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Chair: Mr. Woszczek (Vice-Chair) (Poland)

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In the absence of Ms. Joyini (South Africa), Mr. Woszczek (Poland), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

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

1. **Mr. Salah** (Tunisia) said that peacekeeping operations should be governed by the principles of the United Nations Charter and should adhere to the basic principles of peacekeeping, namely consent of the parties, impartiality and non-use of force except in self-defence and in defence of the mandate. Operations should have clear mandates and specific objectives. Coordination should be strengthened at all levels, with a view to helping countries lay the foundations for peace. Human rights regulations must be respected, especially those pertaining to gender-based violence and sexual assault.

2. Women's participation in peacekeeping and post-conflict environments should be increased in order to improve interactions with vulnerable groups, such as women and children. For its part, Tunisia was seeking to strengthen women's participation among its peacekeepers to reflect the leading role that women played in all fields, including peacebuilding and security.

3. Given the importance of the Organization's cooperation with the African Union on peacekeeping, adequate financial resources should be made available to strengthen that partnership.

4. **Mr. Muhith** (Bangladesh) said that effective mandate delivery required national ownership, consent of the parties, mutual trust between the mission and the host country and adequate resources. Digital technologies could be a crucial enabler for the protection of civilians, strategic communications, situational awareness, peacekeeping intelligence and countering armed attacks against peacekeepers. However, those technologies must be used responsibly, in coordination with the host country. A whole-of-mission approach was important for effective strategic communications, which played a critical role in easing tensions, reducing violence against civilians and combating misinformation and disinformation against peacekeeping missions.

5. The Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation Training emphasized comprehensive predeployment training to fully prepare the country's peacekeepers to serve. Bangladesh was ready to provide

training support to other troop- and police-contributing countries.

6. With a view to ensuring that peacekeeping operations made a lasting impact, efforts should be made to strengthen peacebuilding components throughout the operation lifecycle, including transition. Quick-impact projects played a critical role in that regard.

7. While host Governments were responsible for ensuring that those who committed crimes against peacekeepers were held accountable, all stakeholders needed to reinvigorate efforts to that end. Bangladesh maintained a zero-tolerance policy in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse. In 2023, it had pledged to contribute \$50,000 to the trust fund in support of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. Bangladesh had also advocated for measures to reduce the environmental footprint of United Nations peacekeeping, promoting the use of renewable energy and natural fibres in peacekeeping operations.

8. Bangladesh had been gradually increasing the number of women involved in peacekeeping operations, including in leadership positions. The Department of Operational Support should continue its efforts to reduce barriers to the participation of women in mission settings.

9. **Mr. Benard Estrada** (Guatemala) said that, while responsibility for the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel and equipment primarily fell to the host country, continued efforts were needed to adopt suitable measures to ensure that those responsible for attacks against peacekeepers were brought to justice. Guatemala was also concerned about frequent violations of status-of-forces agreements at several missions, which restricted mobility and kept peacekeepers from fulfilling their mandates.

10. The mandates of certain missions, such as the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), had failed to bring about successful transitions. Guatemala was concerned that the Security Council had not been able to adopt realistic mandates addressing the root causes of certain conflicts. It hoped that the withdrawal of MINUSMA would not adversely affect the protection of civilians.

11. All missions, including those in transition, must be provided with adequate resources. The Peacebuilding Commission should continue to act as a strategic advisor to the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to promote a coherent,

coordinated and strategic approach to peacekeeping and peacebuilding, especially at the transition stage.

12. Since 1999, considerable progress had been made towards expanding the scope of protection of civilian mandates, including through the efforts of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. That Committee provided an essential forum for consensus-building among troop- and police-contributing countries, the primary actors in the mandates of all peace operations, thereby promoting their sense of ownership.

13. Every effort should be made to develop a policy of zero national caveats for peacekeeping missions. Guatemala would continue to contribute military contingents as well as training for its personnel and personnel from the Central American region, with no national caveats.

14. **Mr. Sakowicz** (Poland) said that his country was concerned that the mandates of peacekeeping operations were increasingly being impeded by geopolitical tensions and competition between permanent members of the Security Council. Every effort should be made to ensure that peacekeeping operations could fulfil their tasks without unnecessary uncertainty regarding the future of the mission.

15. Rapidly evolving security environments posed new challenges for peacekeeping. Better-tailored mandates, more effective engagement strategies, a stronger focus on the safety and security of peacekeepers and civilians, as well as efforts to tackle hybrid threats, such as disinformation attacks, were needed. Effective coordination with civilian components on the ground was also essential. Notwithstanding the progress already made, a more coherent approach to conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities was needed.

