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Chair: Mr. Santillo (Vice-Chair)..... (Italy)

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In the absence of Mr. García González (El Salvador), Mr. Santillo (Italy), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 53: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects *(continued)*

1. **Mr. Masood Khan** (Pakistan) said that as a leading participant in United Nations peacekeeping missions, including the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), his country had a vital stake in the effectiveness and success of that endeavour. Pakistan contributed to the maintenance of international peace and security through the dedication and sacrifice of its men and women in the field and through its sustained engagement at the policy level in New York.

2. United Nations peacekeeping missions were operating in an increasingly complex and often perilous context. The current operational and policy challenges could only be addressed through collective action at the international and regional levels. The compartmentalization of roles, as troop or financial contributors or policymakers, was no longer tenable and developed countries must shoulder their responsibilities. Troop-contributing countries should have a greater say in policy matters, and there should be greater coherence between those who formulated mandates and those who implemented them.

3. Given the challenges faced by peacekeeping, it was unacceptable that the substantive work of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations was hindered by trivial matters of procedure. Those problems should be overcome and mechanisms for cooperation between troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat should be strengthened. During Pakistan's presidency of the Security Council, resolution 2086 (2013) had been adopted as the first comprehensive resolution on peacekeeping in over a decade, and Pakistan had worked hard to engage with troop- and police-contributing countries, recognizing that multidimensional missions played a key role in restoring peace and stability in complex crises.

4. Among the issues that required clarification was the use of force, arising mainly in the context of mandates related to the protection of civilians in armed

conflict. Many of those mandates had been carried out in conformity with the fundamental principles of peacekeeping: consent of the parties, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate. In that regard, Pakistan believed that the distinction between peacekeeping and peace enforcement must be maintained.

5. The use of force in United Nations peacekeeping must continue to be confined to the tactical level and governed by clear guidelines, since peacekeepers could not afford to be perceived as combatants. The Intervention Brigade deployed as part of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), under Security Council resolution 2098 (2013), was an exception and a temporary measure. In general, it was necessary to determine how best to protect civilians through prevention and effective patrolling, for which purpose adequate resources were required.

6. Sufficiently staffed and resourced missions were also the best guarantee of safety and security for troops and field personnel. In that connection, the increased frequency of attacks against United Nations missions in recent months was a matter of grave concern. Those attacks should be investigated thoroughly and the necessary measures taken to prevent their recurrence. Also important were new technologies, whose introduction and use enhanced mission resources and information-gathering capacities, thereby contributing to safety and security.

7. Pakistan supported the work of the Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries, and called for greater emphasis on end results. Success in the field depended on predeployment training and professional competence. In that regard, Pakistan had established a Centre for International Peace and Stability in Islamabad. To attain durable peace, political processes must accompany peacekeeping efforts. Host-country capacity-building and peacebuilding were essential for resolving intra-State conflicts. Inter-State conflicts also required resolution; otherwise, the United Nations agenda would remain unfulfilled.

8. For the future, there was a need for frank dialogue on the strategic direction of United Nations peacekeeping. The format and composition of United Nations missions impinged on policy, operational and other issues. Those trends should be analysed,

especially in terms of sustainability and impact on mandate delivery. Reform and innovation should continue so as to strengthen the United Nations peacekeeping architecture and to honour the men and women who served that noble cause.

9. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra Velásquez** (Peru) said that the fundamental reason for the establishment of the United Nations was the maintenance of international peace and security. The Organization accordingly would be judged on the success of its peacekeeping operations, which had come to incorporate a multitude of factors such as peace, security, sustainable development, respect for human rights, protection of civilians and so on. Such operations should seek not only to keep the peace but also to consolidate and sustain it. Peru believed that that was an inherently national process, and that peacekeeping operations must support national authorities in the implementation of development projects.

