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PEACEKEEPING'S BEST ASSURANCE AGAINST INSECURITY IN FIELD WAS WELL-PLANNED MISSION

WHERE THERE WAS PEACE TO KEEP, FOURTH COMMITTEE HEARS AS IT LAUNCHES DEBATE

Complex Nature of Peace Operations Calls for Robust, Streamlined Peacemaking, Peacebuilding, Sometimes 'Peace Enforcing'; Early Troop Contributor Involvement

The changing and increasingly complex nature of peacekeeping operations called for more coordinated, robust, streamlined peacemaking, peacebuilding and sometimes even "peace enforcing", the Fourth Committee was told today, as it launched its general debate on the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

Because the best assurance against the risks of insecurity in the field was a well-planned mission, said Morocco's representative on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, whose member countries supplied more than 80 per cent of peacekeeping personnel in the field, those should not be deployed in a void or in places where the political process was non-existent or compromised.

Troop-contributing countries should be involved early and fully in all stages of operations, she stressed, urging more frequent and substantive interaction among the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries, as that could contribute to a more inclusive decision-making process.

She reiterated the Movement's principled position on peacekeeping — that the establishment of any operation or extension of its mandate should strictly observe United Nations Charter principles, particularly, the consent of the parties, the non-use of force except in self-defence, and impartiality.

Throughout the morning meeting, speakers debated how to improve and enhance the Organization's peacekeeping doctrine to address the most precarious conflicts. The discussion unfolded against the backdrop of the multifaceted challenges facing a number of missions, including last year's forced withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and the, as yet, unfulfilled mandate of the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

Expressing particular concern over the challenges of mobilizing resources for the ambitious mandate of UNAMID was Australia's representative. He, along with several other speakers, said that one lesson of the Brahimi Report was the need for "clear and achievable mandates with resources to match".

Speaking on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand (CANZ), he urged the Secretariat and Sudan, the host Government, to work better in overcoming that Mission's problems, but also cautioned against raising peacekeeping expectations that the international community could not meet.

Sudan's Ambassador said his Government had completely implemented its obligations under Security Council resolution 1769 (2007), concerning UNAMID. It was also completely committed to the deployment of 80 per cent of the UNAMID force and to reaching a political solution to the Darfur conflict. There was now a coordinating body for those political negotiations, and an effort had been launched at the national level to serve as a complement to the regional initiative. The world community should protect that peace process from any sabotage or adventurism.

He said that whenever peacekeeping operations were deployed, there should be a peace to keep. The principles developed over the last 60 years — namely consent of the parties, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defence — should not be bypassed or reinterpreted.

Echoing that thought, the representative of Indonesia said that any attempts to redefine the conditions of self-defence in peacekeeping should be avoided, as the concept of self-defence had been “exhaustively” defined by international law, and was subjected to conditions of necessity and proportionality.

The representative of Nepal, which is among the top five troop-contributing countries and currently has personnel serving in 13 missions, said that even while those core values should be respected, the Security Council should “refine” mission mandates to account for the complexities and challenges of the field — including by adjusting the rules of engagement for field personnel when necessary.

Other speakers said that due to the high number of peacekeeping missions deployed in Africa, particular attention should be paid to peacekeeping capacities on that continent. The relationship between the United Nations and the African Union, and other regional organizations, should be enhanced. Specifically, Algeria’s speaker said the Organization should provide more information on its ambitions and intentions in supporting the Union. That would allow for a better understanding about the roles that the United Nations hoped to play, and would provide a framework for how a collective response could be made to Africa’s needs.

Several delegations highlighted the contributions their countries were already making. France’s representative, speaking on behalf of the European Union, highlighted Europe’s efforts to step up cooperation with the African Union, notably through the Africa Peace Facility. Japan’s representative said his Government had provided approximately \$2.2 million to launch the activities of the Chadian Police for Humanitarian Protection and another \$15.5 million to support peacekeeping training centres in Africa. Japan also welcomed the formation of the African Union-United Nations Panel on Peacekeeping.

Pointing to one recent — and significant -- non-African case, the representative of Brazil said that the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) had provided an opportunity to practice an integrated approach to peacekeeping. An important aspect of the mandate of that Mission, which had been deployed in 2004, had been the implementation of quick impact projects, which provided people with the “dividends of peace”. Unfortunately, the recent hurricanes and the global food crisis had risked Haiti’s recent progress, and she urged all actors to keep supporting Haiti and MINUSTAH in their quest for stability, reconciliation, reconstruction and development.

Picking up that thread, the representative of Mexico, who spoke on behalf of the Rio Group, stressed that such support should be given within established agreements on reconstruction and development, so that the Haitian population’s immediate needs could be met and their widespread poverty addressed through a sustainable development lens.

In other business, the Committee concluded its consideration of peaceful uses of outer space by approving a draft resolution, as orally amended, without a vote on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (document A/C.4/63/L.2/Rev2). The representative of Colombia introduced that draft resolution.

Also speaking during the general debate on peacekeeping were the representatives of Morocco (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Cuba, Syria, Russian Federation, Israel and Fiji.