16. The withdrawal of a United Nations peacekeeping operation or special political mission posed a serious challenge to the peace continuum. Poland supported all actions to make transition processes more effective and more coherent, as those processes were vital to sustaining the peace agenda. It would closely monitor the impact of the withdrawal of MINUSMA on the humanitarian situation, protection of civilians, elections and implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. Transition and peacebuilding considerations should be built into the initial mandate of every mission.

17. **Mr. Sowa** (Sierra Leone) said that peacekeeping operations should be subject to continuous review in a holistic manner, based on their record of conflict

prevention, maintenance of peace and security, crisis management and post-conflict stabilization, with a view to addressing a wide range of operational, financial, humanitarian and other issues with a global impact.

18. Sierra Leone valued the role of women in peacekeeping and was one of the few countries that had met the 30 per cent target for United Nations military experts on mission and staff officers, with a view to achieving gender equality.

19. Amid rising geopolitical tensions and insecurity, peacekeeping missions must be provided with clearly defined mandates and adequate resources based on a realistic assessment of the situation. Peacekeeping operations must be significantly more integrated and should leverage the full range of civilian capacities and expertise across the United Nations and its partners under a system of networked multilateralism and strengthened partnerships. Furthermore, climate policies needed to be mainstreamed to enable peacekeeping missions to tackle the challenges of climate change and related operational difficulties. The United Nations should also support peace operations led by regional organizations, such as the African Union, through sustained, predictable and flexible funding to ensure that they had adequate resources.

20. **Ms. Badjie** (Gambia) said that the unprecedented threats to peace of the time required multilateral solutions and renewed commitment. Responding to emerging challenges and evolving threats to the safety of peacekeepers required innovative approaches as well as constant improvements to training and mission preparedness.

21. The Gambia welcomed efforts to facilitate cooperation among troop- and police-contributing countries to bridge capacity and capability gaps, which was key to improving overall performance. In February 2023, the Governments of the Gambia and Bangladesh had entered into an arrangement to deploy a joint military contingent to a peacekeeping mission. Since then, the two countries had engaged at the political, tactical and operational levels to map out a common deployment plan and thereby ensure that the initiative would be as effective as possible. The Gambia hoped that the co-deployment model would become a new paradigm for peacekeeping and would exemplify how stronger partnerships among Member States could improve how peacekeeping operations were conducted.

22. In recent years, relationships between certain host countries and the Security Council had deteriorated, eroding the consent of the parties in some field missions. A failure to reverse that trend would leave room for misinformation and disinformation, placing the

credibility of United Nations peacekeeping under undue stress. The Security Council should engage host States in consultative discussions when drafting mandates to foster a sense of cooperation during implementation. Further efforts were also needed on the strategic communications front, with a view to setting realistic expectations and fostering a better understanding between missions and local communities. Host States should also uphold their commitments in status-of-forces agreements to create an enabling environment for peacekeeping missions.

23. Increasing the presence of women peacekeepers had led to better community engagement and better overall performance of field missions. The Gambia had accelerated efforts to increase female participation in peacekeeping by mainstreaming a gender perspective across its military and police deployments. It was working with several partners to provide its women officers with additional training and capacity-building so that they could embark on deployments in areas requiring specialised skills. Female officers accounted for 35 per cent of the country's military experts and staff officers.

24. The Gambia welcomed the collaboration between the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission to promote stronger partnerships to address matters of international peace and security in Africa. In line with the relevant Security Council resolutions, financing should be provided to support operations led by the African Union, which acted as a first responder to conflicts on the African continent.

25. **Mr. Llosa** (Peru) said that women played an important role in facilitating relationships with communities affected by violence and building close ties with civilians. Women accounted for 18 per cent of the country's peacekeeping personnel. Peru hoped to increase that figure to 20 per cent by 2024.

26. Peru had supported efforts to develop and promote regional coordination mechanisms and had hosted the First Latin American and Caribbean Conference on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in September 2022. The second such conference, held in September 2023 in Argentina, had led to the unanimous adoption of a statute for a Latin American and Caribbean network for cooperation in peacekeeping, which would help build capacities, foster an exchange of good practices and gradually eliminate barriers to the meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention and peacekeeping.