10. Peru regretted that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had not issued a report, since Member States should be able to keep such operations under review and to benefit from the Special Committee's policy and reform proposals. Peru did, however, welcome the increasing cooperation between the Special Committee and other United Nations bodies such as the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission.

11. The year 2013 marked 40 years of constant participation by Peru in peacekeeping missions, from the dispatch of the first "Peru Battalion" in 1973 following the conflict in the Middle East to the current participation of 374 Peruvians in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Peru welcomed the renewal of that Mission's mandate in Security Council resolution [2119 \(2013\)](#).

12. Peru considered that United Nations peacekeeping personnel should maintain the highest possible standards of ethical conduct. It supported the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy and vigorously condemned the behaviour of those who participated directly or indirectly in any inappropriate activities, especially sexual exploitation and abuse of civilians. Peru also expressed satisfaction at the systematic mainstreaming of the gender perspective in peacekeeping operations and at the inclusion of women as leaders in conflict resolution. Peru already had

female personnel in various peacekeeping operations and intended to increase their numbers in the future.

13. **Mr. Manzi** (Rwanda) said that while Rwanda recognized the challenges of the continuing changes in modern peacekeeping, it also appreciated the institution's adaptability and flexibility. As a result of the increasing number of attacks on peacekeepers, there was a responsibility to reduce risks and strengthen preventive measures.

14. Troop-contributing countries could not and should not be forced to shoulder the financial burden of peacekeeping operations. For that reason, Rwanda was currently participating in the survey to review rates of reimbursement to Member States. Further, as troop preparedness was essential to the success of peacekeeping missions, inter alia so as to protect civilians, Rwanda would participate in a project conducted by the Integrated Training Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and also in a workshop on gender-based violence. Such training initiatives should reflect mandate expectations and mission-specific needs.

15. Rwanda commended Secretariat efforts to engage troop-contributing countries in closing the chronic gap in force enablers, especially with regard to incentives to match the high costs incurred for certain equipment. In that connection, Rwanda had deployed three helicopters to South Sudan and would soon deploy a formed police unit to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

16. Recognizing that the use of force in peacekeeping could threaten the impartiality of a mission's operations and heighten the risks to civilian populations, Rwanda believed that peacekeepers should not be placed in active combat roles; the MONUSCO Intervention Brigade was an exception. Moreover, new technology should be used in an impartial and transparent manner in peacekeeping operations, since the use of technology such as unmanned aerial systems raised issues of information ownership and confidentiality.

17. While the increased participation of women in peacekeeping operations around the world was encouraging, more attention should be paid to the recruitment and training of female peacekeepers and to the integration of the gender perspective into peacekeeping actions, in line with Security Council

resolution 2122 (2013). In addition, the ties between peacekeeping and peacebuilding should be strengthened so as to guarantee national ownership of capacity-building and economic recovery. Quick-impact projects could also contribute to local development and win the hearts and minds of population groups.

18. As a troop-contributing country and a stakeholder in the future of international peace and security, Rwanda both affirmed its commitment, and paid tribute, to the men and women who placed others' well-being and safety above their own on a daily basis, and who had given their lives for that cause.

19. **Ms. Soemarno** (Indonesia) said that as United Nations peacekeeping operations evolved and became multidimensional, all stakeholders, including the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and host Governments, should be guided by the fundamental principles of peacekeeping. Similarly, peacekeepers and civilian components must be provided with the requisite equipment, resources and training so as to guarantee their safety and preserve the credibility of the United Nations.

20. Indonesia deeply regretted the impasse in the Special Committee's deliberations on substantive recommendations and urged all Member States to work together to overcome the stalemate. It was confident that with strong political determination and cooperation from all sides, the open-ended intersessional group of "friends of the Chair" could strengthen dialogue and expand commonalities among peacekeeping stakeholders. Further, respect for the fundamental principles of peacekeeping was essential to the success of operations. In the development of mandates, it was important to hold regular close consultations with stakeholders, especially police- and troop-contributing countries. Also, given the overlap between peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, the Security Council should plan ahead to ensure a seamless transition from peacekeeping to other forms of mission. While Blue Helmets were invariably entrusted with a variety of roles, their primary expertise was in peacekeeping, and giving them more long-term peacebuilding and development roles could affect their immediate peacekeeping responsibilities. In addition, the ongoing global civilian capacity review exercise would enable the requisite expertise to be better harnessed for conflict-affected countries.

