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Chair: Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia)

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

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

1. **Mr. Ramírez Carreño** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), recognizing the efforts and sacrifices of all those who risked their lives daily in fulfilling the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping missions, said that the risks associated with peacekeeping were increasing substantially, together with the number of fatalities caused by asymmetric attacks. The purpose of peacekeeping operations, however, was not to trigger political processes, manage conflicts where there was no peace to keep, or participate in military or residual counterterrorism activities or in other offensives started and abandoned by ad hoc coalitions or by regional or subregional forces.

2. Taking into account the important precedent set by the benchmarks identified for the deployment of a joint United Nations/African Union peacekeeping operation in Somalia, it lay with the Secretariat to analyse both the context of a conflict and the priorities and intentions of the parties and stakeholders involved in order to determine whether the security and political situation on the ground merited the deployment of a peacekeeping operation. In conjunction with a long-term political strategy, such an analysis would enable the Security Council and the General Assembly to establish appropriate and achievable peacekeeping mandates. Troop-contributing countries, furthermore, must be allowed to participate in any decision taken by the Security Council that pertained to mission personnel, in accordance with Article 44 of the Charter of the United Nations.

3. With respect to the gathering, processing, analysis and distribution of information in peacekeeping operations, under no circumstances must any electronic, similarly intrusive or otherwise covert means of interception be used to collect intelligence signals or detect radar or radio waves emitted by the host State or its neighbours, where so doing would compromise the confidentiality of their communications.

4. The fundamental role of peacekeeping operations was effectively to support — and not supplant — the host State in exercising its primary responsibility to

protect civilians under imminent threat of physical attack, as defined by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the only body empowered to develop peacekeeping policies and doctrines. In fulfilling their mandate, peacekeeping missions must focus on the prevention of violence and on mediation and negotiation with the parties to the conflict with an overriding view to a political solution and in strict observance of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and 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. The policy of zero tolerance for all sexual abuse of women and children by peacekeepers must be given total support, with the perpetrators of such unacceptable acts held to account. An increase in the number of women in charge of peacekeeping contingents would also help on that score.

5. **Mr. Halima** (Egypt) said that peacekeeping was not an alternative means of addressing the root causes of conflict but should instead form part of a comprehensive and coherent political strategy for resolving a conflict, with clear exit options available from the outset. Adherence to the basic principles of peacekeeping was crucial to preserving the credibility of the United Nations, and this meant not attempting to expand or alter peacekeeping mandates without consultation or indeed consent. In that regard, the recent dissemination of disturbing views to the effect that mandates under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations did not require the consent of governments was dangerous and furthermore detrimental to the effective fulfilment of peacekeeping mandates and to the safety of United Nations troops and civilian personnel alike. All use of force must therefore be rightly justified, absolutely necessary, duly mandated and in conformity with the principles and purposes of the Charter.

6. Partnership with regional organizations should be expanded in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, by providing, for example, predictable and flexible financial resources in support of the African Union (AU) contribution to peacekeeping missions. To encourage that partnership, Egypt had organized a Security Council debate on the subject, in May 2016, during its Presidency of the Council. Effective triangular cooperation among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat was

needed, particularly during the early stages of mandate formulation, while doctrine and policy guidance must be developed in consultation and agreement with Member States, in keeping with the intergovernmental character of the Organization. In identifying future troop- and police-contributing countries, their commitment to fulfilling the responsibility to provide all equipment and capabilities required for deployment must be taken into account, with a view to expanding the force generation base without compromising United Nations peacekeeping standards.

7. A non-fragmented, non-selective approach must also be adopted to eradicating crimes of sexual exploitation and abuse by all United Nations personnel, including troops, in order to provide clear and coherent guidance for the implementation of a true zero-tolerance policy. Following the debate on the subject requested by major troop-contributing countries during the seventieth session of the General Assembly, the next step was to put forward an omnibus resolution identifying the elements of verifiable action for tackling those crimes. His delegation stood ready to cooperate in all efforts to that end. In the wider perspective, the sacrifices of peacekeepers should strengthen the resolve to settle disputes by peaceful means and effectively ensure the maintenance of international peace and security.

8. **Mr. Gat** (Israel), expressing gratitude to the Member States helping to maintain the United Nations presence on his country's border with the Syrian Arab Republic and voicing his Government's full support for the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), said that the Israeli Defense Forces were committed to ensuring the security of UNDOF and to enabling its effective operation. Indeed, Israel would continue to work with UNDOF in order to facilitate the redeployment required under Security Council resolution [2294 \(2016\)](#) in the area of separation. Thanks to its strong leadership, UNDOF had proved critical to preventing friction and misunderstanding and to maintaining stability along the Israeli-Syrian border, although Israel was experiencing an increasing number of spillover attacks for which it held the Syrian Government responsible. Israel had no wish to become involved in the Syrian conflict but would take all necessary measures to protect its civilians from any cross-border fire. It demanded Syrian compliance with the Disengagement of Forces Agreement of 1974.

9. Israel was also ready to assist in preparations for the forthcoming strategic review of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which was a stabilizing force in its region, thanks to the efforts of its commander and to the ongoing support of troop-contributing countries. Israel called on its neighbours to emulate its commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and to utilize the established tripartite coordinating mechanism for crucially preventing escalation along the Blue Line, as well as for discussing and resolving recent provocative incidents that had aroused concern. The current relative calm in Lebanon was deceptive insofar as, ever since its war with Israel 10 years earlier, Hizbullah had been accumulating unprecedented quantities of rockets and missiles, positioning them in civilian areas and threatening the citizens of Israel with its declared intentions, all of which was described in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution [1701 \(2006\) \(S/2016/189\)](#). Hizbullah's entrenchment in southern Lebanon, specifically in areas within the UNIFIL mandate, constituted a violation of that resolution, while its concealment of weapons within civilian population centres was a war crime. Israel held the Lebanese Government responsible for all that took place in Lebanese territory and for the implementation of that resolution.