The representatives of Syria, Iran and Israel spoke in exercise of the right of reply.

The Committee also observed a moment of silence in honour of the 2,518 United Nations peacekeepers who had lost their lives in the maintenance of peace and security during the last six decades.

The Fourth Committee will continue its general debate on peacekeeping operations in all their aspects at 10 a.m. on Monday, 27 October.

Background

The Fourth Committee met this morning to begin its general debate on the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

It had before it a draft resolution on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (document A/C.4/63/L.2/Rev.1). By that text, the General Assembly would urge States that have not yet become parties to the international treaties governing the uses of outer space to consider ratifying or acceding to those treaties, in accordance with their domestic law, as well as incorporating them in their national legislation.

By further terms, it would emphasize that regional and interregional cooperation in the field of space activities is essential to strengthen the peaceful uses of outer space, assist States in the development of their space capabilities and contribute to the achievement of the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. It would also note, with appreciation, that some States are already implementing space debris mitigation measures on a voluntary basis and would further invite other Member States to implement, through relevant national mechanisms, the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which it had endorsed in resolution 62/217.

The text would also have the Assembly urge all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space. It would also emphasize the need to increase the benefits of space technology and its applications, and to contribute to an orderly growth of space activities favourable to sustained economic growth and sustainable development in all countries, including mitigation of the consequences of disasters, in particular in the developing countries.

By the text's other provisions, the Assembly would urge entities of the United Nations system, particularly those participating in the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, to examine, in cooperation with the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, how space science and technology, and their applications, could contribute to implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration on the development agenda. It would also note, with satisfaction, the progress made within the framework of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER).

The Assembly would also, by the text, urge all Member States to contribute to the Trust Fund for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, to enhance the capacity of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to provide technical and legal advisory services and initiate pilot projects in accordance with the Committee's plan of action. It would agree that the Committee should continue to consider, at its fifty-second session, its agenda item entitled "Space and water" and to consider an item entitled "International cooperation in promoting the use of space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development". It would include two new items entitled "Space and climate change" and "Use of space technology in the United Nations system".

By still other terms, the Assembly would also urge the Group of African States and the Group of Eastern European States to nominate their candidates for the office of First Vice Chair of the Committee and Chair of the Committee, respectively, for the period 2010-2011. It would request entities of the United Nations system and other international organizations to continue and, where appropriate, to enhance their cooperation with the Committee and to provide it with reports on the issues dealt with in the Committee and its subsidiary bodies.

Action on Draft Resolution

Introducing the draft resolution on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (document A/C.4/63/L.2/Rev.1), the representative of Colombia said the draft text referred to the work to be undertaken in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies, in the year that lay ahead. It had the same format as previous years. Its content, which had been examined in its substance during the meetings of the Working Group of the Whole, was also similar. Making one slight edit, he said the date in operative paragraph 23 should be changed from 2008 to 2009.

The Committee then adopted the draft resolution, as orally amended, without a vote, thus concluding its consideration of peaceful uses of outer space.

General Statements

SOUAD EL ALAOUI (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that the present context of United Nations peacekeeping highlighted the importance of the guiding principles governing these operations. She reiterated the Movement's principled position on

peacekeeping, as articulated at all its conferences and summits, that the establishment of any peacekeeping operation or the extension of any of its mandates should strictly observe the purpose and principles of the United Nations Charter, as well as those principles that had evolved in the peacekeeping doctrines. She particularly highlighted the consent of the parties, the non-use of force except in self-defence, and impartiality. Emphasis should also be placed on the principles of sovereign equality, political independence, territorial integrity of all States and non-intervention in matters that were essentially within domestic jurisdiction.

She said the debate on peacekeeping issues should not duplicate, but should reinforce the discussions of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. Providing more than 80 per cent of peacekeeping personnel in the field, the Movement believed that the United Nations held primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and that any regional arrangement should be taken in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter and should not in any way substitute for the United Nations role in that respect. Expressing support for continuing efforts to strengthen African peacekeeping capacities, she emphasized the importance of the Joint Action Plan for United Nations support to the African peacekeeping capacities over the short, medium and long terms.

Continuing, she said that those operations should be provided political support; sufficient human, financial and logistical resources; clearly defined and achievable mandates and exit strategies; and be accompanied by a parallel and inclusive peace process. Consistency in the use of agreed peacekeeping terminology was important, and any discussion of that vocabulary should be done through an intergovernmental process. Reaffirming the General Assembly's primary role within the Organization in formulating concepts, policy and budgetary matters relating to peacekeeping, she further said the Special Committee was the only United Nations forum mandated to comprehensively review peacekeeping operations in all their aspects. Taking note, also, of the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, she stressed the need to preserve the unity of command at all levels. The functioning of the Integrated Mission Planning Process was also important.

