks abandonnés et l'élimination des munitions explosives dans les mandats des opérations de paix.

Conformément à la résolution 2518 (2020), la Suisse soutient les efforts de standardisation de l'ONU ainsi qu'une formation solide avant le déploiement. À cet égard, nous serions intéressés d'entendre le commandant de la force de la MINUSMA nous expliquer comment ces manuels sont mis en œuvre au Mali.

Monsieur le Président,

Les missions de maintien de la paix sont l'un des outils les plus efficaces du Conseil de sécurité, et la protection de la force est à cet égard d'une importance primordiale. La Suisse reste engagée en faveur du renforcement de la sûreté et sécurité des casques bleus, et nous continuerons à en souligner l'importance dans le cadre de notre toute première candidature à un siège au Conseil de sécurité.

Je vous remercie.

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**PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MICHAL MLYNÁR PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF SLOVAKIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

We appreciate the effort by Kenya and other co-hosts in organizing this important debate, which could serve as a call for common action to explore ways of reducing the impact of risks and threats of IEDs and to enhance the safety and security of peacekeepers.

Mr. Chair,

I would like to stress that the protection of our peacekeepers from use of IEDs, as part of force protection, is an area where there is a real need to strengthen mutual cooperation and coordination. The threat of IEDs in the conflicts is real and this is not a new phenomenon to us. Unfortunately, Slovakia is one of the states that lost members of its armed forces as a result of IEDs attacks (Iraq and Afghanistan).

While we recognize that there is a sufficient military expertise and experience on how to improve pre-deployment training, employ effective tactics, techniques and procedures as well as new technologies, we would also like to highlight the need to focus our attention on prevention of the IEDs use and necessity to adopt measures in so-called “left of boom” space.

Counter IEDs (C IEDs) is another phenomenon that confirms the importance of the mission’s preparedness and situational awareness, closer contact with local communities and legitimate use of intelligence in peacekeeping. In cases where the population feels safe, understands and supports mandates of missions, it is much more likely to help us degrade the networks and prevent IEDs attacks.

Let me underline that besides the need for pre-deployment training of the Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs), our support for the preparation and training of national capacities in the field of C IEDs as part of the Security Sector Reform (SSR) process would also support IEDs threat mitigation. Already for many years, Slovakia has identified SSR to be one of the key elements for effective conflict prevention and successful post-conflict rebuilding and stabilization.

Mr. Chair,

In the context of our discussion I would like to stress that other international organizations offer to the UN support and cooperation in the field of C IEDs training. I would also like to mention that on the basis of the recently concluded Special UN Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34) negotiations, recommendations have been formulated concerning safety, security and partnership focused on more effective training, reduction of caveats, use of technology and intelligence in peacekeeping operations.

At the same time, it is necessary to underline that IEDs threats continues to evolve, as evidenced by the increasing use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) by militants. These new realities will require the adaptation of peacekeeping operations in response to these new threats.

Mr. Chair,

It's my pleasure to state that in Slovakia recently contributed to the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, which was established by the General Assembly to act as an accountable, fast-track, low-cost mechanism to rid the world of the threat of landmines. Slovakia has also provided a financial contribution to the IEDs Threat Mitigation Advisory Team project as well as to the UNMAS project addressing the threat posed by explosive ordnance in Iraq.

I'm convinced that the IEDs threats can be reduced by enhancing troop and police contributing capabilities and putting mitigation measures in place. New technologies offer some solutions that will assist these efforts. However, if our efforts are to be effective, a comprehensive approach that incorporates revised policies and systems is needed in order to integrate the technologies into operations. In this context, it is of critical importance to strengthen peacekeeping personnel's safety and security and their ability to implement the mission's mandates.

I thank you.

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MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE EL SALVADOR  
ANTE LA ORGANIZACIÓN DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR EGRISLDA LÓPEZ PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF EL SALVADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

I would like to join previous speakers in thanking the organizers for convening this important Arria-Formula Meeting and for providing El Salvador an opportunity to share its views on this relevant topic.

My country has a long history of supporting the United Nations as a troop-and-police-contributing country. Currently, I can proudly express that we have peacekeepers deployed in six United Nations Peace Operations across the globe.

Our largest participation in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) coincides with it being the Peace Operation -for the sixth year in a row- that suffered the greatest number of peacekeeper deaths, including as a result of deliberate attacks carried out with improvised explosive devices.

For this reason, El Salvador fully shares the concerns expressed about the serious problems caused by the deployment of improvised explosive devices. In order to mitigate the risks posed by this threat for Peace Operations, we would like to share the following recommendations:

First, we would like to encourage the Security Council to ensure that peace operations are adequately equipped and trained to reduce the threat posed by improvised explosive devices. This would improve the safety and performance of peacekeepers and potentially increase their ability to protect civilians and develop national capacities for responding to the threat.

Second, from a tactic point of view, we believe that the best way to combat improvised explosive devices is to maintain a constant vigilance of the logistic road network in order to early detect the explosive device and eliminate the element of risk on military convoys, as well as to protect the civilian local population. In that sense, we encourage contributing countries to participate with Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) or other type of surveillance technology to cooperate with the United Nations Peace Operations, in order to eradicate the insertion of improvised explosive devices on the road networks, preventing troop loses and supporting the logistical efforts.

Finally, and against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, we believe that countering the threats posed by improvised explosive devices requires robust commitment and international cooperation among the States, international and regional organizations and the private sector.