10. The tumultuous events of recent years in the Middle East highlighted the urgent need to stand in defence of the cherished values of liberty, democracy and peace. Notwithstanding its support for the United Nations forces serving on its borders, Israel had learned the historical lesson that it could not rely on others for its security. It would therefore defend itself in difficult times, as necessary.

11. As a vehicle for promoting a positive agenda, the United Nations should work to enhance the system-wide implementation of its Sustainable Development Goals and principles. To that end, Israel had much to offer in the way of cutting-edge technology, sustainable logistics and indeed training in medicine and in protection of civilians and peacekeepers. It had already volunteered to assist in reducing the ecological footprint of United Nations peacekeeping operations and looked forward to similar engagement and cooperation in other areas of activity. Peacekeeping operations faced unparalleled challenges, including

those posed by violent armed groups, criminal gangs and lack of State structures, and their mandates often required large deployments in difficult terrain. The brave men and women peacekeepers from around the world were to be commended for their dedication and commitment in such circumstances.

12. **Mr. Castañeda Solares** (Guatemala) said that strategic and operational capacity-building was essential to underpinning the central role of peacekeeping operations in the international peace and security architecture in terms of resolving conflicts, adapting to new situations and enhancing effectiveness in the search for sustainable peace in accordance with the needs of host countries. The Organization's performance in peacekeeping, a shared responsibility with conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace at its core, could be further improved through the integral involvement of key intergovernmental organizations, the Secretariat and United Nations programmes and specialized agencies, working together with peacekeeping operations on the ground.

13. In the United Nations context, the maintenance of peace indeed posed complex challenges, as exemplified by the current polarization between countries contributing troops and police and those contributing finance. It was therefore important to maintain cooperation among Member States in the respective settings of the Special Committee and the Fifth Committee, as well as between host States and mission officials. Cooperation within the Security Council was also essential, given the job of its members to uphold peacekeeping mandates and the impact that a lack of unity would have on the functioning and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. Triangular cooperation among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat was similarly key to strengthening the mandate of peacekeeping missions, their operational concept and the rules of engagement. Any commitment of troops must be made on the basis of a clear understanding of what was expected of them.

14. All behaviour inconsistent with the Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets posed a threat to local populations and was unacceptable. The persistent sexual exploitation and abuse in the peacekeeping context was consequently highly disturbing; it tarnished the reputation of the Organization's entire

personnel and must not be tolerated. Any delay in following up on the disciplinary and legal measures taken by Member States in such cases indicated a systemic failure, which must be tackled by ensuring that all incidents and complaints involving criminal conduct in any United Nations context were thoroughly and impartially investigated in a swift and timely manner. The establishment of immediate response teams to gather and preserve evidence of sexual exploitation and abuse was therefore a positive way forward.

15. In exploring new ways of strengthening the operational capacities of peacekeeping missions, the Special Committee should give consideration to, among other things, promoting technological innovation and information management in the vital interest of enhancing logistical effectiveness so as to ensure the instant flow of all information between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and contingents in the field. In that regard, the recommendations in the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations ([A/70/96-S/2015/446](#)) would strengthen and ameliorate the operational aspects of peacekeeping missions, all of which must also have clear and realistic mandates specific to each situation and be analysed, planned and established in close consultation with troop-contributing countries. Only then would mandates be consistent with capacities and founded on a common understanding of such matters as risk assessment, practical needs and essential tasks.

16. His delegation was concerned that the scope and implications of the so-called robust peacekeeping operations distorted the essential function of peacekeeping missions, which were neither designed nor equipped to combat terrorism or impose political solutions to a conflict through the sustained use of force. With the safety and security of peacekeepers an unconditional priority, it was good to learn that the analysis of security-related initiatives was improving, thanks to, inter alia, appropriate decision-making and risk management measures. It followed that the resulting information must be transmitted to troop-contributing countries in a timely manner. As one of those countries, Guatemala reiterated its commitment to providing personnel meeting the highest standards of efficiency, competence, discipline and integrity to work under the United Nations flag.

17. **Mrs. Samarasinghe** (Sri Lanka) said that specialized capabilities were needed to address the multidimensional and ever-changing challenges facing peacekeeping operations, which called for continued support from Member States and measures for achieving a comprehensive effects-based approach. The first step to those ends was to provide additional resources that would enable peacekeeping missions to discharge their mandates. Where possible, moreover, the host countries must take ownership of the process, with an emphasis on building national institutions, strengthening national security structures and tackling issues of restorative justice and reconciliation for the sake of peace. The root causes of instability and conflict must also be taken on board and efforts made to develop local information and intelligence-gathering networks so as better to protect civilians and non-combatants.

18. It was vital, too, to include women in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-conflict operations at all levels, given that their experiences of conflict — and hence their understanding of peace — differed from those of men. Similarly vital was the need for awareness of the potential damage caused by peacekeeping operations to local environments and economies, as well as to relations with host communities. A zero-tolerance approach to sexual exploitation and abuse must also be pursued, with the protection of children as a key focus of all peacekeeping operations, which must indeed be centred above all on the protection and promotion of human rights.