27. To make missions more efficient, better adapt them to the circumstances on the ground and bolster the safety and security of personnel, it was important to use

advanced technologies, establish quick response forces, provide modern medical support and alert systems and develop strategic deployment and evacuation plans. Owing to the significant increase in the use of improvised explosive devices, especially in the Sahel region, training in their detection and deactivation was essential. Since 2022, a contingent of Peruvian military officers specialized in the deactivation of explosive devices had been stationed with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

28. Troop-contributing countries must have up-to-date, accurate information on the expectations, challenges and specific requirements of missions. In turn, those countries must provide properly trained personnel, thereby facilitating their integration into host communities. Lastly, dialogue and cooperation between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries must be strengthened with a view to ensuring that peace operations had clear objectives, coherent strategies and innovative responses.

29. **Mr. Kim In Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that peacekeeping operations should be conducted on the basis of the principles of respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs, which were enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Major issues, including with regard to peacekeeping operations, were currently decided in the interests of a few members of the Security Council and not through close consultation with the concerned parties. That approach did not promote peace and security, as had been demonstrated by the situation in Afghanistan, where military occupation by the United States of America had resulted in the losses of hundreds of thousands of civilian lives and an unprecedented refugee crisis. To ensure that peacekeeping operations contributed to ending conflict and promoting peace, the authority and role of the General Assembly and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations should be enhanced, and high-handedness, arbitrariness and double standards should not be tolerated on the Security Council.

30. Actions that misused the name of the United Nations in pursuit of sinister political and military interests should never be overlooked. The United Nations Command in south Korea had been illegally established by the United States and had nothing to do with the United Nations administration, budget or any other aspect. Notwithstanding General Assembly resolution 3390 (XXX) on the dissolution of the United Nations Command, the United States insisted on keeping it in place with a view to perpetuating its occupation of south Korea and seeking hegemonic

dominance over the Asia-Pacific region. Immediate measures should therefore be taken to dismantle the United Nations Command in south Korea.

31. **Mr. Joseph Domingue Ngor Ndiaye** (Senegal) said that measures to address the increase in direct attacks against peacekeepers, particularly those involving improvised explosive devices, should be strengthened. Senegal remained committed to accountability for all crimes against peacekeepers, as recommended in Security Council resolution [2589 \(2021\)](#). Senegal fully supported the zero-tolerance policy on sexual abuse and exploitation by United Nations personnel, as had been demonstrated by its participation in the circle of leadership on the prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations operations.

32. Respect for and promotion of multilingualism in peacekeeping operations was imperative to their success. Accordingly, there should be a balance between languages in the publication of documents and in the selection of actors on the ground and at Headquarters.

33. As peacekeeping operations were deployed to areas where there was no peace left to keep and no State left to support, they were called upon to make significant contributions in such areas as restoring the authority of the State, providing basic social services and supporting political reforms and election processes. Despite their increasingly multidimensional nature, however, peace operations had fewer and fewer resources. Resources should be aligned to mission mandates and not the other way around. With a view to developing realistic, achievable mandates, mission needs, especially in terms of material resources, must be evaluated rigorously using objective and comprehensive information while taking into account operational conditions. Mission performance and credibility depended on it.

34. Prevention and mediation must be at the forefront of efforts to achieve a lasting peace. Africa must occupy a special place in United Nations policies and strategies on crisis prevention and resolution, as well as post-conflict reconstruction. Senegal commended the tangible progress made in the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in seeking political solutions to disputes in Africa. Predictable, sustainable and flexible financing mechanisms were critical for African Union peacekeeping operations authorized by the Security Council. Equally, special political missions should be strengthened through adequate funding.

35. **Mr. Marschik** (Austria) said that the need for United Nations peacekeeping had never been greater. The current reform process should be used to improve

and recalibrate peacekeeping and expand its toolbox to meet the demands of the contemporary world. Strengthened partnerships would be key to the Organization's ability to ensure that the right type of operation could be deployed as quickly and as effectively as possible wherever needed. Austria had been advocating for a new understanding of networked multilateralism on a global level, with much stronger coordination and cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. Networked multilateralism did not, however, mark a departure from United Nations peacekeeping. To achieve closer cooperation with the Organization's partners, the Secretariat would need to provide essential services, for instance by coordinating and establishing standards, providing information for mandate development, assisting with the establishment of missions on the ground, monitoring and ensuring accountability.

36. Closer cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations could leverage the comparative advantages of regional organizations and increase their ownership over missions. In that connection, African-led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council should be provided with sustainable funding.

