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Sixty-third session

41st plenary meeting

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Official Records

President: Mr. D'Escoto Brockmann (Nicaragua)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Commemorative meeting for the sixtieth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping

Agenda item 31

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Draft resolution (A/63/L.16)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly, under agenda item 31, will now hold a commemorative meeting to mark the sixtieth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping operations, in accordance with the decision taken at its 2nd plenary meeting and pursuant to resolution 62/273 of 11 September 2008.

(*spoke in English*)

I am pleased to open this commemorative meeting of the General Assembly marking the peacekeeping work of the United Nations over the past 60 years. I wish to join representatives of regional groups and the host country in highlighting the remarkable history of peacekeeping operations and celebrating the partnership with the United Nations system that has evolved over the decades.

Today's peacekeeping operations — all 20 of them, requiring more than 110,000 personnel — are characterized by their unprecedented scale and complexity. They remain a key measure of the ability of the United Nations to meet its Charter mandate and

the expectations of the world's peoples. But we should keep in mind the astonishing, and I would say shameful, fact that the current annual budget for United Nations peacekeeping is approximately \$5.6 billion, which represents one half of 1 per cent of global military spending. That mad asymmetry dooms our best intentions.

As I speak, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) is in crisis. The reports of violence against civilians in the conflict zones highlight a terrifying campaign of sexual attacks against girls and women that may be unprecedented in its scale and brutality. It is estimated that MONUC has one peacekeeper for each 10,000 civilians in the conflict areas. That makes MONUC's mandate impossible to fulfil. That glaring example serves to remind us that, despite our best intentions, the bitter reality of the conflicts in many countries dwarfs the ability of peacekeepers to fulfil their mandates. The conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo point to the enormous importance of finding political solutions to large-scale conflicts and the need to redouble efforts to resolve them through broadly orchestrated diplomatic means.

There are other peacekeeping operations that are of smaller scale but must nevertheless be resolved. In Western Sahara, for example, the decolonization process has been stalled since the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara was deployed to monitor the ceasefire and organize a referendum in 1991. Despite the best efforts of the diplomatic community, the territory remains occupied.

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I am personally concerned about the human rights abuses taking place, and I have requested that the High Commissioner for Human Rights release his report that was completed in 2006. In that regard, I offer to make myself available to assist all parties in any way I can to help resolve that long-standing issue, which risks being forgotten by the international community.

Because a peacekeeping mandate is not specifically spelled out in the Charter, that essential work has had to evolve as innovative partnerships nurtured by different organs of the United Nations. The interaction among those different areas of responsibilities of the United Nations is a dynamic that I have chosen to highlight during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly.

In that regard, the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretariat enjoy a close partnership that has grown and responded to ever-changing circumstances over the decades. That partnership remains central to whatever successes and failures we have encountered and to the improvements that we wish to make in our peacekeeping efforts.

We celebrate the broad participation in troop contribution by industrialized and developing countries alike. That broad-based participation helps to assure the credibility of each intervention. The principles of neutrality, transparency and universality lend them their legitimacy and must be treasured and defended by all of us. The slightest abuse of those principles is immediately noted and the damage to the legitimacy and credibility of our efforts is difficult to repair.

The restructuring of peacekeeping operations, arising from catastrophic failures in the 1990s and highlighted in the groundbreaking Brahimi report of 2000, should enhance our ability to identify, coordinate and sustain increasingly complex operations.

The General Assembly has the responsibility to ensure that operations are equipped with the tools needed to fulfil their mandates. But, almost without exception, they are still being sent into harm's way with insufficient resources at their command. It makes sense that troop-contributing countries have more of a say in determining the resources required to minimize the risk and maximize the chances of success of the operations their troops are committed to. Indeed, troop-contributing countries should be involved at the earliest stage when the Security Council mandates an operation, and later in any changes in the mandate as

they are required. That closer involvement will create more reality checks to ensure that operations are well conceived and administered from the outset.