19. Developing countries were the major troop contributors, often with great sacrifice, but there was still room for others with the necessary resources and technical capabilities to take on an active peacekeeping role. For its part, Sri Lanka was committed to increasing its current contribution of troops, military observers and civilian police to United Nations peacekeeping operations, to ensuring the best possible training and vetting techniques enabling its peacekeepers to uphold the highest standards, and to deploying Government-provided personnel in field missions. It was similarly keen to deploy women peacekeepers in line with the United Nations efforts in that domain. Its determination to enhance its peacekeeping strength was in fact linked with its own post-conflict peacebuilding efforts aimed at reinforcing

the civil administration in former conflict areas. In that context of post-conflict peace consolidation, the incorporation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants into peacekeeping mandates was a welcome measure that helped to stabilize conflict-ridden societies and promote long-term development. The highest tribute must be paid, however, to the thousands who had made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in peacekeeping operations under the United Nations flag.

20. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiola** (Mexico) said that the outcomes of the three structural reviews relating to peacekeeping operations had highlighted the fundamental shift in emphasis from international peace and security as a pillar towards the concept of sustainable peace, as reflected in Security Council resolution 2272 (2016) on United Nations peacekeeping operations and resolution 2282 (2016) on post-conflict peacebuilding, the implication being that conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding were central to strengthening both peacekeeping operations, with their primarily military components, and special political missions, with their primarily civilian components. In both cases, more focus must be placed on defending and guaranteeing the interests and rights of local populations, which called for new multidimensional and political solutions aimed at promoting security, development and human rights with a view to sustaining peace. In the absence of predictable resources for the effective implementation of assigned mandates, however, peacekeeping personnel were hard pressed to satisfy the increasing demands placed on them from all sides. The allocation of resources should therefore be reviewed, also in order to take account of that new conceptual narrative of sustainable peace and the close connection between conflict prevention, mediation, peacebuilding and indeed sustainable development for sustainable peace.

21. Ways of implementing the outcomes of the review processes must continue to be frankly explored during the current session of the General Assembly through ongoing dialogue, with a focus on triangular cooperation among the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries, which should be involved in the making of decisions and policies with a bearing on peacekeeping. It was important to remember, however, that the purpose of peacekeeping operations was not to fight terrorism,

thus giving rise to concerns about the robust mandates of some peacekeeping missions. The first United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit, held in June 2016, was a welcome innovation that would help to promote understanding and cooperation in the area of peacekeeping.

22. Mexico had recently joined the family of troop-contributing countries, providing expertly-trained personnel to several missions, with good results. A major challenge facing the United Nations in the peacekeeping context, however, was the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by its personnel. It was intolerable that persons mandated to protect civilians in time of conflict should be committing such heinous crimes, which damaged the image of the United Nations and must be roundly condemned. All troop-contributing countries must adhere strictly to the zero-tolerance policy introduced to combat sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers, making it imperative that all offenders be held to account. In that regard, the appointment of the Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse was a welcome development, as were the measures set out Security Council [2272 \(2016\)](#). Mexico would continue its active participation in the debate on peacekeeping operations with a view to achieving the ultimate goal of sustainable peace, which was an important shared responsibility underscored by the sacrifices of peacekeeping personnel, to whom due tribute must be paid.

23. **Ms. Ziade** (Lebanon), emphasizing the need to strengthen the capacity of peacekeeping operations to adapt in response to new challenges and national priorities, said that the early detection of unrest or crisis was paramount in preventing conflict, as was the role of peacekeeping in establishing an environment conducive to the reduction of tensions and the establishment of a political process for enhancing stability and security. Peacekeeping operations must therefore include the elements of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction from the outset, and must at the same time support national institutions and capacity-building in such areas as the rule of law, good governance and women's participation in peace negotiations, the objective being to promote a smooth transition towards national ownership and lasting political solutions.

24. The increasing complexity of conflicts called for greater collaboration not only among local, national and regional actors but also among the Special Committee, as the unique intergovernmental forum on peacekeeping policies, the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries, the Secretariat, United Nations agencies and host countries.

25. As to the zero-tolerance approach to the criminal acts of sexual violence being committed in the peacekeeping setting, it was a welcome means of preventing any reoccurrence and holding perpetrators to account. Guidelines set for protection of civilians during peacekeeping missions must also be comprehensively implemented, while the commendable measures adopted to increase women's representation in leadership posts should be taken further.

26. With reference to the deployment of UNIFIL in south Lebanon, her Government had repeatedly affirmed its commitment to the full implementation of Security Council resolution [1701 \(2006\)](#) and appealed for Israel to comply with its obligations accordingly, including by withdrawing from the remaining occupied Lebanese territory and ceasing its land, sea and air violations of Lebanese sovereignty, clear examples of both of which were cited in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of that resolution ([S/2016/572](#)). The Government prided itself on its continuing transparent and timely contact with UNIFIL and the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon in the interest of facilitating swift solutions to financial, logistical and other matters relating to the Mission's mandate. Thanks to their continuing excellent strategic dialogue and coordination with UNIFIL, moreover, the Lebanese Armed Forces benefited from ongoing capacity-building for fulfilling their tasks with UNIFIL in south Lebanon, as well as for combating terrorism and maintaining security and stability.

27. Mindful of the fact that the tripartite forum enabled UNIFIL to forestall any unilateral provocation that might escalate the situation, her Government had cautioned against Israeli attempts to undermine such cooperation and indeed the credibility of UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces. The tragic deaths of peacekeepers and Lebanese civilians in Israeli attacks carried out over the years in Lebanon were a reminder

that such crimes must never be repeated, that their perpetrators must be held accountable, and that the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers were vital to the full implementation of all peacekeeping mandates. The tireless efforts of UNIFIL to fulfil its mandate in such critical times were laudable, as was the commitment of each troop-contributing country to that goal.