Because the best assurance against the risks of insecurity in the field was a well-planned mission, she said that those should not be deployed in a void or in places where the political process was non-existent or compromised. Troop-contributing countries should be involved early and fully in all stages of operations. More frequent and substantive interaction among the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop-contributing countries was needed, since that could contribute to a more inclusive decision-making process. Also, the revised Draft Model Memorandums of Understanding adopted by the General Assembly should be implemented. Security sector reform should be integrated into the broad framework of United Nations rule of law activities to ensure that such activities were not duplicated. A concerted effort should also be made by Member States, supported by the Secretariat, to deepen a common understanding of peacekeeping operations and a common vision for further solutions, in order to overcome the controversy, which had prevented the adoption of the Special Committee's report on time.

She said the Movement remained concerned over its underrepresentation in the staffing of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and [the Department of] Field Support, and called on the Secretary-General to address that current imbalance in representation. She stressed that all Member States should pay their assessed contributions in full, so that outstanding reimbursements to troop-contributing countries could be made. In closing, she expressed regret that the Movement's proposal for a special high-level meeting in the General Assembly had not materialized, and she called for a minute of silence in respect of those personnel who had lost their lives in the maintenance of peace.

The Chairman then invited the Member States to rise and observe a moment of silence.

JEAN-MAURICE RIPERT ([France](#)), speaking on behalf of the European Union, reiterated the relevance and merit of the Brahimi Report, and said it should continue to guide the Committee and international community in strengthening the capacities and efficiencies of peacekeeping operations. The Union and United Nations convergent conception of crisis management had facilitated closer cooperation over the past few years. Those organizations shared the conviction that all available instruments -- political, civil and military -- should be mobilized, so that the crisis management could transition to the peacebuilding phase as smoothly as possible.

He said that the Union had played a major role in peacekeeping in recent years, and last year's launch of the Stability Instrument had made it even better equipped to respond rapidly and flexibly to crises. The Union was currently the largest financial contributor to United Nations-led peacekeeping operations at more than 40 per cent of the budget, as well as almost 12 per cent of

uniformed personnel — Blue Helmets -- to United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Union was also stepping up cooperation with the African Union, notably through the Africa Peace Facility, and had supported other United Nations peacekeeping efforts in Georgia, by facilitating mediation to reach a ceasefire, and deploying more than 210 European observers to complement the United Nations and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) missions.

The European Union had also offered unilateral protection for World Food Programme (WFP) vessels, from piracy in the waters off Somalia, he noted, adding that piracy had become a global threat. The Union was in the process of establishing new forms of operational cooperation with the United Nations, in regard to maritime activities. He noted the significance of the new principles and guidelines for United Nations peacekeeping operations, and urged a speeding up of development of all parts of the “doctrinal corpus”. In that regard, he welcomed the development of the formed police units, which would provide greater clarity to Member States and missions, in terms of those units’ roles and functions.

He said that greater efforts should be made to enhance coordination between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other relevant United Nations entities. He strongly condemned the recent targeted attacks on United Nations personnel and called for improved cooperation between troop contributing countries, the Peacekeeping Operations Department, and the Department of Safety and Security, and the use of advanced technology to improve safety. He reiterated the importance of preventative activities and adequate pre-deployment in peacekeeping operations, along with measures to ensure full accountability in cases of misconduct. In closing, he paid tribute to the 2,518 United Nations peacekeepers who had lost their lives “in the name of peace” during the operation’s 60-year history.

CLAUDE HELLER (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, noted the Organization’s efforts to streamline and strengthen its peacekeeping operations, and said that, as capacity and operational activities were strengthened, the leadership and efficiency of those operations would be increased. On doctrinal issues facing those operations, he underlined the consent of all parties, impartiality, and non-use of force, except in cases of self-defence and those cases where the mandate of the Organization was being defended.

He further noted that the agreed restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had resulted in the creation of the Department of Field Support, and at the same time, the zero-tolerance policy had been established. There should be strong follow-up on both fronts. In that, the role of the memorandums of understanding in strengthening the response to such abuse should be kept in mind. He pointed to the Special Committee as the ideal venue for Member States to be heard on the topic. Its work should be strengthened, however, and hopefully, its reports could be adopted on time. Furthermore, everything possible should be done to ensure the unified chain of command; it was essential that tight coordination between the Departments of Peacekeeping and Field Support be maintained. Greater coordination was also needed between the troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat, as that would allow for successful implementation of the operations’ mandates. Additional reform work was also needed in procurement, among other areas.

Continuing, he reaffirmed the Group’s commitment to the zero-tolerance policy. It was also a priority to ensure the safety and security of the personnel. That topic should be considered in depth in the Special Committee. Saluting the people of Haiti, he underlined the Group’s support to United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and welcomed the recent renovation of that operation’s mandate. Haiti had been greatly affected by recent natural disasters, and support should be given to that country within established agreements on reconstruction and development, so that the population’s immediate needs could be met and the widespread poverty addressed, through sustainable development. All efforts should also be made to strengthen and train peacekeeping personnel. Training in Portuguese could add to their capabilities. Expressing concern that some troop-contributing countries had not been reimbursed for their contributions, he called on Member States that had not paid their dues to do so.