21. Indonesia believed that the full, effective and equal participation of women in efforts to maintain and

promote peace was essential. In that regard, it was necessary further to bolster gender mainstreaming in both national and international peace and security endeavours. Indonesia expressed concern, however, regarding the use of private security companies in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations and looked forward to proper intergovernmental consideration of all aspects of such companies' work, as well as discussion of the use of modern technology in peacekeeping operations.

22. Finally, Indonesia underscored its commitment to United Nations peacekeeping, to which it had first contributed in 1957. It currently participated in nine peacekeeping missions and was the top troop contributor to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL); in addition, it was in the process of deploying one infantry battalion to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The noble and valiant work done by United Nations peacekeepers across the globe undoubtedly represented the best of the United Nations.

23. **Mr. Toro-Carnevali** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that United Nations peacekeeping operations had evolved over the past few decades from their traditional function of maintaining a ceasefire to include a variety of tasks such as election monitoring, disarmament and the protection of civilians. New doctrines had also emerged in the design and implementation of operations such as those envisaging the use of force outside the traditional sphere of self-defence and so-called hybrid operations that involved both the maintenance and the imposition of peace.

24. In that regard, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterated its position that peacekeeping operations must respect the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including non-interference in internal affairs, and also adhere to the fundamental principles of impartiality, non-use of force, and consent of the parties. Such operations must emphasize the use of political influence and integral support for the parties in the search for peaceful solutions, and must be part of, not an alternative to, political solutions to conflicts.

25. The General Assembly, through the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, was clearly responsible for considering new peacekeeping concepts and policies, and in that regard the strategies used by

certain countries to hamper the negotiations on the Special Committee's report for 2013 were regrettable. Venezuela considered that United Nations peacekeeping efforts should be accompanied by the sustained economic assistance of the international community to reduce poverty and inequality and achieve a firm and lasting peace. The affected States should be regarded not as victims, but as fundamental participants in the definition and implementation of a long-term peace and development agenda, in line with their right to self-determination.

26. **Mr. Sharoni** (Israel) said that Israel found itself in a region of the world where peace creation remained elusive, but peacekeeping operations were needed to maintain stability. Israel had closely cooperated with various United Nations peacekeeping missions for decades, and supported the strengthening of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), without any reduction in personnel, budget or other resources. The violence that had shaken Syria was sending shock waves through the Middle East.

27. **Mr. Hamed** (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking on a point of order, said that the agenda of the current meeting did not provide for discussion of the internal affairs of States, only for discussion of peacekeeping operations. Delegations, and particularly the delegation representing the Israeli occupation authorities, were therefore requested to adhere to the agenda item under consideration when addressing the Committee and refrain from disrupting its work.

28. **Mr. Sharoni** (Israel) said that Israel attached importance to UNIFIL as a stabilizing force in the region. With tensions and volatility escalating, Israel reaffirmed its commitment to Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), and called on its neighbours to do the same and to raise minor complaints in the tripartite mechanism as the most effective forum for addressing routine incidents.

29. The relative calm in southern Lebanon was deceptive. While the Government of Lebanon turned a blind eye to violations of resolution 1701 (2006), Hizbullah continued to build an army with tens of thousands of missiles. Indeed, in the eighteenth semi-annual report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) (S/2013/612), the Secretary-General stated that such actions created an atmosphere of intimidation and represented a key

challenge to the safety of Lebanese civilians. The Secretary-General had therefore called on the Lebanese Government and armed forces to stop the flow of weapons to Hizbullah.