Let us reaffirm our determination to strengthen that very special United Nations partnership so that it can maintain the delicate and dynamic interplay between military, political and financial realities to make peacekeeping operations effective. But just as importantly, let us always focus on ways to bring nations together to solve problems that will make those operations the rare exception in the years to come.

I now give the floor to Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro.

The Deputy Secretary-General: The Secretary-General had intended to join this important commemoration, but, as the General Assembly may know, he is in now Nairobi attending an emergency meeting on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. His mission there aptly illustrates the importance of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Sixty years ago, the Security Council dispatched a small group of international military observers to the Middle East. Their task was to supervise an uneasy ceasefire between the new State of Israel and its neighbours. That first peacekeeping mission was an experiment that the founders of the United Nations had not foreseen. The model proved to be a great success.

Peacekeeping has now evolved into one of the cornerstones of international diplomacy. The presence of peacekeepers sends a powerful signal that States Members of the United Nations are working together for solutions in the best spirit of the Organization's Charter. Today, there are more than 100,000 United Nations peacekeepers deployed in 18 missions across the globe. That scale is unprecedented.

Peacekeeping operations have also had to evolve to meet the changing nature of conflict. Beyond monitoring ceasefires, today's peacekeepers have wide-ranging mandates. They help post-conflict societies to rebuild. They nurture democratic governance. They protect civilians, disarm ex-combatants, supervise elections and strengthen institutions.

But the evolution of peacekeeping has not come without cost. The United Nations has learned some hard lessons. Perhaps above all, we have seen that peacekeepers will not succeed in building true security if there is no peace to keep.

Peacekeeping is not the right tool for every job. We can play a valuable role in accompanying a political process, but we cannot substitute for one. Where there is a viable political process, we can confront potential spoilers. Where there is none, we cannot, and should not, fight a war. Our experiences in Bosnia and Somalia in the early 1990s proved that point. Darfur confronts us with a similar challenge today.

The United Nations provides a system for sharing the costs and responsibilities of peacekeeping among its Member States. Indeed, the cost effectiveness of our peacekeeping operations remains one of the Organization's key attributes. United Nations troop deployments are less expensive than those of most comparable organizations or national militaries. Moreover, the annual peacekeeping budget — currently about \$7 billion — is a tiny fraction of world military expenditures.

Peacekeepers operate in some of the most austere and challenging environments. They do what other people either cannot or will not do in order to protect people at risk. That courageous spirit, that solidarity with other human beings, is crucial to sustaining the United Nations. Peacekeepers need our support. They need clear and achievable mandates. They need the political will and material resources of our Member States.

With that support, great feats are possible. In the streets and alleyways of Cité Soleil in Port-au-Prince, people no longer live in fear of the once-notorious gangs. That is just one example of how peacekeepers are giving people all over the world a chance to live free from the scourge of conflict.

As we look back on the 60-year history of peacekeeping, let us be proud of what has been accomplished. Let us pay tribute to the more than 2,500 peacekeepers and other personnel who have given their lives while serving the United Nations. Let us pledge to face the challenges ahead with real, long-term resolve. Now more than ever, the world needs the blue helmets, and the blue helmets need the world's support.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Mauritius, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Soborun (Mauritius): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group on the occasion of the commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping.

Peace is vital in all walks of life. Suffice it to add, therefore, that peacekeeping is considered a flagship activity of the United Nations, helping to restore peace and stability and bringing hope to millions of people in various conflict-affected regions around the world. United Nations peacekeeping has achieved tremendous accomplishments since its inception as a United Nations concept under which troops were — and still are — deployed not for war but to provide a foundation for lasting peace. In so doing, United Nations peacekeeping has proved itself as an important tool to ensure that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the United Nations.

The African Group seizes this opportunity to, first, renew the Group's commitment to the principles governing United Nations peacekeeping operations, such as the consent of the parties and the non-use of force except in self-defence and impartiality. Those basic principles, which have guided United Nations peacekeeping operations over the last five decades without controversy, still remain relevant and should be preserved.

Secondly, we would like to reaffirm that United Nations peacekeeping operations should be provided with the necessary political support, clearly defined and achievable mandates, adequate capabilities, logistical and financial resources and exit strategies.