KERRY O’BRIEN (Australia), speaking on behalf of the CANZ group of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, said that calls for increased United Nations peacekeeping must be answered in the most effective manner. Key lessons from the Brahimi Report must be remembered, particularly the need for “clear and achievable mandates with resources to match”. In that context, CANZ had concerns over the challenges of mobilizing resources for the ambitious mandate of the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). He urged the Secretariat and the host Government to work better in overcoming that Mission’s problems, but also cautioned against raising peacekeeping expectations that the international community could not meet.

Turning to management issues, he expressed concern that the Integrated Operational Teams were not performing the role envisaged; improvement would require the full support of the senior staff of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. He also expressed interest in knowing the results of the placement of the Police Division within the Office of the Rule of Law and Security Institutions. He urged that next year's restructured update report be made available to Member States prior to the 2009 session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, and that competent staff be quickly recruited to fill the remaining posts in the effort to strengthen the Office of Military Affairs, which he hoped would be further augmented with strategic analysis capacity. Early and integrated planning for missions through the Integrated Mission Planning Process required a focal point within the Secretariat.

He stressed the need for greater coherence across mission components and with country teams in all missions. He said that the development of a clear guidance doctrine for missions was a priority, including guidance on protection of civilians and the role of formed police units. Support for security sector reform must be based on local ownership, democratic civilian control and whole-system integration. In addition, he looked forward to updates on progress on using new technology and better planning to protect peacekeepers. In the interest of lessening risk, military helicopters assigned to United Nations missions must come under the command of the Force Commander. Finally, he called for rigorous adherence to the zero-tolerance policy on sexual abuse, and he requested a briefing on changes in training of peacekeepers.

REBECA HERNÁNDEZ TOLEDANO (Cuba), supporting the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that much had changed since the establishment of peacekeeping operations 60 years ago. The current operations faced many challenges and used the most United Nations resources, as it was one of the most central instruments of the Organization to maintain international peace and security.

She said there had been a quantitative increase in operations, which were increasingly multifaceted and complex. Cuba had endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to restructure the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, with the creation of the Department of Field Support, and hoped that the restructuring would help meet the shifting demands of the mandate. The creation of a more complex Department of Peacekeeping Operations could not substitute for addressing and solving the root of problems, but must serve as a temporary measure pending a long-term strategy for economic and social development to take hold; otherwise, vicious cycles would not be broken.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations must respect the sovereignty of States and must not interfere with territorial integrity, she said. Rather, there must be consent, impartiality and the non-use of force, except for self-defence. Peacekeeping missions must have clear goals, as well as the resources necessary to achieve them. An exit strategy was also essential. She recognized the regional arrangements' value for peacekeeping operations, but reiterated that such arrangements should be in step with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

Also crucial was to accelerate cooperation between troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat, as that could lead to a more inclusive and active process at all stages of peacekeeping. The developing troop-contributing countries were particularly affected by a lack of more frequent and substantive interaction. There should also be more equitable geographic distribution on the ground, as a clear imbalance in those posts favoured the developed countries. Also crucial was to maintain a zero-tolerance policy with regard to sexual exploitation and abuse committed by United Nations personnel and staff. Measures to combat those crimes should be implemented without delay.

MARIA LUIZA RIBEIRO VIOTTI (Brazil) said the significant increase in the deployment of troops and police in peacekeeping missions around the world and the corresponding increase in their budgets, totalling more than \$7 billion, was a significant strain on the Organization and its Member States. There was still an unclear limit to the capacity of troop-and police-contributing countries needed to meet the needs of the new operations. At the same time, the present financial crisis threatened to divert essential resources from peacekeeping. In that context, it was important to ensure that the mandates were realistic and that all missions received the necessary means.

She said she was particularly concerned about the hybrid Mission in Darfur. UNAMID was well behind in its deployment and was suffering from significant logistical and financial constraints. Brazil supported the Secretary-General's efforts to accelerate its deployment, which was essential to the safety of the local population. Brazil strongly condemned all acts of violence against UNAMID and underlined that need to bring perpetrators to justice.

Since 2004, Brazil had been a troop-contributing country in MINUSTAH, which was an important opportunity to practice an integrated approach to peacekeeping, she said. An important aspect of that Mission's mandate was the implementation of quick impact projects, which provided people with the "dividends of peace". The hurricane and global food crisis had risked the Haiti's recent progress. She urged all actors to keep supporting Haiti and MINUSTAH in their quest for stability, reconciliation, reconstruction and development. Brazil's experience in Haiti had inspired its coordination of the country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission for Guinea-Bissau.

Brazil had contributed to United Nations peacekeeping operations since 1948, she said, adding that her country had sent more than 20,000 military, police and civilians to missions and was proud to be part of that success story. She paid tribute to all those in the past 60 years who had lost their lives or been injured in the service of peace.

MOHAMED SOFIANE BERRAH (Algeria), endorsing the statement on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that in the past 60 years, United Nations peacekeeping operations had been transformed, particularly with the publication of the Brahimi Report, which had stressed the effectiveness of integrated and hybrid missions. Indeed, it took note of the different nature of conflicts and stressed that a flexible response was needed, so that the possibility of a spillover of unstable climates could be taken into account, and a focus on creating a climate of stability, so that peace could take hold, could be ensured.