30. In general terms, the aftershocks of the earthquake shaking the Middle East were being felt throughout the world and it was necessary to stand in defence of the values of freedom, democracy and peace. While Israel supported the United Nations forces serving on its borders as a stabilizing presence, it had recognized from its earliest days as a nation that it must also take responsibility for its own defence.

31. **Mr. Tissot-Daguette** (Switzerland) said that while MONUSCO had recently been strengthened, United Nations peacekeeping missions in general must demonstrate a capacity to react promptly to violence against civilians. In Mali, the creation of MINUSMA had made a major contribution to peace and security in the region.

32. Although those two missions had been in the spotlight, other missions of varying sizes had been conducted throughout the year, including the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), MINUSTAH and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). While the Member States tended to pay attention to the most complex and urgent issues, it was nevertheless necessary to fulfil commitments made regarding lower-level conflicts and peacekeeping missions in order to avoid the resumption of hostilities and establish sustainable peace, for example through UNDOF, which had operated in the occupied Syrian Golan since 1974 and was once again facing regional instability.

33. While peacekeeping was inherently dangerous, it was in no way acceptable that peacekeepers themselves should be targeted. Support for the Organization's efforts remained essential, and Member States should continue to raise awareness of the role played by peacekeepers and bring those who attacked them to justice in accordance with international humanitarian law.

34. Following a short period of consolidation, the demand for peacekeeping was again rising. Between January and August 2013, an average of 100 new peacekeepers per week had been selected, trained and sent on mission. In that regard, Member States should redouble their efforts to promote the participation of women in peacekeeping activities.

35. Modern technologies enabled peacekeeping operations to be conducted more effectively and reduced costs. They should be applied at all levels and should include text-messaging technologies for use in the case of a disaster. The unarmed unmanned aerial systems deployed in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo were a significant example. The lessons learned from that experience would be vital for determining the role of such technologies in future peacekeeping operations. In that connection, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support were encouraged to continue their evaluations of new technologies and to work together in that area with Member States.

36. Given the ongoing developments in technology and the challenges they presented, it was regrettable that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations still had difficulty in resolving relatively simple procedural issues. Since that Committee was the only forum in which troop contributors, large and small, took part in the discussion of peacekeeping doctrine, it was in Member States' interest that it should play its role fully within the peacekeeping architecture. What was required above all was a change in attitude. Partnership was the basis for sharing tasks and responsibilities, and could not be effective without negotiation and compromise on all sides.

37. **Mr. Ciss** (Senegal) commented that the African continent was one of the major beneficiaries of United Nations peacekeeping operations, in particular MINUSMA, MONUSCO and UNOCI. In that regard, the Organization should continue its strategic partnership with the African Union and different subregional entities with regard to technical, logistical and financial support. Senegal in particular had made a substantial contribution to international efforts to promote peace and security, and currently had a total of 2,934 soldiers and police in different theatres of operation.

38. United Nations peacekeeping missions should strive to be effective and should be based on clear, credible and realistic mandates with adequate provision of human, logistical and financial resources. Local and national ownership of peace processes in the countries concerned would be an additional guarantee of success and efficiency, and it was pleasing to note that the United Nations had adopted a forward-thinking and holistic approach that allowed for the adoption of improvements as required.

39. In that connection, the 2009 new partnership agenda extended and deepened the reform process already launched by the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (Brahimi report) (A/55/305-S/2000/809), aimed primarily at adapting peacekeeping operations to contemporary needs and future requirements in the context of more complex missions with higher costs. To preserve the Organization's image and consolidate its legitimacy in the eyes of the world, it was more important than ever that those operations should comply with the fundamental principles of consent, impartiality and the non-use of force in accordance with Security Council resolution 2086 (2013), since they contributed to the climate of trust that must exist between peacekeepers and the warring parties if peace was to be achieved. Similarly, Senegal emphasized the importance of compliance with the disciplinary standards in force, which called for full respect for the laws, habits and customs of host countries. It also welcomed the zero-tolerance policy introduced by the Secretary-General in relation to cases of sexual abuse.