28. **Mr. Scappini Ricciardi** (Paraguay) said that his country's Constitution established the guiding principles for its foreign relations, which included international solidarity and cooperation and the international protection of human rights, while Paraguayan military participation in international peacekeeping missions was governed by a domestic law on national defence and internal security. On that basis, as well as on the understanding that responsible collective action was needed to tackle situations endangering civilian lives and political stability in various countries and regions of the world, Paraguay had sought to play a role in the maintenance of international peace and security by participating in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

29. In so doing, the priority for Paraguay was to implement effectively the mandates of the peacekeeping missions in which it participated, to which end it had established a centre for training its military peacekeepers to discharge their duties in the field. Protection of civilians in armed conflict, multinational logistics and the United Nations Police were among the various subjects covered in the predeployment training courses, some of which were mission-specific. He outlined the history to date of the Paraguayan involvement in United Nations peacekeeping operations, which had continued for almost two decades, over which time it had increased to the point where Paraguay was now participating in almost one half of the operations currently under way.

30. The protection of civilians in armed conflict must be explicitly included in all peacekeeping mandates, which should be progressively modified to ensure that it remained a priority at all times. Member States, for their part, must also be committed to defending vulnerable populations in areas of risk. As to the deplorable human rights violations and abuses perpetrated by members of peacekeeping operations, they must be condemned in the strongest terms and

specific measures taken to address them. While the ideal would be for peacekeeping missions to become redundant, Paraguayan personnel would always be available to help in protecting civilians for as long as situations threatening international peace and security continued to exist.

31. **Mr. Amarachgul** (Thailand) said that adherence to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to the basic principles of peacekeeping remained fundamental to the success of peacekeeping missions, which also relied on the close and meaningful partnership of the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop- and police-contributing countries, as well as on the invaluable contribution of regional and subregional organizations. In the example of the African Union, its contribution rightly warranted the provision of adequate financial and logistical support for its peacekeeping operations in Africa. There and elsewhere, the safety and security of all peacekeepers must be given high priority, particularly in view of the disturbing rise in targeted attacks against United Nations personnel, properties and premises, a problem that highlighted the importance of predeployment and in-mission training, the supply of appropriate equipment, and action to bring perpetrators to justice.

32. His country was a long-standing contributor of military and police personnel who had proudly served in their many thousands in scores of United Nations peacekeeping and other missions. Indeed, the continuing commitment of Thailand on that score was demonstrated by its high-level participation in the 2015 Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping, at which it had pledged additional contributions, and in the United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial held more recently in London. Its endorsement of the outcome documents from both events likewise demonstrated its resolve to join in improving United Nations peacekeeping through more effective planning and performance. Thailand thus stood ready to explore further collaboration aimed at ensuring the compliance of its personnel with United Nations standards and at enhancing the collective peacekeeping capabilities.

33. As a staunch supporter of the women, peace and security agenda, Thailand favoured an increase in the number and role of women in peacekeeping for the sake of operational effectiveness, including in

addressing the issue of gender-based violence, and was itself committed to deploying more females to United Nations peacekeeping missions. It expected a high standard of conduct from all its peacekeepers and hence fully supported the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, which must entail the prompt investigation of credible allegations and prosecution for misconduct, with an emphasis throughout on transparency and accountability. Thailand also advocated a holistic and people-centred approach to peacekeeping that integrated peacebuilding and development so as to help alleviate the socioeconomic grievances frequently underlying conflict and to enhance the prospect of sustainable peace. Paying tribute to all those serving in peacekeeping operations for their dedication and courage, in particular those who had given their lives for peace, he reiterated his country's commitment to working with all partners to strengthen those operations.

34. **Mr. Ry Tuy** (Cambodia), likewise paying tribute to the gallant peacekeepers who had sacrificed their lives for the cause of peace, said that welcome progress had been achieved in addressing the clear-cut messages outlined in the report of the High-level Panel with respect inter alia to preventing conflict and mediating peace, expanding regional partnerships, addressing abuse, and ensuring field-focused support. All troop-contributing countries were concerned for the safety and security of their troops, particularly as the majority were now deployed to dangerous and challenging situations of intense conflict. Proper training, access to modern technology and information, professional planning and effective security arrangements were therefore among the elements vital to reducing the risks faced by peacekeepers and to thus enabling them to fulfil their mandates. The highest standards of conduct and discipline were similarly vital to maintaining the credibility of the Organization, with adequate financial and logistical resources also key to safeguarding and protecting vulnerable civilian populations in conflict zones, where women peacekeepers had furthermore proved their ability to perform to the same standard in the same difficult roles as their male counterparts.

35. Indeed, women were among the many hundreds of Cambodian peacekeepers currently deployed in different capacities to a number of peacekeeping missions, all of whom had attended training courses at

the Cambodian National Center for Peacekeeping Forces, Mines and Explosive Remnants of War Clearance, covering such topics as conduct and discipline and respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, cultural differences and the legislation of host countries. As a troop contributor praised for its ethical peacekeeping performance, Cambodia called for concerted action to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse and to hold perpetrators to account. Having pledged at the 2015 Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping to contribute additional peacekeepers, Cambodia would remain fully engaged in the promotion of international peace and security, a commitment further reiterated through its participation, in 2016, in the follow-up United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial and its signing of the resulting London Communiqué. For its part, the United Nations must raise awareness of the need for short-term reviews of peacekeeping missions in all their aspects in the interest of encouraging troop-contributing countries to increase their assistance.