37. Peacekeeping operations needed to take the interconnectivity of climate change and security into account. It was imperative that missions whose mandates included climate considerations, such as the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), had dedicated personnel and specialized training so that they could deliver on those climate mandates. Austria welcomed the work of the climate security mechanism towards strengthening capacity in that area. To further support this work, Austria had decided to financially contribute to that mechanism and serve on its joint steering committee.

38. Austria intended to gradually increase its contributions to United Nations peace efforts and would step up its training and capacity-building activities over the next few years. Greater investment in those areas would better support local ownership of missions and resilience against local and regional threats to peace and security.

39. **Mr. Abuzied Shamseldin Ahmed Mohamed** (Sudan) said that the increasingly complex nature of conflicts required stronger coordination between the United Nations, troop- and police-contributing countries and host Governments. The Sudan welcomed the preparation of policies and strategies reflecting multilateralism.

40. Peacekeeping operations must adhere to the basic principles of peacekeeping. Without the consent of the host country, peacekeeping operations could be considered acts of interference in internal affairs, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations. Impartiality was also essential, but a distinction must be made between impartiality and complicity with militias, especially in situations involving potential violations of international law. Force should not be used unless mandated or in self-defence. Peacekeeping missions should not be subjected to external pressures. Missions should be evaluated on a continuous basis to prevent and immediately rectify any mistakes that might occur.

41. Coordination between the host country and the mission was essential to overcoming obstacles and improving the overall performance of peacekeeping operations. In the light of the difficulties of operational environments, mandates should be realistic, adapted to the conditions on the ground and aligned with the host country's objectives. Experience had shown that mission credibility was adversely affected when missions did not rise to the aspirations of host communities. Therefore, negotiations over mandates of peacekeeping missions must consider the conditions and priorities of host countries and not the interests of certain countries. The success of a mission depended on its mandate and its budget; thus, missions must be supported with adequate resources. The languages spoken and the local culture also needed to be taken into account.

42. The Sudan was eager to achieve stability and security in the region. To that end, it would work with the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) to help it achieve its mandate in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

43. **Mr. Ray** (Nepal) said that Nepal was the second largest troop- and police-contributing country, and 6,300 of its personnel were currently deployed across 12 peacekeeping missions. Nepal had always responded to the calls of the United Nations, even at short notice and in the most difficult theatres, without any national caveats. In June 2023, Nepal had hosted the seventh international symposium of the Partnership for Technology in Peacekeeping, the first event of its kind to be held in South Asia.

44. The integration of peacebuilding and preventive strategies into peacekeeping facilitated the achievement of a lasting peace. It was essential to have a holistic and integrated approach to peacekeeping, so missions could complement nationally led political processes by addressing the root causes of conflict.

45. Mandates should be context-specific, sequenced, pragmatic and achievable. They must be grounded in a sustained, focused and meaningful dialogue among all stakeholders and supported with adequate human, financial, logistics and technological resources. Effective cooperation and coordination in the field and a whole-of-mission approach were necessary for the delivery of mission mandates.

46. National caveats, whether declared or undeclared, prevented timely and appropriate responses to urgent situations in the field and placed an additional burden on peacekeepers operating without such caveats. Nepal had consistently upheld a policy of no national caveats and called upon other countries to do the same.

47. Peacekeeping operations needed to have forward-looking transition and exit strategies so that they could adapt to rapidly evolving situations. Host countries should provide full support to peacekeeping personnel in the repatriation process.

48. It was important that Member States made their financial contributions in a timely manner. The Secretariat should settle any outstanding reimbursements to troop- and police-contributing countries.

49. In response to the recent surge in attacks against peacekeepers using improvised explosive devices, a threat mitigation strategy should be developed, and arrangements should be made for adequate force protection.

50. A nationally led peacebuilding process that was inclusive of women, young people and community leaders was indispensable for sustainable peace. Nepal was committed to achieving the targets set out in the gender parity strategy and to enforcing a zero-tolerance policy in cases of sexual exploitation or abuse. It was proud to have one of the top rates of participation of women peacekeepers.

51. Troop- and police-contributing countries should be provided with proportionate opportunity to serve in senior leadership positions in the field and at Headquarters, commensurate with their contributions.

52. **Mr. Costa Chaves** (Timor-Leste) said that evolving security threats were requiring peacekeeping operations to adapt quickly to different challenges on the ground. Such operations needed adequate planning, management and financial support, as well as sufficient time, resources and facilities for ensuring the health, well-being and safety of all peacekeepers. During mission drawdowns or transitions, peacekeeping operations should provide sufficient capacity-building support for arms control by the host country in order to

prevent violence and ensure the resiliency of peace agreements.