40. **Mr. Hamed** (Syrian Arab Republic), noting that the United Nations bore primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, said that peacekeeping operations needed to maintain respect for sovereignty in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and to adhere to the three fundamental principles of consent of the parties, non-use of force and impartiality. Peacekeeping operations were no substitute for permanent solutions that addressed the root causes of conflict. Protection of civilians was primarily the host country's responsibility and should never be used as a pretext for interference in a country's internal affairs. A clear legal definition of the concept of civilian protection was therefore needed before the scope and parameters of operations to protect civilians could be established.

41. His country had always had excellent relations with the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and with UNDOF. Although peacekeeping operations were supposed to be temporary, Israel's continued aggression, occupation and refusal to abide by relevant United Nations resolutions had forced United Nations peacekeeping forces to remain in the Middle East for decades, at great financial and human cost. Syria urged the United Nations to exert pressure on Israel to end its occupation of Arab land and cease its aggression against the countries and peoples of the

region so that peacekeepers could return home to their families.

42. The Israeli occupation authorities continued to threaten and attack peacekeepers and assist Al-Qaida-affiliated terrorist groups in the area of separation in the Golan. Those groups had abducted United Nations personnel, targeted their positions and stolen equipment bearing the United Nations emblem. Wounded terrorists had been transported over the line of separation to Israeli hospitals, where they had received treatment before being returned to Syrian territory, again over the line of separation, in order to resume their terrorist activities. Not only did Israel's assistance to those terrorists blatantly violate the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian Forces, the mandate of UNDOF and international law; it also hindered the work of peacekeepers and placed their lives at risk.

43. **Mr. Mohamed** (Sudan) said that his country had provided a successful, pioneering example of host-country cooperation with a peacekeeping mission in the case of UNAMID. His delegation insisted that peacekeeping operations must be in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the fundamental principles of peacekeeping. The use of force must be confined to self-defence, in line with those principles.

44. It was essential to examine the root causes of conflicts and to find lasting, comprehensive solutions to all their political and economic aspects. That required closer coordination between peacekeeping missions and host Governments. Peacekeeping operations were not a substitute for a political process. To be successful, they must be accorded political support, the authority delegated to them must be limited and their exit strategy must be clearly defined and quick to implement once peace was achieved. Peacekeeping missions must also be capable of addressing the challenges posed by criminal and terrorist groups.

45. To facilitate the work of peacekeeping missions and ensure that they successfully fulfilled their mandates, troop-contributing countries needed to be more involved in the formulation of guidelines and policies governing those operations and in decision-making in the context of triangular cooperation among those countries, the Secretariat and the Security Council. The United Nations had a critical role to play in ensuring the success of peacekeeping operations,

including by encouraging all parties to a conflict to enter negotiations with clearly defined goals so that peacekeeping operations were deployed in a safe and stable environment.

46. **Ms. Gankhurai** (Mongolia) said that approximately 1,000 military officers from Mongolia were serving in six United Nations peacekeeping operations, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Darfur and South Sudan. Peacekeepers were often deployed in extremely unstable and dangerous situations and they must be adequately trained and equipped to fulfil their mandates. High priority must, moreover, be given to ensuring their safety and security. In that regard, Mongolia condemned the deliberate attacks perpetrated by certain parties against United Nations peacekeepers.

47. Because troop- and police-contributing countries bore ultimate responsibility for the success of peacekeeping missions, they must be involved in decision-making, and trilateral cooperation between those countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat must be strengthened with a view to ensuring that peacekeeping missions fulfilled their mandates. In that connection, Mongolia urged the Secretariat to redouble its efforts to increase the number of staff from troop- and police-contributing countries working in the Department of Field Support and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Moreover, Mongolia regretted that the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations had not reached agreement on key issues and hoped that the open-ended intersessional group of "friends of the Chair" would facilitate progress in that regard.