Thirdly, we reaffirm Africa's commitment to assume its share of responsibility for peacekeeping for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Fourthly, we express Africa's appreciation to United Nations and African Union peacekeepers, who continue to contribute towards ensuring that peace is preserved and consolidated and that civilians are protected in situations of conflict.

Fifthly, we reiterate our full support for all efforts and measures aimed at promoting the safety and security of United Nations peacekeeping personnel.

Sixthly, we condemn the threats and attacks perpetrated against peacekeepers and reaffirm that the best assurance against risks are well-planned and clearly mandated missions that are not deployed in a

void or where the political process is either non-existent or compromised.

Seventhly, we underscore the importance of the zero-tolerance policy to ensure that misconduct by peacekeepers, including sexual abuse and exploitation, is prevented and that justice is served against those found guilty of such violations.

We would also like to express our satisfaction that the United Nations and African Union have deployed considerable efforts to build a genuine partnership for peace in Africa, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter, under which Africa has undertaken to develop its capacity to provide African peacekeeping where needed on the continent. In that regard, the African Group looks forward to United Nations support to strengthen African peacekeeping capabilities and emphasizes the importance of continued implementation of the joint action plan for United Nations support in the short, medium and long term.

The African Union, for its part, continues to develop and consolidate its peace and security architecture, which includes the Peace and Security Council, the African Standby Force, the Continental Early Warning Mechanism and the Panel of the Wise. The African Group seizes this opportunity to convey its appreciation to all its partners who have supported the process for establishing that architecture. We wish to reiterate the African Union's call on the international community to lend its full support to addressing outstanding challenges in view of their consolidation and full operationalization.

The African Group reiterates the need to strengthen efforts towards addressing the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, in order to enhance the success of peacekeeping and build a comprehensive approach to the restoration of peace and security in situations of conflict.

Africa, which hosts several peacekeeping operations, continues to bear its fair share of United Nations peacekeeping, along with its own initiatives and efforts. It continues to be among the leading troop contributors, providing sustained support to United Nations peacekeeping for more than 50 years.

In conclusion, we would like to extend our fullest support to all the brave men and women serving in peacekeeping operations. We also pay tribute to those

peacekeepers who have lost their lives in the line of duty while serving in peacekeeping operations. Last but not least, we would also like to express our profound appreciation and thanks to all the troop-contributing countries.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to briefly interrupt these proceedings in order to recognize the presence, among us here in this Hall, of the representatives of the military forces who carry out their peacekeeping duties on the ground on behalf of the United Nations. They face great challenges on an almost daily basis. I ask them to rise and I invite Member States to give them a well-deserved round of applause.

I now call on the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Khazae (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the Asian Group. Allow me to begin by expressing our high honour and great satisfaction at being able to attend this ceremony in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping operations. It represents the sentiment that inspires us all as we consider the important role those operations have played in our collective pursuit of international peace and security.

Since the inception of the first United Nations peacekeeping mission in 1948, hundreds of thousands of troops have taken part in over 60 field missions, and more than 2,500 soldiers and civilians have lost their lives in those operations. Lessons learned from various peacekeeping operations over the years can provide useful guidance for all concerned. Although the United Nations record on peacekeeping operations is one with many ups and downs, it is evident that those operations changed dramatically in terms of scale and scope after the cold war.

Success in recent years has increased the demand for United Nations peacekeeping. United Nations peacekeeping operations are now widely recognized in the international community as the flagship activity of the Organization and have been assigned more complex and multidimensional tasks in recent years. At the same time, it has been quite a challenging task for the United Nations to ensure effective, timely and fully resourced deployments to establish the necessary

operational capacity in order to carry out the assigned mandates.

It is a matter of great pride for us that Asia has always played an important role in United Nations peacekeeping operations since their inception. It will continue to do so in the future. Asia is one of the major contributors to peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the United Nations. As of 31 March 2008, six Asian countries were among the top 20 contributors of uniformed personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations and provided more than 50 per cent of that personnel. Moreover, five Asian States were among the top 10 contributors of uniformed personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations and three of them were at the top of the list, providing more than 40 per cent of the personnel. That is the most tangible contribution by Asia to the maintenance of international peace and security. Asia also plays an important role in financing peacekeeping operations.