36. **Mr. Zaayman** (South Africa) said that the High-level Panel had provided clear and concrete recommendations to deal with the changing landscape of peace operations and the challenges to peacekeepers in their efforts to maintain peace and security. Consultation was an important aspect of implementing the reforms entailed, particularly with respect to developing a more robust approach to the protection of civilians. The expertise of key actors was also invaluable in ensuring the effectiveness of peace operations, with political engagement as the prime component, to which mediation and conflict prevention, new ways of planning, and closer relationships with regional organizations could be added as significant tools for promoting long-term peace and security. The achievement of that objective, together with the rule of law and good governance, called for an integrated approach in which peacebuilding activities were built into all peacekeeping missions from an early stage to create the right enabling environment. Also to be emphasized was preventive action consisting in identifying and subsequently addressing the root causes of conflicts by stepping up the interaction between peacebuilding and peacekeeping mechanisms, especially in support of key sustainable development and political processes aimed at peaceful conflict resolution.

37. It was troubling, however, that United Nations peacekeeping mandates should be undermined by the

activities of some parties to conflict situations. All parties must fully respect military agreements concluded with peacekeeping missions and ensure the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel as they performed their mandated duties.

38. Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union should be broadened to encompass all aspects of peace and security with a view to following consistent strategies in line with relevant United Nations resolutions when dealing with conflicts in Africa. Indeed, stronger partnerships with regional organizations would address some of the constraints facing the United Nations in its peace operations. The AU stance was that the basic principles of peacekeeping remained pertinent but should be interpreted in the light of new challenges. AU peace missions authorized by the Security Council must furthermore be adequately resourced and funded, for which purpose predictable, sustainable and flexible financing could be secured through assessed contributions.

39. Incidents involving sexual exploitation and abuse brought peacekeeping missions into disrepute, eroded public trust in peacekeepers and ran contrary to their mandate to protect civilians. Prior to their deployment in the field, peacekeepers should therefore receive additional training designed to raise their awareness of misconduct and its consequences. Decisive steps taken by South Africa in that sphere included the immediate dispatch of investigating officers to the field and, where necessary, the conduct of on-site courts-martial. He joined previous speakers in paying tribute to all peacekeepers for their professionalism, dedication and courage.

40. **Ms. Idris** (Brunei Darussalam), echoing that sentiment of immense gratitude to the world's peacekeepers, said that the sense of shared responsibility among Member States for the preservation of international peace and security had grown in step with the rising number of countries participating in peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes, which was an encouraging trend. In the increasingly volatile and complex global security environment, however, the areas in which peacekeepers operated were also now more often classified as substantially, highly or extremely dangerous. The United Nations must therefore remain committed to

ensuring the safety and security of its peacekeepers, with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support playing an indispensable role in advancing measures for their protection. The integrity of peacekeeping operations must also be upheld, in which context the reported cases of sexual abuse and exploitation by United Nations peacekeepers gave rise to serious concern. In furtherance of the zero-tolerance policy rightly adopted in that regard, all allegations of such conduct must be thoroughly investigated and every effort made to ensure the full implementation of Security Council resolution [2272 \(2016\)](#).

41. Albeit a long-term process, preventive diplomacy was a worthwhile investment and a highly cost-effective means of addressing conflict that should be integral to all efforts undertaken to that end. The emphasis placed on such diplomacy in the areas of peacebuilding and peacekeeping, as well as in the women, peace and security agenda, was therefore welcome. Brunei Darussalam remained committed to supporting, within its capability, United Nations action to maintain international peace and security. Indeed, it had consistently fulfilled its financial obligations in the peacekeeping domain and regularly deployed its peacekeepers to UNIFIL as part of the Malaysian contingent. In the regional context, its security personnel had constantly participated in the peacekeeping efforts in the southern Philippines, where it had also more recently been involved in the decommissioning of weapons belonging to a local liberation movement. It had furthermore requested membership in the Special Committee with a view to enhancing its understanding of the issues associated with peacekeeping.

42. **Ms. Myint** (Myanmar) said that the peacekeeping so vital to promoting international peace and security in a turbulent world had grown into the most visible and costly activity undertaken by the United Nations, yet the surge in peacekeepers pointed to the mounting failure to prevent and resolve conflicts. Peacekeeping missions should be an interim solution only, however, in the continued pursuit of the main objective of negotiated political settlement. The recommendations made concerning the peace and security architecture and the women, peace and security agenda should therefore be assessed in a careful and balanced manner with a view to strengthening United Nations

peacekeeping activities without compromising the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the basic principles of peacekeeping, which must remain the bedrock values for ensuring the credibility of all peace missions.

43. Peacekeeping troops must support the efforts of host countries to discharge their primary responsibility for the protection of civilians, which was of paramount importance. Peacekeeping mandates should therefore not only be regularly reviewed to that end in the light of the situation on the ground but must also be strictly observed. Personnel safety and security in an increasingly dangerous environment was another priority amid the growing concern over the alarming rate of casualties among United Nations peacekeepers, which called for enhanced capacity-building and training, including in the areas of technology and information, so as to guarantee their safety.

44. The special measures introduced to ensure zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers were welcome, as was the policy of vetting civilian and uniformed personnel for human rights violations. Second thoughts should be given, however, to the proposal that troops from Member States listed in the annual reports of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict should not participate in peacekeeping missions; that was in fact an opportunity not to be denied to the countries concerned, provided that they were actively engaged in ending the recruitment of child soldiers and that they also vetted their own personnel, prior to any deployment to the field, for sexual misconduct and human rights abuses. Indeed, it was the past history of individuals that should be the deciding factor in their deployment, bearing in mind that the United Nations peacekeeping personnel involved in recent cases of sexual exploitation and abuse had not been from countries listed in those reports. In short, all Member States wishing to contribute troops to peacekeeping missions must have a fair chance to do so.