48. **Mr. Wehbi** (Lebanon) said that peacekeeping should be seen not as an end in itself, but as a step towards the permanent resolution of conflict. Enhancing the role of peacekeeping and political missions could, however, strengthen efforts by the international community to promote peace and uphold the rights of people in war-torn societies to liberty, security and prosperity. Civil affairs activities could provide a critical link between peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts by facilitating the extension of State authority and establishing social conditions that were conducive to peace. Moreover, the sharing of best practices and closer collaboration among United Nations entities and local, national and regional actors would enable resources to be allocated more effectively to address key priorities in the field.

49. The Lebanese Government commended efforts by UNIFIL, which, in close collaboration with people in southern Lebanon, was striving to promote community development, and lauded efforts by UNIFIL and the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon to manage resources effectively and make better use of data to promote the efficiency of operations. The appointment of more women to leadership positions by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was welcome. UNIFIL had appointed female peacekeepers as platoon commanders, medical officers, military police officers and demining team members.

50. Lebanon called for full implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) and commended efforts by the international community to compel Israel to withdraw its forces completely from Lebanese territory and refrain from violating Lebanon's sovereignty. To that end, the Lebanese armed forces continued to work closely with UNIFIL, including through the tripartite mechanism, and were striving to enhance the operational readiness of the Lebanese army.

51. Israeli landmines, cluster munitions and explosive remnants of war continued to cause casualties among Lebanese civilians, and Lebanon remained committed to the goals of the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018. Lebanon was deeply grateful to all troop-contributing countries and lauded the commitment of UNIFIL personnel serving in that country. Crimes such as the Israeli attacks in 2006 on the premises of the Fiji contingent of UNIFIL and on an UNTSO position must never be repeated.

52. **Mr. Kyslytsya** (Ukraine) said that Ukraine had participated in more than 20 United Nations missions over the previous 20 years, contributing more than 34,000 troops to United Nations peacekeeping efforts around the world.

53. Regretting that the Special Committee had not submitted a report that year, he urged the Secretariat to do its utmost to implement the recommendations contained in the Special Committee's previous report, including enhancing the legal mechanisms for investigating and prosecuting crimes against United Nations peacekeepers. Ukraine remained deeply concerned that the Secretariat had afforded inadequate attention to the safety and security of peacekeeping missions, especially in connection with helicopter procurement, and supported the Special Committee's

request to the Secretariat to identify the factors that prevented troop-contributing countries from providing military helicopters. Ukraine supported the implementation of the Senior Advisory Group's recommendations concerning reimbursement for key, highly specialized military assets, but believed that a long-term solution would require more robust incentives for countries that contributed military helicopters. His delegation fully supported the Group's recommendations as to the need for the reimbursement system to recognize the different levels of risk incurred in different United Nations missions, in order to secure broader and more effective participation in even the most demanding missions. It also supported the Group's call for troop- and police-contributing countries to interact more systematically with the Security Council.

54. Ukraine welcomed the progress made on developing the strategic guidance framework for international police, as there was a clear need to enhance standardization among police peacekeeping activities carried out under the auspices of the United Nations and other international organizations. To further that endeavour, Ukraine had hosted an event in March 2013 that had been attended by police experts from the Euro-Atlantic and Central Asian regions and representatives of regional and international organizations. Ukraine also commended the establishment of a group of friends of United Nations police, and the initiative of the Secretary-General in appointing the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Development Programme as the global focal point for police, justice and corrections in post-conflict and other crisis situations, which would enhance the ability of the Organization to fill critical civilian capacity gaps in the aftermath of conflicts.