53. As a former host country, Timor-Leste had unique experience with peacekeeping operations, and was working to give back to the international community through its active involvement as a troop- and police-contributing country. His delegation commended the work undertaken as part of the network for regional cooperation to facilitate the training and assessment of peacekeepers, as well as the initiative to encourage joint deployments between developed and developing countries. Timor-Leste had established training centres and brought in certified United Nations instructors to train its military peacekeepers for deployment, and was in the process of establishing such centres for police officers. It was ready to engage with countries in the region to co-host predeployment training sessions and readiness assessments.

54. Women had made a positive impact on peacekeeping operations, especially in terms of community engagement. Timor-Leste continued to support all efforts towards gender equality in both its national police and defence forces. It had established specific departments to promote the development of skills that would enable women to perform their duties effectively. Women peacekeepers were prepared for command and front-line roles, where they provided valuable perspectives in planning operations and making key decisions, especially those affecting civilians, in particular women and girls. His country was fully committed to the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and would ensure that all Timorese personnel deployed had undergone gender-sensitive predeployment training.

55. **Mr. Moriko** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that adjustments to the architecture of peacekeeping operations were needed to make them more effective in achieving their mandates. His delegation welcomed the reforms undertaken by the Secretary-General and fully supported his New Agenda for Peace. It was concerned about hate speech and disinformation and misinformation campaigns, which were increasingly aimed at United Nations personnel in theatres of operation. Efforts were needed to reinforce strategic communication in missions and adopt innovative approaches to increase trust between them and local actors.

56. To address new and emerging threats, it was important to fully open peace and security processes to the participation of women and young people. In that regard, Côte d'Ivoire supported the initiatives aimed at promoting leadership by women at all levels of

peacekeeping. It had strengthened the role of women in its national peace and security architecture and had adopted a second national plan of action for implementing Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security, which was aimed at strengthening the participation of women in defence and security forces and peace missions, increasing the participation of women and girls in the prevention of intercommunal conflicts, and protecting women from gender-based violence.

57. **Mr. Stritt** (Switzerland) said that political solutions were essential in restoring and consolidating peace in regions affected by conflicts and crises. Such solutions needed to be inclusive, acceptable to all parties concerned and based on genuine social justice and full respect for human rights. In the ongoing withdrawal of United Nations missions from Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, preventing a resurgence of violence should remain the focus. In particular, it was essential for national authorities to assume their responsibilities in protecting civilians.

58. Peacekeeping missions should enjoy political support from the host country and be provided with adequate means to fulfil their mandates. Obstacles imposed by certain parties should not be tolerated, such as restrictions on freedom of movement, disinformation, violations of status-of-forces agreements and attacks on United Nations personnel. At the same time, more needed to be done to enhance the performance of peace operations. His delegation welcomed in that regard the widespread implementation of the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System. To increase the System's impact, the performance evaluation cycle should be coupled with the planning and budget cycles. The use of new technologies should also be encouraged, as they could improve surveillance and enable early warning of missions, allowing faster and more proportionate and effective reactions. In addition, accountability for violence committed against civilians or mission personnel needed to be further strengthened. Attacks against United Nations personnel could, in certain cases, amount to war crimes.

59. Lastly, a rethink was needed of the way the United Nations collaborated in peacekeeping with regional organizations in general, and with the African Union in particular. Predictable, sustainable and flexible funding for African Union-led peace support operations should be explored. Switzerland stood ready to support efforts to that end, notably in the Security Council.

60. **Ms. Zacarias** (Portugal) said that Portugal had consistently participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations and was currently engaged in

several missions, namely in the Central African Republic and South Sudan. Her country fully supported the United Nations reform agenda and the use of an integrated approach that combined peacekeeping with ambitious action aimed at promoting resilience, sustainable development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Closer interlinkage between peacekeeping forces and civilian capacities and expertise across the United Nations system and its partners was needed to make peacekeeping operations more effective and to increase local ownership.

61. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding should not be seen as separate moments in a peace process. The timely involvement of the Peacebuilding Commission in outlining and implementing transitions from peacekeeping operations could be an important step for their success. Her delegation commended recent initiatives regarding strategic communications in the context of peacekeeping operations, while highlighting the need to develop communication strategies from the inception of missions, rather than as an afterthought or in reaction to the growing challenge of disinformation.