45. The rising number of peace operations had created a heavy financial burden that should be shouldered largely by Security Council members and those in a position to make higher contributions to the peacekeeping budget. Myanmar had regularly fulfilled its financial obligations on that score and had also recently rejoined the club of troop-contributing

countries. It was therefore interested in exchanging experiences in that capacity and in benefiting from training opportunities to enhance it still further. In the quest for new ways of better addressing the challenges posed by the scale and complexity of current-day conflicts, the hope was that the Committee's work would help to increase the effectiveness of peace operations as a mechanism for promoting peace and security without compromising the time-tested basic principles of peacekeeping.

46. **Mr. Saad** (Malaysia), reiterating the tributes paid to the United Nations peacekeepers bringing hope to millions, said that his country's resolute commitment to supporting peacekeeping efforts worldwide stemmed from its belief in collective security arrangements and the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes, as was indeed borne out by its contribution of many thousands of military and police personnel to multiple United Nations peacekeeping missions to date. It had furthermore doubled the number of women peacekeepers in its most recent deployment to UNIFIL, one of several missions currently served by a Malaysian contingent, to which another was soon to be added. His delegation was also working closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations concerning the additional resources pledged by Malaysia in the context of the United Nations Peacekeeping Readiness Capability System after its participation in the Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping in 2015, which it had followed in 2016 with its attendance at the United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial.

47. The Malaysian Government was likewise committed to strong and beneficial collaboration with the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in such matters as the delivery of humanitarian assistance and relief — usually by military forces — to those affected by the natural disasters common throughout the region. Considering that an organized and structured mechanism was critical to optimizing the post-disaster response of those forces, including in the management of potential security issues, ASEAN had established a ready group of troops for rapid deployment to countries facing crises or emergencies.

48. Capacity-building and training were key to enabling peacekeepers to maintain the highest

standards of professionalism and the readiness and performance expected by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, with which Malaysia had therefore co-organized a successful training course for trainers on the protection of civilians. A common training module would be a useful addition as a vital tool for equipping peacekeepers, prior to their deployment, with the knowledge they needed for surviving the challenges of the task they had been assigned and for ensuring their safety and security. Information-sharing, including through greater consultation and engagement between the United Nations and troop-contributing countries, would also offer a similarly valuable tool for improving the interoperability and operational effectiveness of peacekeeping missions, as it would help to clarify the mission roles and responsibilities and enhance coordination and transparency in the formulation and implementation of their mandates. Malaysia, for its part, would continue to support the United Nations in its efforts to conduct and develop its peacekeeping operations in new ways.

49. **Mrs. Nguyen Phuong Nga** (Viet Nam) said that the greater complexity of many of the world's conflicts had created a new global context that highlighted the importance of United Nations peacekeeping operations, which must first and foremost uphold the very principles on which they were based. Commendable progress had been made in peacekeeping activities at the conceptual and practical levels, as well as in identifying ways forward to effective implementation of the mandates set, with an emphasis on preventive diplomacy and mediation. The crucial interconnection between peacekeeping and peacebuilding must now be cultivated, notably by strengthening coordination between the Security Council and the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, with a view to accompanying peacekeeping with action to promote economic recovery, reintegration and capacity-building in the host country in order to address the root causes of conflict, rebuild the social fabric and cohesion, and smooth the transition to lasting peace and security.

50. More inclusive consultations involving the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop- and police-contributing countries should also be pursued in connection with policy formulation and decision-making concerning mission mandates, as should cooperation with regional and subregional

organizations. The safety and security of peacekeepers working in increasingly hostile environments must furthermore be better ensured through comprehensive policymaking, appropriate predeployment training and advanced use of new cost-effective technologies. As part of its commitment to assisting United Nations peacekeeping efforts, within its capacities, Viet Nam was actively preparing to contribute a variety of personnel to United Nations missions in addition to the peacekeepers it had already sent to take part in missions in Africa. Tribute was due to all peacekeepers for their contributions and ultimate sacrifices to the sacred cause of maintaining world peace.

51. **Ms. Stener** (Norway) said that implementation of the reforms recommended by the High-level Panel must be speeded up, adding that her country stood ready, together with its close partners Ethiopia and the Republic of Korea, to continue facilitating dialogue across regional groups to that end. The efforts to develop a comprehensive and effective operational peace architecture following the four reviews of peace operations, peacebuilding, and the women, peace and security agenda must continue, and the emerging consensus on the need for reform must be translated into concrete decisions and fresh practices, both at United Nations Headquarters and in the field. The centrality of such reform to the vision statement delivered by the Secretary-General-designate was indeed greatly satisfying to note. Also welcome was the new emphasis on increased cooperation with regional organizations, in particular the AU, which must be commended on its decision to finance part of its operations through a levy on imports that might augur well for an agreement on improved funding arrangements for all AU operations mandated by the Security Council.

52. It was important for host States to be fully committed to implementing the High-level Panel's recommendation that peacekeeping operations must be underpinned by a political strategy. In that vein, the budding practice of establishing compacts with host States and other stakeholders offered a promising way forward to overcoming the major challenge posed to some missions by a lack of cooperation evidenced in such unacceptable measures as administrative barriers or denial of freedom of movement to United Nations personnel. The inclusion of women in such compacts was crucial to sustainable peace, just as their inclusion

at all levels was crucial to the effectiveness of peace operations, and therefore more women should be appointed as leaders and all gender advisor positions must be filled and adequately funded. Greater priority must also be given to ensuring the safety and security of peacekeepers through, inter alia, deploying modern technology, improving camp defences, securing supply routes and guaranteeing adequate medical care.