55. Ukraine would continue to support efforts to train police officers for peacekeeping missions and was keen to be certified by the Organization as a provider of effective, professional and integrated predeployment training for police peacekeepers. To that end, the Secretariat had recently evaluated the Ukrainian Ministry of the Interior peacekeeping centre, to ensure that its courses complied with the core values, competencies and standards of the Organization.

56. **Mr. Ilichev** (Russian Federation) said that the Russian Federation attached primary importance to United Nations peacekeeping and considered it to be the main instrument for guaranteeing international

peace and security. The role played by the United Nations in conflict zones included peacekeeping operations and special political missions, and funds and programmes in the field. In deciding how the United Nations should react to crises, emphasis must be given to the situation on the ground and the nature of existing threats in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to enhance the effectiveness of the action taken.

57. While the two thirds of peacekeepers who wore military uniforms had always been assigned difficult tasks, their mission mandates, aimed increasingly at resolving the root causes of conflicts, were becoming more and more complex. The protection of civilians was one of their most important tasks, but his delegation was seriously concerned about the increasing tendency towards an overly free interpretation of international humanitarian law provisions relating to the protection of civilians in armed conflict, and even the conflation of those provisions with the ambiguous concept of responsibility to protect.

58. Each peacekeeping operation should have clear political goals and peacekeepers must strictly observe the terms of their mandates on the basis of impartiality and non-interference in internal political conflict. The Russian Federation believed that the so-called strengthening of mandates raised a number of issues, including the definition of parameters for the use of force and the achievement of international consensus regarding the aims of such missions. All those factors called for a carefully balanced discussion among Member States, and required high-level military expertise and resources from regional organizations. For example, the best way to deal with the worsening crisis in the Central African Republic was for Governments in the subregion to provide peacekeeping forces under the aegis of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA).

59. The Russian Federation considered that the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization offered good possibilities for the development of partnerships in the peacekeeping arena. Such partnerships were particularly important in view of the growing demands being placed on the Organization's peacekeeping resources. In connection with the Secretary-General's intention to transfer one battalion from MONUSCO to the Central African Republic, his delegation wondered whether the situation in the Democratic Republic of the

Congo had improved to the extent that a MONUSCO contingent could be spared, and whether the planning for troop deployment actually corresponded to the reality of the task at hand.

60. On the whole, it was necessary to establish a permanent dialogue on all aspects of peacekeeping operations between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries so that the mandates of such operations could be more clearly and realistically defined and their implementation more closely monitored. He hoped that the discussions in the Fourth Committee would lead to further strengthening of the effectiveness of operations, which should be carried out in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, so as to fulfil the primary obligation of the Security Council, i.e. the maintenance of international peace and security.

61. **Mr. DeLaurentis** (United States of America) said that his country deeply appreciated the dedication of peacekeepers serving around the world and extended its sympathy to the families of the 79 peacekeepers who had died in the first 10 months of 2013.

62. United Nations peacekeepers were key partners in efforts to help fragile States transition from violent conflict to durable stability. Although they were facing new challenges and risks, innovative approaches to peacekeeping were facilitating their work. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Intervention Brigade had recently been established and unmanned aerial vehicles were to be used to protect civilians more effectively. Meanwhile, the United Nations was helping to strengthen the police and the rule of law in Liberia as that country's Government prepared for the end of peacekeeping operations.

63. Peacekeeping was a collective endeavour that required the cooperation of relevant States and the expertise and dedication of many stakeholders, including police and military officers and civilians, both in the field and at headquarters. The protection of civilians was central to that crucial endeavour, for reasons of human decency but also as the foundation for stable governance. If societies were to function, people must be able to carry out their daily activities in safety. The United States hoped that a broad range of Member States would participate in the efforts of the Organization to develop professional guidance and standards for a wide range of military specialties, in addition to a strategic guidance framework to enhance

the effectiveness of the United Nations police in peace operations.