62. The training of peacekeepers should be improved, both to enhance the effectiveness of operations and to ensure the protection of civilians against violence and abuses. Portugal had been steadily increasing its deployment of female peacekeepers, which contributed significantly to its understanding of the operational environment, its successful engagement with the population, greater social and cultural awareness in programmes and the empowerment of women in host countries.

63. **Mr. Løvold** (Norway) said that although the days of large integrated United Nations peacekeeping missions had passed, it was important not to lose sight of the value of a comprehensive approach, especially in situations where the political environment was not conducive to peace. Military engagement alone was not enough. The Security Council must ensure that peace operations were deployed in support of clearly identified political purposes, goals and processes.

64. Enhancing the capacity of United Nations peacekeepers to analyse and act on increasingly complex threats was vital to ensuring their own safety and protecting civilians. The peacekeeping intelligence academy that Norway had established with other Member States was an example of how to strengthen such capacity. His delegation welcomed the recent focus on peacekeepers' mental health. It also strongly supported efforts to reduce the environmental footprint of missions. Results from United Nations peace operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo and

Mali, among others, had shown that renewable energy reduced operational costs, security risks associated with fuel convoys, and greenhouse gas emissions, while enhancing infrastructure for host countries.

65. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations must be strengthened. Since most peacekeeping missions operated in African countries, Norway supported the establishment of a mechanism through which African Union-led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council would have access to United Nations assessed contributions on a case-by-case basis.

66. **Ms. Mocanu** (Romania) said that peacekeeping operations played a key role in peace processes, defusing potential tensions and protecting civilians. Trust in such missions was low, however, and the activities of peacekeepers were being tested in various contexts. Of particular concern were the activities of mercenaries and transnational criminal groups and their effect on the safety of peacekeepers, as well as the disproportionate amount of misinformation and disinformation confronting United Nations missions.

67. The New Agenda for Peace was not the sole solution for the future of peacekeeping. A revitalized view of peacekeeping missions should take into consideration a whole-of-United Nations-ecosystem approach. In any reform process, the monitoring of and reporting on human rights violations needed to be preserved, as it was one of the pillars of peacekeeping.

68. As Co-Chair of the Women and Peace and Security Focal Points Network in 2023, Romania hoped that more States would join the Network and implement the commitments contained in Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#). The topic of gender in peacekeeping operations would be considered at a conference to be held in Bucharest in November 2023. Her delegation hoped that the subject of women and peace and security would be discussed at the 2023 United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference to be held in Ghana in December.

69. **Ms. González López** (El Salvador) said that peacekeeping operations were, by definition, temporary in nature. It was essential to ensure that they were part of a wider strategy aimed at supporting viable political processes, that their mandates, objectives and command structures were clearly defined, and that sufficient resources and adequate and predictable financing were provided. Managing security risks, mitigating threats, improving responses to attacks against peacekeeping personnel and addressing the spread of disinformation and misinformation should continue to be priorities. Her delegation also emphasized the importance of making

improvements in medical care and the evacuation of wounded personnel.

70. El Salvador remained concerned about the challenges faced in the withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), including the recent announcement that the Mission had been forced to speed up the process owing to deteriorating conditions and attacks against United Nations personnel, and that it had been forced to destroy sensitive equipment to avoid leaving it behind in a conflict zone. Her delegation stressed the important role of the host country authorities in facilitating the safe and organized departure of MINUSMA. It also noted the worrying escalation of violence in the area covered by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). On 28 October 2023, two members of UNIFIL had been wounded by shelling in Sector East. Her delegation wished to remind the parties of their obligations to ensure the security and safety of peacekeeping personnel, as well as the inviolability of United Nations premises.

71. It was important to guarantee the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping. El Salvador would continue to work towards achieving the objectives of the uniformed gender parity strategy 2018–2028. It was also committed to the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse.

72. **Mr. Amorín** (Uruguay) said that, since July 2022, Uruguay had been implementing its first national action plan on women and peace and security. In putting that commitment into practice, the Armed Forces of Uruguay, with the support of the Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations, were implementing a programme aimed at overcoming obstacles related to deployment criteria, family constraints affecting women's capacity for deployment, the negative perception of others' past experiences in peacekeeping operations and gender roles, including the underrepresentation of women in operational roles.

73. Uruguay was working on the voluntary commitments that would be presented at the 2023 Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference to be held in Ghana in December. Holding that meeting in Africa for the first time would be particularly relevant for addressing that continent's specific peace and security challenges and promoting international cooperation to strengthen peacekeeping capacities, increase awareness of regional dynamics and advance solutions adapted to local needs. In June 2023, Uruguay had sponsored a preparatory meeting in Dhaka on women in peacekeeping to better prepare Member States to make

concrete commitments in that regard at the 2023 Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference.