The evolution of peacekeeping operations has provided us with new opportunities for deeper and more meaningful changes and responses to the management of conflicts. It has also been the subject of intensive and serious discussions concerning the level of its efficiency in addressing conflict situations. The Asian Group, while reiterating its full support for United Nations peacekeeping operations, wishes to stress that the United Nations is a universal body entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and that peacekeeping operations should strictly observe the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter.

We reiterate that respect for the basic principles of peacekeeping, such as the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence, is essential to the success of peacekeeping missions. We also emphasize that respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and of non-intervention in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State is crucial to common efforts — including peacekeeping operations — to promote international peace and security. Moreover, we believe that the highest priority should be accorded to the safety and security of United Nations peacekeeping personnel.

In conclusion, the Asian Group would like to reserve its highest respect for all the brave, devoted women and men who have served in United Nations

peacekeeping operations over the years. We pay homage to those who lost their lives to bestow peace and tranquillity on millions of people living in the most testing and dangerous conditions. We remember them today with sadness in our hearts and we honour their supreme sacrifice in the cause of peace. We pray that their souls may rest in peace.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Croatia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Jurica (Croatia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

The Group of Eastern European States has been and continues to be strongly committed to United Nations peacekeeping activities. Members of our Group have consistently been among troop contributors to United Nations peacekeeping missions, with national contingents coming from Group member States providing a significant percentage of the overall military strength of the Organization's peacekeeping personnel.

On 29 May 2008, we marked the 60th anniversary of the first peacekeeping mission established by the Security Council. In the days since, a further 63 peacekeeping missions were established by the Security Council, in which hundreds of thousands of participants from scores of countries have taken part.

Today, United Nations peacekeeping missions continue to enjoy the wide participation of the United Nations membership. More than 110,000 peacekeepers from 119 countries are currently deployed in missions worldwide. For its part, the Group of Eastern European States would like to commend all States from all regional groups that have contributed their military, police and civilian personnel to peacekeeping operations throughout the world over the past 60 years.

United Nations peacekeeping operations have proven to be a useful and effective tool at the disposal of the international community for addressing some of the world's most daunting challenges to peace and security. To quote the Secretary-General, "peacekeeping has developed into a flagship enterprise of our Organization". During the past six decades, United Nations peacekeepers have saved countless lives, prevented wars and eased tensions in numerous crisis areas around the world. To those affected by war

and its atrocities, the presence of United Nations peacekeepers has offered hope and the conviction that they have not been abandoned.

Deployed to some of the most dangerous places on Earth, United Nations peacekeepers have on numerous occasions proven their bravery and dedication to the cause of peace. That is why the safety and security of all United Nations personnel, including peacekeepers, should remain a priority. We condemn in the strongest terms the killing of and targeted attacks on United Nations peacekeepers and all acts of violence against them.

At the heart of every peacekeeping operation remains the protection of civilians. We therefore welcome the growing emphasis within the Organization on the protection of those most vulnerable in armed conflict, notably women and children.

Today, in this body, we are also paying special tribute to the more than 2,500 peacekeepers who have given their lives in the cause of peace over the past 60 years. Their ultimate sacrifice is a reminder of human willingness to fight the destructive forces of armed conflict.

Allow me to conclude by stating that United Nations peacekeeping activities will continue to enjoy the active support of the States of the Eastern European Group.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Chile, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and, in that capacity, to associate our region with this tribute to United Nations peacekeeping operations as we commemorate their sixtieth anniversary.

Peacekeeping operations have proved to be an important tool enabling the United Nations to meet its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Indeed, peacekeeping operations are currently the most important activity of the Organization aimed at restoring peace and stability and providing support and hope to millions of people living in areas affected by conflict in the world. This commemoration provides an opportunity to renew the commitment of my Group to the basic principles of

peacekeeping. We emphasize the importance of universal participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Over the past 60 years, peacekeeping operations have grown considerably in number, scope and composition. They are staffed by over 110,000 people from 118 countries. The military personnel who traditionally staffed those missions have been joined by police forces, civilians and volunteers.