64. Despite the dedication and exemplary conduct of most peacekeepers, incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse by a few bad actors continued to occur. Member States and United Nations leaders in the field must take action to halt misconduct and to discipline those who abused their positions of trust.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

65. **Mr. Sharoni** (Israel) said that, by undermining the democratic principles of the General Assembly and making baseless allegations against Israel, the representative of Syria wished to draw attention away from his country's brutal and horrific crimes, which included mass murder and trampling on the freedom of the Syrian people. Although Israel and Syria had a long history of conflict and were separated by politics and religion, they were eternally linked by their common humanity. Israel was horrified by the suffering that the Syrian people had endured and would continue to offer assistance to any Syrian civilian in need.

66. Lebanese Government forces were making no attempt to prevent violations of the Blue Line. Such violations had become much more frequent over the previous two months; in September 2013, the Blue Line had been violated 49 times by members of Hizbullah and other armed persons. It was shocking to hear the Lebanese representative criticize Israel when Hizbullah, a member of the Lebanese regime, was so intimately involved in the killing of innocent Syrians.

67. **Mr. Hamed** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the representative of the Israeli occupation authorities had made false and misleading allegations in a desperate attempt to conceal the fact that Israel was assisting terrorist groups in the area of separation in the Occupied Syrian Golan, as well as the fact that Israel's occupation of Arab land was the reason that three peacekeeping missions were deployed in the region. It would have been more appropriate if the representative, rather than expressing hollow and insincere support for those missions, had called for an end to the Israeli occupation so that peacekeepers could return safely to their homes and families.

68. The representative's comments were all the more shocking since Israel held the record for acts of aggression against peacekeeping forces and United Nations premises, including the deliberate targeting of

the premises of the Fiji contingent of UNIFIL in 1996, which had resulted in the deaths of 106 civilians. Furthermore, according to a statement by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan and a report of the Canadian Armed Forces, several UNTSO observers had been killed when Israel had deliberately targeted their position. Israel had also targeted the Tanzanian and Spanish contingents operating in southern Lebanon.

69. The Israeli occupation authorities still refused to hand over the maps showing the locations of the munitions remaining in southern Lebanon, thereby ensuring further casualties among civilians and United Nations peacekeepers, even though many years had elapsed since the end of hostilities in 2006. Israel's claim that it was providing humanitarian assistance to Syrian civilians was also bogus. Instead, it was providing medical treatment to members of terrorist groups operating in the separation zone, including those affiliated with Al-Qaida, so that they could resume their terrorist activities in Syrian territory, thereby putting the lives of civilians and of United Nations personnel operating there at risk.

70. **Mr. Wehbi** (Lebanon) said that it was an undisputed fact that, over the years, Israel had targeted United Nations personnel and premises in Lebanon, and had attacked, inter alia, UNIFIL and UNTSO positions. Lebanon sincerely hoped that such heinous crimes, which it strongly condemned, would never be repeated. Recalling that Israel had violated Lebanese territory, airspace and territorial waters more than 10,000 times, he urged the United Nations to compel Israel to completely withdraw its armed forces from his country. Israel had, moreover, dropped more than 4 million cluster munitions over Lebanese villages and fields during the final two days of its brutal aggression against Lebanon in 2006, affecting almost 20 per cent of Lebanese territory. That heinous and ongoing crime continued to prevent civilians from using their land, roads and homes.

71. **Mr. Sharoni** (Israel) said that by killing over 100,000 Syrian citizens, the Syrian Government had revealed that it was an expert at using chemical weapons and perpetrating acts of terrorism. The statements by the Syrian representative had, moreover, demonstrated that his country was an expert at disseminating lies and disinformation.

72. **Mr. Hamed** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, rather than disseminating lies, he had merely drawn

attention to the conclusions of United Nations reports. The Israeli occupation authorities continued to violate international law and United Nations resolutions and must answer for the crimes they had committed against peacekeepers in the region. The Israeli representative should apologize for what was known by the entire international community: as part of a deliberate policy of violence, his country continued to target those who sought to uphold peace.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.