He said that regional agreements should be respected in peacekeeping operations, particularly if there was an expressed will for regional organizations to assume the difficult responsibilities of peacekeeping. Established structures and arrangements between the United Nations and those organizations should be respected and maintained. Happily, inroads had been made in that area. Yet, because Africa was still at the heart of the Organization's rethinking of peacekeeping operations, support should be given to the proactive approach taken by the continent to establish a standby force, so that it did not have to depend on the international community for preventing and responding to conflict.

Also, he suggested that coordination between the African Union and the United Nations should be enhanced. Towards that goal, the Organization should provide more information on its ambitions and intentions in supporting the Union. That would allow for a better understanding about the roles that the United Nations hoped to play, and would provide a framework for how a collective response could be made to specific needs articulated by African players.

He said that financial support had not been sufficiently addressed by donor countries, which had not given enough attention to strengthening long-term capacities of such bodies as the African Union. Hopefully, new tracks of cooperation would emerge. Non-compliance by belligerent factions also remained a major impediment to responding to conflicts. That political problem extended to the range of different scenarios requiring peacekeeping operations, and it was clear that the political arena had to be addressed in such operations. Goals that were too ambitious or mandates that did not receive sufficient means for their implementation created problems. Exit strategies should also be considered to prevent instances of withdrawals, as had been seen in Eritrea and Ethiopia.

ABDALMAHMOOD ABDALHALEEM MOHAMAD (Sudan), also aligning his statement with that of the Non-Aligned Movement, reaffirmed his country's support for United Nations peacekeeping efforts, adding, however, that whenever such operations were deployed, there should be a peace to keep. Such operations should also be "part and parcel" of the work of reinforcing economic and social development, including dealing with the rising prices of food and climate change, as well as meeting urgent humanitarian needs. The United Nations needed a comprehensive vision for peacekeeping that should also be linked to the responsibilities of donor countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals and all other internationally agreed development goals.

Affirming his country's respect for the United Nations Charter in the realm of peacekeeping, in which the consent of the parties, the non-use of force except in self-defence, impartiality and territorial integrity of all States was paramount, he said those principles had been preserved over the last 60 years and should not be bypassed or reinterpreted. Indeed, they should be firmly observed in the choices and rules of States. For its part, Sudan had completely implemented its obligations under Security Council resolution 1769 (2007), concerning UNAMID, particularly in the area of customs and visa obligations. It was also completely committed to the deployment of 80 per cent of the UNAMID force and to reaching a political solution to the Darfur conflict. In that regard, there was now a coordinating body for those political negotiations, and an effort had been launched at the national level to serve as a complement to the regional initiative. Towards that end, he underlined statements made by Joint African Union-United Nations Chief Mediator for Darfur, Djibril Yipènè Bassolé, regarding the vitality of the negotiating process as a means to reaching a peaceful solution. The international

community should protect that peace process from any sabotage or adventurism.

Meanwhile, Sudan was implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement with complete coordination with the United Nations Advance Mission in the Sudan (UNAMIS), he noted. The population census had been completed to prepare for next April's election and for further development programmes throughout its giant territory. Sudan had noted the dialogue on security sector reform, particularly in the post-conflict situation, where economic and social development was paramount. It believed, however, that models should not be imposed on any country. Efforts undertaken in that respect should be made only with the country's consent. Further, it should be recognized that security sector reform was the concern of the General Assembly. Sudan looked forward to the completion of the work of the group of experts studying security sector reform and hoped proposals for sustainable financing for peacekeeping processes would be made.

He said his country had also taken note of the strategy to aid victims of sexual abuse, by the United Nations peacekeeping forces. That strategy should not be just a motto, but should be implemented. Indeed, Sudan awaited results on the investigation into allegations of abuse by such forces in Juba over two years ago.

A clear exit strategy for peacekeeping operations should be included from the inception of their planning stages, he said. Also important was transparency, particularly in the rules governing purchasing processes. Priority should be given to national and regional providers. The Organization should also provide "machinery" to give the impression that it was part of the solution and not the problem. Towards that end, Sudan proposed that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and [the Department of] Field Support needed "perception planning" to win over the hearts and minds of those in the communities where the operations were deployed. In closing, he expressed thanks to those personnel serving in Sudan.

MANAR TALEB (Syria), aligning himself with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that peacekeeping operations played a vital role in de-escalating tension and establishing a conducive environment for post-conflict peacebuilding. Those multidimensional efforts were now stretched over many tasks, from peace monitoring to the vital challenge of governance in conflict-ridden regions. Peacekeeping operations should comply with the Charter mandates, with respect to sovereignty and territorial integrity. It went without saying that host countries must comply in that regard.

In order to maintain the credibility of the organization, he pointed out that the repetitive attempts by some to circumvent the principles that governed peacekeeping, particularly prior consent, neutrality and non-use of force, undermined the foundation of international troops and increased regional instability. Syria had always supported peacekeeping at all levels, and believed the nature of those operations had undergone a substantial and substantive change, but peacekeeping operations were not a substitute for a permanent settlement of disputes. Those required a serious consideration of root causes.