The commitment of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States to that process has been strong from the outset. The countries of the region have a long-standing tradition of participating in those missions through the provision of human and material resources. Indeed, the region is one of the main troop contributors.

The Group appreciates the contribution made by peacekeeping operations to the peace and stability of the region. Today, that contribution is manifest in the work of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. In that connection, the Group stresses the importance of not only ensuring security but also contributing to the development of the country, with the aim of achieving a stable and lasting peace.

There has been a huge increase in the number of peacekeeping operations. As a result, the capacity of the Organization to adapt its structures to the increase in operations and staffing must be reinforced. In order to deal with that new reality, the Organization has launched, as we all know, a series of reforms. The Group is involved in that task, as shown by its constructive participation in the reform of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the creation of the Department of Field Support.

In addition, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States understands that, if the response to those challenges is to be effective, we must improve coordination and interaction between the various entities involved, such as the Secretariat, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the troop-contributing countries and the Security Council. Such coordination must precede decision-making processes in order to achieve effective operation deployments and facilitate the successful implementation of mandates.

In that connection, we should like to mention the meeting between Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-

General for Peacekeeping Operations; Under-Secretary-General Ms. Susana Malcorra of the Department of Field Support; and the Fourth Committee, at which an interactive dialogue took place on the new challenges facing peacekeeping operations. We would like to continue and strengthen that dialogue between the Secretariat and Member States. Furthermore, the Group also fully supports the Organization's zero-tolerance policy and its strategy for victim support and assistance.

The Group believes that the men and women serving in a peacekeeping operation are its most valuable resource. We therefore support all efforts and measures to promote the safety and protection of the staff so that they can perform their noble work. The Group reaffirms that the best way of ensuring the safety of the staff of peacekeeping operations is to have well-planned missions that are deployed in places where the basic conditions for their completion are met. At the same time, the Group condemns all acts of violence against the staff of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

To the over 2,400 men and women in peacekeeping operations who perished in the line of duty, the Group pays a most heartfelt and profound tribute and thanks them for having helped to save lives by giving their own in that noble task.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Iceland, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

This year marks the sixtieth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping. Today's commemorative meeting underlines that milestone, and we warmly welcome the draft resolution and declaration submitted for the consideration of the General Assembly on this occasion.

United Nations peacekeeping is a unique and dynamic tool that continues to be among the key instruments available to the Organization in discharging its responsibility under the Charter in the maintenance of international peace and security. During those six decades, peacekeeping has developed into the flagship activity of the United Nations, helping

to restore peace and stability and bringing hope to millions of people in conflict zones around the world.

Indeed, the blue helmet worn by peacekeepers has become a tangible symbol of the United Nations for the most vulnerable. United Nations peacekeeping also symbolizes the solidarity of the international community by bringing together nations from various regions and cultures to help other nations recovering from the scourges of war. Today, more than half of Member States contribute personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations; of course, all Member States contribute financially to peacekeeping efforts. As we speak, the United Nations has more than 110,000 dedicated men and women deployed in peacekeeping operations around the world.

From a rather modest enterprise, which started in 1948 with the establishment of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, peacekeeping has evolved into the large and complex multidimensional peace operations that we know today. As the nature of conflicts has changed, peacekeeping has adapted accordingly. Current peacekeeping operations involve a multitude of tasks to ensure an effective United Nations response to the needs and expectations of countries and populations affected by conflict, and thus help pave the way for sustainable peace and development. We must continue to build on past successes, learn from the challenges we have faced and keep strengthening this uniquely valuable instrument.