53. Norway had recently endorsed the Kigali Principles on the Protection of Civilians and welcomed the performance evaluation framework introduced by the Secretariat for peacekeeping, which could in fact be used to develop a similar framework for all United Nations personnel. Efforts to combat sexual exploitation and abuse must continue and Member States must be fully transparent in their willingness and ability to hold their nationals accountable for crimes committed while in the service of the United Nations.

54. With the United Nations Police playing a key role in building the capacities of host States to protect their own citizens, welcome progress had been achieved in implementing the Strategic Guidance Framework for International Police Peacekeeping. Implementation of the recommendations set out in the external review of the functions, structure and capacity of the United Nations Police Division was also vital, bearing in mind that it was the establishment of core police functions and a minimum capacity in the criminal justice chain that provided a basis for the United Nations to reduce and eventually withdraw a peace operation. It was therefore to be hoped that the United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in 2017 would be attended by ministers responsible for the recruitment of United Nations Police members and by other justice personnel.

55. For their part, Member States must collaborate closely to deliver the capabilities needed in missions, a good example of which was the rotation scheme operated by five European countries for providing transport aircraft to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Norway was ready to engage in dialogue with the Secretariat concerning possible extrabudgetary contributions in support of implementing the reform agenda, to which it was strongly committed. It thus looked forward to the

leadership of the Secretary-General-designate in that realm with the goal of enabling the United Nations to fulfil its potential to perform more effectively in the field.

56. **Mr. Bako** (Niger) said that resolution of the plethora of persistent conflicts threatening international peace and security was absorbing so many resources as to cast into shadow the hopes of establishing a more just world of progress for all. As a country that pursued the ideals of peace, security and development, Niger played its part in initiatives aimed at preventing conflict and at restoring and consolidating peace, including peacekeeping operations, to which it had contributed civilian and military personnel, both men and women, in considerable numbers. The reviews of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and the future of peace operations had offered a welcome means of identifying inadequacies and anachronisms in those operations, as in the case of missions that were incapable of defending civilians against the terrorist and other attacks, now typically occurring on account of the increasingly asymmetric nature of conflict. Inadequacies could often in fact be traced back to the mandates themselves, which should always be relevant and adapted to each situation. Invariably, however, they must include the protection of civilians, a task that all peacekeeping operations must be adequately resourced to perform.

57. In that context, the Kigali Principles on the Protection of Civilians were especially pertinent, underlining as they did such important issues as the preparedness of contingents, preventive measures, urgent intervention, support for community resilience and the need for synergy with development activities. Niger had endorsed the Principles and was also one of the five Sahel countries forming the group known as the G5 Sahel, comprising also Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Mauritania, the purpose of which was to tackle the threats to peace, security and development in the region and address their root causes. The Sahel countries harboured the hope that, following completion of the current review of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, their priorities would be taken more into account and they could take ownership of the strategy, as well as build their capacities in connection with cross-border security and combating terrorism and armed violence. Niger was

committed to working to strengthen peacekeeping operations.

58. **Mr. Zehnder** (Switzerland), welcoming the positive response to the recommendations resulting from the recent reviews of peacekeeping operations and the peacebuilding architecture, said that there were aspects of four areas that merited attention in the next report of the Special Committee. First, conflict prevention must be a system-wide priority, to which end it was essential to strengthen all entities working in the relevant areas of activity and, in so doing, to apply a holistic approach. Particular emphasis must be placed on observance of the rule of law, security sector reform, transitional justice, mediation and the ending of impunity, all of which were key elements of prevention and often interdependent.

59. Secondly, in the light of the commitment to post-conflict peacebuilding confirmed by the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution [2282 \(2016\)](#) on the subject, the Special Committee's report should reflect the synergies between the maintenance and consolidation of peace, as well as recognize the value of the Peacebuilding Commission and its Country-Specific Configurations.

60. Thirdly, those serving in the United Nations Police Force must undergo high-quality mandatory predeployment training, which should include a component on culturally-appropriate behaviour designed to ensure that police officers were well received in local communities. The United Nations Police Division should also be equipped to support Member States and assist their delivery of certified police training. With a view to strengthening the rule of law, furthermore, the Division should plan and carry out its activities in cooperation with those working in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the areas of justice, corrections and human rights.

61. Fourthly, notwithstanding the progress achieved, more must be done to address the deplorable acts of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers that undermined the credibility of peacekeeping missions and indeed that of the Organization as a whole. All occurrences of such crimes must be eradicated through the zero-tolerance policy, which each Member State must work to put into effect. In brief, the responsible committees of the General Assembly must maintain the current

momentum for strengthening peacekeeping operations by working in close collaboration to find innovative ways of implementing the recommendations made by the various review bodies.

62. **Mr. Akhtaruzzaman** (Bangladesh) said that, as a leading police and troop contributor, his country had a vital stake in the effectiveness of peace operations and had constantly updated its deployment and operational capabilities in recognition of the swiftness of change occurring in the range and context of peacekeeping. Bangladesh remained committed to contributing various contingents in order to improve rapid deployment and force generation in field missions and was also willing to deploy still others to address existing and projected gaps. All such contingents could moreover be deployed within 60 days of the receipt of a formal offer.

63. Bangladesh, committed to promoting human rights and gender perspectives and protecting civilians, had also incorporated into its peacekeeping training curricula a comprehensive component, including in-built demonstration exercises, on the protection of civilians. Its peacekeepers were consequently well equipped to carry out that specific mandate in all situations and had indeed performed well in challenging missions like those in Mali and the Central African Republic. The protection of civilians nonetheless called for a more coordinated approach in which responsibilities were shared by the host nation.