The peacekeeping budget was over \$8 billion, which was more than the United Nations regular budget, which stood at \$4.3 billion, he said. That should make Member States reflect on those operations and their ramifications. Their task should be discharged, so that operations were not expanded in a cumulative manner at the expense of the lofty goals of those operations, which was the peaceful settlement of disputes.

He said that Syria highly appreciated the sacrifices being made by leaders and members of the peacekeeping operations the world over, notably in the Middle East, and especially saluted those working to demine southern Lebanon. Furthermore, he honoured the United Nations personnel who had given their lives trying to uncover explosive remnants of Israeli aggression. Syria enjoyed good relations with the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). Peacekeeping operations should be deployed for short periods of time. Peace became elusive in the face of Israeli defiance of international legality, aggression against neighbours and occupation of their lands.

It was essential to maintain the safety and security of United Nations personnel, he said, stressing the importance of enhancing political processes in conflict-ridden regions and engaging all stakeholders in all political processes. Also important was for peacekeeping operations to have a clear mandate and planned in a comprehensive framework, in line with the political framework of the countries in which they were to serve. Personnel who violated the mandates "deformed" the noble task of peacekeepers, and he stressed the importance of dialogue and cooperation between

troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat. He also stressed the importance of cooperation between troop-contributing countries in the field and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Benefiting from the experience of the troop-contributors could lead to clearer mandates. It was essential to “promote a culture of peace” at the highest levels and to raise awareness of the lofty goals of the Organization, in cooperation with the Department of Public Information.

VLADIMIR ZAEMSKY (Russian Federation), noting that the Organization had achieved its first success in the reform of peacekeeping, also drew attention to the failures, notably the forced suspension of the activities of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), owing to confrontational and obstructionist actions by one of the parties, and an overall atmosphere non-conducive to progress in reaching a settlement. He also negatively assessed last spring’s session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, where repeated confrontations between parties made it difficult for the Special Committee to formulate its report. That was unacceptable for the only committee with universal membership discussing peacekeeping issues. The proliferation of such conduct would be “a grave menace to peacekeeping as a whole”.

He said that the expansion of peacekeeping activities created greater challenges and required greater resources. Peacekeeping operations no longer had exclusively military mandates, but were now charged with ensuring implementation of comprehensive peace agreements and creating a basis for durable peace. Peacekeepers today carried out a range of complicated tasks, such as helping to establish sustainable public institutions, monitoring human rights compliance, security sector reform and disarmament, and the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants. At the same time, the interests of all parties had to be taken into account, sovereignty and territorial integrity respected, and national ownership encouraged.

A common strategy, rather than guidelines, for peacekeeping operations should be formulated as an internal United Nations document, and preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping and peacebuilding should be its main elements, he said. However, peacekeeping was not receiving the required level of military expertise. Revitalization of the Military Staff Committee, as proposed by the Russian delegation at the Millennium Summit, was aimed at verifying the preparedness of assigned troops and services in peacekeeping operations, in order to provide the Security Council with up-to-date information. Improvement was needed in the quality of analysis of various aspects of peacekeeping for the decision-making process. The Military Staff Committee should include all 15 Council members.

He said he supported plans to reinforce the Office of Military Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations’ Police Division, noting that fiscal discipline must be maintained during the process. All proposals in that regard should be examined thoroughly. General and clear rules for personnel management must also be developed, and attention should be paid to avoiding the duplication of functions during restructuring. Further, troop-contributing countries should provide preliminary guarantees for the necessary personnel and logistics to peacekeeping operations to avoid problems, such as those associated with UNAMID, which remained understaffed a year after the decision had been taken on its deployment.

He favoured decentralizing responsibility for maintaining the peace and increasing the role of regional organizations, provided that their relationship with the Organization, especially the Security Council, was based on Chapter VII of the Charter. He offered to increase his country’s contributions to peacekeeping. Humanitarian mine clearance remained a priority, and he expressed an interest in expanding cooperation with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). He also offered further assistance in the area of police training and was prepared to increase participation in the Organization’s stand-by agreements and to consider sending a Russian air group to the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT).

MADHU RAMAN ACHARYA (Nepal) said that despite successes and failures, peacekeeping had evolved as the most important in the multilateral exercises for maintaining international peace and security, and gave the United Nations the most credit of all its other functions. Peacekeeping had shifted from its traditional role of provide “peace enforcement” to include “peacemaking” and “peacebuilding”. However, missions were currently overwhelmed by their tasks and the complexity of their operations. The Security Council must refine their mandates to take those complexities and challenges into account, and the rules of engagement for field personnel should be adjusted accordingly.

He said that the core values of the peacekeeping operations, such as adherence to the Charter and the non-use of force, should not be compromised even in the face of growing complexities

and remained the most important element in these operations. Troop-contributing countries should be equitably represented in senior command positions in the field and at Headquarters. He also hoped that the standby police capacity would “find its utility” and have the required geographical diversity. As one of the top five troop-contributing countries, Nepal would also like to see more of its civilians in United Nations field missions and peacekeeping operations.