Today we pay tribute to the invaluable contribution of the hundreds of thousands of men and women who have served as United Nations peacekeepers in more than 60 peacekeeping missions. Over those six decades, more than 2,400 men and women have lost their lives serving the cause of peace under the United Nations banner. The Group of Western European and other States reaffirms its commitment to United Nations peacekeeping in honour of their memory.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

Mr. Khalilzad (United States of America): The United States welcomes this opportunity to recognize and salute the many contributions and sacrifices made by the military, police and civilian personnel who have served in United Nations peacekeeping operations throughout the world over the past 60 years. Their

dedication has been, and continues to be, the living embodiment of the profound commitment of the nations of the world to seek common ground and to cooperate so that all people everywhere can be safe from the scourge of war.

The Security Council authorized the first United Nations peacekeeping mission in 1948. Sixty years later, United Nations peacekeepers have been deployed to all corners of the world. We have seen the success of those deployments in peacekeeping missions ranging from Sierra Leone to Guatemala to Mozambique. From the beginning, the United States has been a steadfast partner in supporting United Nations peacekeeping operations as a key instrument in maintaining international peace and security.

The role and tasks of United Nations peacekeeping have evolved over the past six decades. Today United Nations peacekeepers have broader and more diverse responsibilities than ever before. We recognize that the causes of conflict must be addressed from the very beginning and that our common job is increasingly to support the creation of conditions for sustainable peace.

We welcome the steps taken under the able leadership of Secretary-General Ban by the Secretariat to reform and restructure and provide adequate resources for the ever-growing and unprecedented demand for complex peacekeeping operations. There has been great progress in recent years.

Peacekeeping professionals deserve the highest praise for their dedication and willingness to shoulder that heavy responsibility. Many have given their lives to serve the cause of peace. We honour them and we remember them.

The United States shares the concerns of the international community with regard to the vulnerability of civilians who find themselves in the midst of conflict through no choice or fault of their own. Women and children are particularly vulnerable in those situations. The protection of civilians is now specifically included in half of the mandates of current peacekeeping operations. While the need for that protection is clear, how to achieve that goal is our most pressing collective challenge.

The United States looks forward to continuing the close cooperation we have enjoyed with our fellow Member States and with the professionals of the United

Nations as we work together to strengthen and foster peace.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Sahel (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): As we meet today to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of peacekeeping operations — under a negotiated format and in accordance with the rules of procedure — we have been surprised by, and we condemn, the violation of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly represented by your statement, Mr. President, on the issue of the Sahara. This is neither the place nor the time to discuss it, especially in the flagrantly partisan terms you have used, Mr. President.

This also involves an erroneous assessment of an ongoing political process under the Security Council that has the support of the international community. Your partisanship, Mr. President, is based on an inaccurate perception of the nature and scope of the political differences. We are perplexed by it. That is certainly not the best way to help the parties to arrive at a mutually acceptable political solution to a regional political dispute. For its part, my country has not lost sight of the purpose of this meeting, whose success we have spared no effort to ensure. As a country that has contributed troops to peacekeeping operations for more than 50 years, we honour the memory of the men and women who have sacrificed their lives to the cause of world peace.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker for this commemorative meeting.

We shall now proceed to the vote on draft resolution A/63/L.16, entitled “Sixtieth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping”. I should like to inform the Assembly that the following delegations have become sponsors of this draft resolution: Belarus, Israel, Malta, Monaco, Paraguay, the Russian Federation and Serbia.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/63/L.16?

Draft resolution A/63/L.16 was adopted (resolution 63/16).

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have thus concluded this commemorative meeting marking the sixtieth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 31.

Programme of work

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Before adjourning this meeting, I would like to inform members that, at the request of the sponsors, consideration of agenda item 12, "Prevention of armed conflict", originally scheduled for Monday, 10 November, will be postponed to a later date to be announced.

I would also like to inform members that some additions to the programme of work have been made

for Monday morning, 10 November 2008. The General Assembly will resume consideration of agenda item 69 entitled "Report of the International Criminal Court", and sub-item (n) of agenda item 114, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States", in order to take action on draft resolutions A/63/L.19 and A/63/L.20, respectively. At the same meeting, the Assembly will also take up sub-item (h) of agenda item 105, entitled "Appointment of a member of the Joint Inspection Unit".

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.