In this sense, El Salvador calls upon the different stakeholders to demonstrate its commitment in addressing the threats that improvised explosive devices pose to peace operations and civilians. At the same time, allow me to assure you that you can count on El Salvador's continued engagement for this issue.

I thank you.

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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR DR. MUHAMMAD SHAHID AMIN KHAN, WORLD CHAIR, INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION #IHRC**

Excellency Chairman,

Thank you for your kindness, by giving me the floor to pay my tribute to our peacekeepers and contribute my thoughts in this important gathering of UN Permanent Mission.

The use of IEDs is an increasing threat. Their impact on domestic security, confidence in public institutions, humanitarian response, peace and stability operations, and regional stability, and their links to terrorist and criminal networks all illustrate that addressing IEDs is a multifaceted challenge to which States have a common interest to seek effective responses.

IEDs pose a particular challenge to the arms control and security community – they are an explosive tool of violence that can be made with commercial, dual-use or industrial materials and are used predominantly by irregular forces. This means that our traditional set of tools and processes are not necessarily the most adapted to addressing the problem.

An international response to IEDs requires the attention and commitment of a variety of stakeholders – from governments and militaries, to humanitarian, operational and other specialized agencies, to industry and to research organizations and advocacy groups. Addressing IEDs requires not only a diverse community of practitioners, but also a variety of different processes and approaches. The question before us is how to get the most out of these processes, build upon them, strengthen them and to address remaining gaps.

The threat of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) is a serious global problem. IEDs impact security, safety, stability, humanitarian and peace operations, and sustainable development in communities around the world. Addressing IEDs is a multifaceted challenge – with both security and humanitarian dimensions – and one which States and the UN have a common interest to seek effective responses.

An international response to IEDs requires the attention and commitment of a variety of stakeholders – from governments and militaries, to humanitarian, operational and other specialized agencies, to industry and to research organizations and advocacy groups. Addressing IEDs requires not only a diverse community of practitioners, but also a variety of different processes and approaches. The question is how to get the most out of these processes, build upon them, strengthen them and address gaps.

While recognizing the primary role of Member States of UN in addressing the threat of IEDs, we have to explore how the UN system as a whole can more effectively contribute by addressing following questions:

- How can UN processes and actors play a stronger or more active role in addressing IEDs?
- Is greater coordination within the UN necessary to achieve this?



- How could the UN better support national, regional and international efforts to address IEDs, and where could the UN show greater leadership as a globally representative institution?

Initial surveying of the IED issue within the UN framework suggests three main potential areas where the UN system's processes and actors could play a more active role to address the threat of IEDs and reduce their impact:

- Sharing and consolidating knowledge, raising awareness and stigmatizing IED use against civilians;
- Supporting the strengthening of national efforts to reduce the IED threat; and
- Empowering and better utilizing the UN framework for a more coherent approach to addressing IEDs.

The UN has an important role to play in addressing both the security and humanitarian impacts of IEDs. Its unique position as a global institution cannot be overemphasized. A coordination framework or mechanism within the UN system would bring together the relevant processes and actors—including in peacekeeping, counter-terrorism, humanitarian relief, IHL, human rights, disarmament, research and others—in order to strengthen knowledge of and linkages between these entities and their IED-related activities. Such a mechanism would be essential to the development of a more coherent UN strategy.

Through utilizing existing avenues and exploring new approaches, greater cooperation among all relevant stakeholders could result in multiplier effects, pooling of resources, enlargement of participation, and enhanced effectiveness. Thus active UN support for and participation in addressing IEDs should be encouraged.

International Human Rights Commission #IHRC appreciate the efforts of the member countries for their contribution in UN peacekeeping troops to rescue the humanity from conflicts and applauded the Peacekeepers for risking their lives to saving humanity.

We firmly stand with the our brave people of Blue Helmets and belts , who are sacrificing for humanity and challenging the great threats to peace and security, I may suggest that the UN must get onboard the civil society organizations with the Peacekeepers for awareness and training purpose, which can lead the good partnership to combat the threats of IED.

Mr. Chairman, once again thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Human Rights Commission #IHRC to contribute our vision towards the threats which our Peacekeepers are facing day by day.

## CONCLUSION

Peacekeepers are faced with multifaceted challenges in their operational contexts. With the increasing complexity of conflicts and their protracted nature, the importance of protecting the protectors cannot be gainsaid.

In 2017, the Security Council through resolution 2365 expressed concern on the threat associated by the indiscriminate use of improvised explosive devices, including by terrorists, to the civilian population and peacekeeping personnel. Further, it highlighted the primary role of States, as well as the UN System in the mitigation of dangers posed to civilians by landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices.

In 2020, the Security Council through its resolution 2518 not only underscored the importance of the safety and security of peacekeepers but called on the Secretary-General, the T/PCC and Member States to work together to ensure that missions are adequately resourced and all peacekeepers in the field are willing, capable and equipped. Various initiatives such as the Secretary-General's "Action for Peacekeeping" have placed similar emphasis on the safety and security of peacekeepers.

It is in this light that primacy should be placed towards a whole of UN system approach to protect the UN peacekeeper by eliminating these evolving threats posed by IEDs. With the aforementioned recommendations proffered by the United Nations and Members States, it is paramount that all stakeholders remain contemporary to the evolving threats and advocate for the continued reinforcements in both technological and financial support to ensure that peacekeepers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are risk averse and capable to implement their mandates.

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