74. The Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace was becoming ever more necessary amid a proliferation in conflicts; however, an achievable agenda required broad discussion and consensus among Member States. It was essential to enhance the capacity of peacekeeping operations, facilitate their implementation of mandates and ensure that they achieved their ultimate goal of protecting civilians in situations of armed conflict.

75. **Mr. Baghdadi** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, although not provided for in the Charter of the United Nations, peacekeeping operations were one of the Organization's main tools for maintaining peace and security. They should adhere scrupulously to the principles of the Charter, namely, sovereignty, territorial integrity, the political independence of States and non-interference in their internal affairs, and should be impervious to political contention or polemic. The basic principles of peacekeeping must be applied in all matters relating to peacekeeping activities. Peacekeeping operations were no substitute for lasting solutions, which required genuine and objective efforts to address the root causes of conflicts.

76. The Syrian Arab Republic had always encouraged efforts to develop peacekeeping operations at all levels. It enjoyed a good relationship with officials of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). It was committed to supporting the mandates of both forces in any way possible and, in that context, emphasized that UNDOF should comply with its standard operating procedures, in particular with regard to maintenance of the command structure. The Government of his country had facilitated the return of personnel from both missions to the area of separation, continued to facilitate the movement of mission personnel within the areas of separation and limitation via the Qunaytirah gate, and had helped enable the resumption of inspections on the Syrian side. His delegation condemned the occupying Israeli forces for violating the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian Forces by attacking airports and other civilian sites in the Syrian Arab Republic, resulting in civilian casualties and the destruction of infrastructure. They had crossed the ceasefire line and abducted Syrian civilians, who, after being detained and interrogated, had been released in the same areas where they had been abducted. Such measures placed the lives of those civilians at risk and constituted a violation of the Agreement, which provided that civilians in that situation should be handed over at the Qunaytirah

crossing, with the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross acting as intermediaries.

77. A clear distinction must be made in United Nations reports between minor violations committed by the Syrian side involving hunters accidentally crossing the ceasefire line and the grave violations committed by the Israeli side, such as its use of the area of limitation to conduct air strikes on Syrian civilians and intimidate them by dropping leaflets.

78. Although peacekeeping operations were intended to be a short-term measure, such operations had lasted for decades in the Middle East because Israel continued to occupy Arab territories, defy the relevant United Nations resolutions and persist with hostile policies that threatened regional peace and security. The Israeli occupation of Arab territories was the reason for the presence of three peacekeeping operations, which were a burden on the budget of the United Nations and took up valuable capacities and human resources. The United Nations should therefore pressure Israel to end its occupation of Arab land.

79. **Mr. Bendjama** (Algeria) said that peacekeeping operations could not be a substitute for the prevention of conflict, which remained more cost-effective on all levels. Such operations had recently been confronted with significant changes in the nature of armed conflict and emerging asymmetrical challenges, such as the expansion of terrorist and criminal armed groups. In some violent contexts, there was no peace to keep. He agreed with the call of the Secretary-General for a new generation of peace enforcement missions and counter-terrorist operations led by regional forces.

80. Peacekeeping operations were not meant to last forever. They needed to engage more proactively in the implementation of their mandates. The central focus of those mandates should be the active implementation of political solutions, and the Security Council had a critical role to play in that regard. Collective political support was the strongest asset of a peacekeeping operation, which should remain a neutral tool for maintaining peace and security and not be politicized or instrumentalized to pursue a political agenda. All peacekeeping operations, including the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), should include a human rights monitoring component as part of their mandates.

81. The African Union was an obvious partner in peacekeeping, as it was an effective first responder to crisis before the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission. It was high time to lay the foundation for peace operations on the African continent led by the African Union and supported by the United

Nations. Such operations would combine the respective strengths of both organizations by securing adequate, predictable and sustainable resources.

82. **Mr. Noordin** (Malaysia) said that training was essential to ensuring the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions. The Malaysian Peacekeeping Centre continued to be recognized as a top training facility in the region. The Centre collaborated with the Directorate of Military Training and Cooperation of Canada to provide training for experts and peacekeeping personnel on subjects related to women and peace and security. In addition, to enhance interoperability and mission effectiveness, the Malaysian Armed Forces, in collaboration with the Global Peace Operations Initiative of the United States of America, had co-hosted a multinational peacekeeping exercise for service members and representatives from more than 19 partner nations.