64. Bangladesh recognized the need to modernize peacekeeping and was thus equipping its contingents with the new technology needed to meet current and emerging peacekeeping requirements. It also subscribed to the concept that real-time information should be shared laterally, so as to enhance operational outreach. Furthermore, Bangladesh had already been deploying female peacekeepers for well over a decade and was gradually increasing their numbers, to which end it was also seeking assistance from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. It urged continued measures, such as maintaining adequate defence stores and timely information-sharing, to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers, who must at no time engage in any counterterrorism activities. It also advocated continued triangular partnership among troop- and police-contributing countries, the Secretariat and the Security

Council at the strategic and operational levels, as well as a more comprehensive approach that would lead to better understanding and a more effective outcome at the field level.

65. Bangladesh took a zero-tolerance position on sexual exploitation and abuse, with an emphasis on prevention, and was committed to taking appropriate disciplinary action against any of its personnel found guilty of such acts, as it had indeed already done in one case. It was also developing a centre of excellence for peacekeeping training and aimed to provide customized training and support for peacekeepers from other troop- and police-contributing countries. It was furthermore ready to send more of its own peacekeepers, who had served in many complex, beleaguered and trying situations, to undertake other United Nations assignments.

66. With United Nations peacekeeping operations largely time-bound, however, more resources should be devoted to the task of creating a mindset of mutual tolerance and respect in order build sustainable peace, stability and security in a world free of violence, war and terror born of misunderstanding.

67. **Ms. Andrianantoandro** (Madagascar) said that peacekeeping was integral to United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security, to which her country remained committed, as indeed indicated by its increased participation in numerous peacekeeping missions in Africa. Madagascar was likewise engaged in the international quest for solutions to the challenges facing peacekeeping operations, which were instrumental in creating the peace so critical to sustainable development. In that regard, the priorities set by the Secretary-General in response to the work of the High-level Panel, notably in the areas of prevention, partnership strengthening and new ways of conducting operations, would undoubtedly bring about improvements necessary for coping with ever-more complex conflicts.

68. With conflict prevention and, consequently, preventive diplomacy as primary considerations, it was vital to focus attention on constructive dialogue and mediation in an inclusive process aimed at finding political solutions, which should therefore be central to all decisions concerning deployment, particularly as peacekeeping operations were never an alternative to such solutions. It was furthermore important to have a

built-in exit strategy involving such elements as peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction and national ownership of the peace process. Triangular cooperation among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat should also be improved and strategic partnerships strengthened, in which context the relationship between the United Nations and the AU pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter offered an excellent example, bearing in mind that over one half of peacekeeping missions were in Africa.

69. Praise was due both to the Secretariat for its willingness to provide additional support, including training, to developing countries wishing to contribute troops, and to Member States for the training grants and other commitments they made to help ensure the adequacy of the human, financial and logistical resources needed for peacekeeping operations. Tribute must likewise be paid to all peacekeeping personnel for their devotion, courage and, in some cases, ultimate sacrifice. Faced with an arduous task in increasingly hostile environments, the personnel must be assured of their safety and security as a matter of priority, particularly as the acts of violence against them had more than doubled in recent years. The protection of civilians, too, must feature as a concern. Her delegation welcomed the recommendations made in the context of the women, peace and security agenda, as well as the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation, and the Security Council's actions to increase women's involvement in measures to prevent and respond to conflict. Madagascar remained ready to cooperate with the United Nations and all partners in the noble enterprise of peacekeeping.

70. **Mr. Mounzer** (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Israeli representative must first be reminded that the Syrian Golan was occupied Syrian territory that would eventually be returned to the Syrian Arab Republic and that the tens of thousands of Syrian citizens living there had since 1987 remained firmly attached to it and to their Syrian citizenship. Secondly, the line of separation lay between the Syrian motherland and the occupied Syrian Golan. Thirdly, the representative's statement that the occupying Power would continue to work with UNDOF and did not wish to become involved in the Syrian Arab Republic could not be any further from the truth.

71. Indeed, there could be no more evidence of such Israeli involvement than the fact that the Prime Minister and senior officials of the occupying Power had visited injured terrorists belonging to the Nusra Front, a listed international terrorist entity, in the Israeli hospitals where they were receiving treatment, having provided not only weapons to the Nusra Front terrorists operating under its protection and auspices in the occupied Syrian Golan buffer zone but also logistical and technical support, including by supplying aerial images and precise coordinates pertaining to the locations of the Syrian Army and those defending their towns and villages in the Qunaytirah countryside. It further supported those and other terrorists active in the buffer zone by helping them to cross the line of separation, thereby compromising the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. Safeguarded by the occupying Power and as documented by the United Nations, those terrorist groups had expelled UNDOF from the occupied Syrian Golan and kidnapped some of its members. The responsibility for all that took place in the UNDOF buffer zone, including the obstruction of UNDOF in its work and its return to the area, thus lay with the occupying Power.

72. **Mr. Gat** (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply to the statement made by the representative of Lebanon, said that it was difficult to consider her remarks seriously as long as Hizbullah, a designated terrorist organization, continued to be a part of the Lebanese Government and an influential political power. Having concealed over 100,000 rockets and missiles in Lebanese villages and towns, Hizbullah was using Lebanese civilians as human shields, thus committing a double war crime. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) cited also by the Lebanese representative clearly stated in paragraph 66 that Hizbullah's action contradicted the obligations of Lebanon under resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006). As warned in that report, should Hizbullah's possession of arms or attempts to procure sophisticated weapons provoke conflict, the consequences were potentially very grave for Lebanon and for the region.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.