Although it was an evolving concept, the peacekeeping doctrine should be “owned” by Member States and endorsed by the Security Council, he said. Also, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations should improve its working methods, so that important decisions were not delayed. Civilian casualties in peacekeeping operations were not acceptable, and missions must have built-in mandates for the protection of women and children. Exit strategies must also be included, as peacekeeping must not be separated from peacebuilding. Countries could not be left to lapse back into hostilities once the missions had departed. Despite the political nature of the Peacebuilding Commission and its connection to the Security Council, the United Nations system must still improve resources to address root causes of conflicts, even when they were not on the Commission’s agenda.

In closing, he said that Nepal had continuously contributed to United Nations peacekeeping efforts for 50 years, during which time 71,155 military and police had taken part in 34 peacekeeping missions around the world. It currently had personnel serving in 13 missions. Nepal, already one of the top five troop-contributing countries for military personnel, planned to increase its level of contribution “should there be need”. Acts committed by reckless individuals could not tarnish the image of the operations and Organizations as a whole, and a zero- tolerance policy must be developed in that regard.

AVIVA RAZ-SHECHTER (Israel) said the men and women who donned blue helmets were the face of peace around the world. As the United Nations reflected on the past and deliberated on the future of peacekeeping, Israel had been honoured to join the Special Committee as a full member this year. In that light, it reiterated its commitment to the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to include the Department of Field Support. The streamlining of the work of those Departments was a critical task in the face of ever more complex and multifaceted operations, and Israel – which was proud to be a troop-contributing country, albeit modestly -- remained committed to their mission, vision and important work.

She said that Israel was no stranger to the difficult work and delicate circumstances under which United Nations peacekeepers operated in the Middle East, and had learned a great many lessons from those peacekeeping experiences. Today, Israel remained committed to the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006). One of the most significant consequences of that important resolution had been the deployment of an improved and upgraded United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Israel would continue to fully support those troops, but it remained deeply concerned about ongoing developments along its northern border, as Hizbullah continued to operate and rearm itself in direct contravention of resolution 1701. That rearmament — actively supported by Syria and Iran — was a threat, not only to regional peace and stability, but also to UNIFIL troops and the Lebanese Armed Forces. Hizbullah’s leader had acknowledged it was rearming itself and adapting itself to new realities on the ground. Thus, Israel welcomed the deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces in South Lebanon, but was concerned about reports that the Lebanese forces were turning a blind eye to Hizbullah, both north and south of the Litani River.

In that light, she stressed that resolution 1701 identified the area between the Blue Line and the Litani River as a zone free of any armed personnel, assets or weapons, other than those of Lebanon and UNIFIL. On the whole, what happened in UNIFIL’s area of operations would serve as a test of the will and commitment of the United Nations to the values of peacekeeping. Israel appreciated the continued efforts of the UNDOF since 1974. Today, UNDOF played a constructive role, quietly and efficiently.

MARTY M. NATALEGAWA (Indonesia), associating his statement with that made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that peacekeeping required robust support from the entire United Nations system. The capstone doctrine could be used as a reference by the operations. The views of Member States had been considered informally, but they should be consulted more formally, and a clear understanding sought, on any future implementation. The further development of the doctrine should be firmly based on the guiding principles of United Nations peacekeeping, namely, consent of the parties, impartiality, and non-use of force, except in self-defence and in defence of Security Council mandates. Any attempts to redefine the conditions of self-defence in peacekeeping should be avoided, as the concept of self-defence had been “exhaustively” defined by international law, and was subjected to conditions of necessity and proportionality.

He said that peacekeepers must be deployed with clear protocols. If situations deteriorated or safety of civilians was at stake, the Council should not fail to develop an appropriate mandate. He further underlined that cooperation, regular consultation and coherence among the Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat were critical to the success of peacekeeping objectives. The Special Committee could play an important facilitating role by conveying exchanges with the troop-contributing countries and other relevant stakeholders.

A lasting peace required a comprehensive approach to address the main triggers of a conflict, he said. Yet there were currently only four countries on the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda. Furthermore, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should build partnerships with other regional organizations and pertinent private sector agencies, in accordance with United Nations Charter, Chapter VIII. Further support was needed from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Integrated Training Service to provide, among other things, mobile training assistance and better coherence with national peacekeeping training centres, to enable a more relevant and focused deployment.

NORHIRO OKUDA ([Japan](#)) said his country had staunchly supported peacekeeping operations since it had joined the United Nations, and it had been honoured to host June's seminar on "Evolution and New Changes" to mark the sixtieth anniversary. Under Japan's chairmanship, the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission had also held a policy discussion to study how to accomplish the seamless and smooth transition from the peacekeeping stage to peacebuilding. The hope was to follow up on the synergies between peacekeeping and peacebuilding in various frameworks. As part of its goal to enhance its personnel contributions to peacekeeping, Japan, for the first time, was sending staff officers of its Self-Defence Force to the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), and it hoped to find more ways to contribute in the future.