83. Malaysia remained deeply concerned about the increased number of attacks against United Nations peacekeepers. His country currently had 867 peacekeepers serving in five peacekeeping operations and one special political mission, with the largest group deployed to UNIFIL. Ensuring their safety was essential as more peacekeepers were deployed to stabilize countries in conflict. All stakeholders were responsible for the morale, safety and security of peacekeepers. To prioritize their well-being, peacekeepers must be provided with the necessary skills, training and equipment, along with adequate resources. To that end, his delegation urged the Secretariat to ensure timely reimbursement for all troop-contributing countries.

84. **Mr. Vorshilov** (Mongolia) said that the international security environment had been deteriorating over the past year, especially in areas where peacekeeping operations were being conducted. In 2023, more than 80 per cent of attacks committed against United Nations personnel had involved improvised explosive devices or other explosive ordnance, a worrisome trend that required special attention and the taking of necessary protective measures.

85. The issue of mental health among peacekeepers was also becoming critical, especially since they were starting to be deployed for extended periods of six months to one year. The Mongolian Armed Forces were planning to initiate a pilot project in coordination with the United Nations country team to support the well-being of peacekeepers' families during deployments.

86. Mongolia had increased the proportion of its female military personnel in United Nations peacekeeping operations by 11.9 per cent in military

units and 23 per cent among uniformed individual personnel, and would continue those efforts until the proportion reached 15 per cent by 2027.

87. The success of military personnel in peacekeeping operations depended on proper and comprehensive training, as well as the provision of high-quality modern equipment. Mongolia therefore supported the policy of extensively using modern technology in such operations. In addition, since 2003, the Mongolian Armed Forces had been hosting annual peacekeeping multinational field training under the name of Khaan Quest. His delegation encouraged the Department of Peace Operations and Member States to participate actively in the next training exercise, which was scheduled for June 2024.

88. **Mr. Nguyen** Hoang Nguyen (Viet Nam) said that greater investment in the safety and security of peacekeepers was needed, as they were being deployed in complex and deteriorating political and security environments where they faced a lack of trust on the part of many host countries and were increasingly the target of malicious acts. Mission capabilities and capacities needed to be adapted, including by leveraging technology.

89. Strategic communications were critical to foster mutual understanding, manage expectations and garner trust and support from host Governments, local communities and relevant stakeholders. His delegation encouraged greater collaboration between the United Nations and regional organizations, including in capacity-building, training and the sharing of best practices. His delegation also encouraged the Organization and other stakeholders to continue assisting police- and troop-contributing countries, especially those newly participating in that field, so that they could fully participate in peacekeeping activities.

90. His country firmly supported the increased role and participation of women in peacekeeping operations. The percentage of female peacekeepers from Viet Nam stood at 13 per cent, and the country was working to achieve the targets of 15 per cent for unit deployment and 20 per cent for individual participation. Viet Nam looked forward to continued effective cooperation and assistance from all parties for the development of its peacekeeping forces, and was preparing for more deployments to UNMISS and UNISFA.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

91. **Mr. Kedar** (Israel) said that the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic had accused his country of attacking civilian sites in his country. Israel not only had the right to defend itself, but also had a duty to do so.

All sites in the Syrian Arab Republic that had been or might have been attacked by Israel were not being used solely for civilian purposes but rather were strategic elements of Syrian military infrastructure designed to enable the transfer of military hardware, including long-range rockets and missiles, to the recognized terrorist organization Hizbullah, in both the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon, and to assist in upgrading the range and accuracy of that organization's military equipment. The single aim of Hizbullah was to destroy Israel and to kill as many Israelis as possible. In the past three weeks, it had fired tens of rockets, anti-tank missiles and mortars at both civilian and military sites in Israel. His delegation could only speculate as to how much lethal weaponry had been delivered to Hizbullah via the Syrian Arab Republic. Accordingly, if that country did not wish Israel to attack legitimate military targets in the exercise of its right and duty of self-defence, then it should consider ending the use of such infrastructure to support, enable and strengthen Hizbullah.

92. **Mr. Baghdadi** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that he rejected the accusations made by Israel. In just the past 10 days, the civilian airport of Aleppo, a gateway for humanitarian aid for the Syrian people, had been shelled by Israel four times. Everyone knew that it was a civilian airport. It was clear to the whole world that Israel was attacking his country's civilian infrastructure.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.