He emphasized that ensuring effective and timely deployments was an increasingly complex task. With a majority of current United Nations peacekeeping missions deployed in Africa, the role played by many African troops in those difficult peacekeeping tasks was notable, particularly because they occurred in the face of widespread operational challenges. Believing it was imperative to support peacekeeping capacity-building in African nations, Japan had provided approximately \$2.2 million to launch the activities of the Chadian Police for Humanitarian Protection and another \$15.5 million to support peacekeeping training centres in Africa. It also welcomed the formation of the African Union-United Nations Panel on Peacekeeping.

In order to fully realize their military expertise, the Office of Military Affairs and the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support required close coordination and cooperation, he said. The military and police components, and their expertise, continued to play a fundamental role in peacekeeping missions and should be fully supported. The safety and security of personnel should also be fully protected. Advanced measures should be vigorously considered, and safety standards for using commercially-contracted airplanes for United Nations operations should be carefully reviewed. Japan remained deeply concerned about continued reports of misconduct by peacekeepers; they might be a small fraction of the total force, but those had a large impact on the Organization's credibility. In closing, he said it was necessary for the Security Council to strengthen its interaction with stakeholders when it made decisions on peacekeeping.

MASON F. SMITH ([Fiji](#)) said that, unfortunately, peacekeeping had not been without its sacrifices, and his delegation wished to pay tribute to those who had paid the "ultimate sacrifice" for the maintenance of peace and security. "Blessed are the peacekeepers, for they shall be called the children of God." He expressed deep concern at the targeted attacks of United Nations peacekeepers, and strongly condemned all such acts of violence, such as the 9 July attack on UNAMID peacekeepers in Northern Darfur, which had killed 7 and wounded 22.

Turning to the issue of departmental restructuring, he said it was necessary to address the question of unity of command at Headquarters and in the field between the Department of Field Support and Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and to apply the Integrated Operational Teams and the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions. The surge in and increased complexities of operations required an ongoing re-examination of strategies for complex, multidimensional peacekeeping, which recognized the nexus between political mediation, emergency humanitarian response, security intervention through peacekeeping or peace enforcement, national reconciliation and long-term sustainable development.

Those strategies must also be based on national ownership, in order to succeed, and should support the "cross-cutting" issues of gender, children and HIV/AIDS, which affected peacekeepers and

local communities alike, he said. A peacekeeping training strategy was also needed to ensure that personnel possessed the required professional background and expertise, and his delegation looked forward to such a publication by the Secretariat. In line with those requirements, the Police Division Department of Peacekeeping Operations had conducted a test as part of pre-deployment training.

Rights of Reply

Taking the floor in exercise of the right of reply to comments made by Israel's delegation, the representative of Syria said that those comments were part of a "desperate campaign" by that terrorist State to distract world attention from its abusive campaigns. It appeared Israel did not know the realities of what was occurring or what had been included in the Secretary-General's reports. Indeed, those technical reports included no instances of trafficking of weapons along the Syrian-Lebanese border. They had, however, referred to ongoing violations by Israel, and comments made by its representatives changed nothing with respect to reality.

He said that Israel had a long list of aggressions, a number of which had been noted by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who had spoken out about Israel's systematic targeting of United Nations outposts and the peacekeeping personnel sheltered there. Yet, Israel had ignored those comments and had later targeted a United Nations post by using a remote control bomb, resulting, according to an official Canadian report, in the death of a Canadian general as well as troops from Austria, China and Finland. Syria was still looking forward to Israel's apology on that matter. The most recent victim of Israel's barbaric acts had been a Belgian mine clearer, who had been killed in September.

The representative of Iran expressed dismay over the baseless allegations made by one delegation. Iran had always supported efforts to establish peace in the Middle East, but it did not support the systematic violation of the rights of the Palestinian people. It was not surprised that the main source of instability in the region had embarked on a political campaign to deflect attention from its own transgressions.

In response, the representative of Israel said her delegation would not respond to each and every instance of propaganda expressed here. Yet, she directed Iran's attention to the many United Nations reports that documented its support for Hizbullah fighters, including Security Council resolution 1747 (2007) regarding the export of Iranian weapons to many countries, including in the Middle East.

Turning to the Syrian delegate's remarks, she said that Security Council resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006) referred to Syria's assistance to Hizbullah. She also referred to the letter from Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon regarding that assistance. Also on the "short list" of evidence that Syria supported Hizbullah was the use of Syrian rockets during fighting in Lebanon in 2006.

The representative of Syria, exercising the right of reply, said that all he had said in his previous reply was "the truth", which had been previously documented in United Nations reports. The Israeli delegate "should know" that although Israel had managed to deceive some people for a short period of time, it could not deceive "all people all the time". The culture of Israel was "a culture of killing and destruction", and "all this" had been recorded in United Nations documentation.

The representative of Iran, speaking in right of reply, said that the allegations heard had been publicized and had been the cause of many unjust military actions in the region. He did not feel the need to have any response in that regard.

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