

Security Council Open Debate on UN Peacekeeping: A Multidimensional Approach, January 21st 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Shaanika, Permanent Mission of Namibia to the United Nations.

I will be brief. My delegation joins other representatives, Mr. President, in congratulating you on assuming the presidency of the Council. We also commend you for scheduling this important debate on United Nations peacekeeping. The concept paper you circulated, on the theme “United Nations peacekeeping: a multidimensional approach” (S/2013/4, annex), has been very helpful in guiding our deliberations today. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his insightful statement on this important subject.

While my delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Ambassador Mootaz Ahmadein Khalil, Permanent Representative of Egypt, on behalf of the

Non-Aligned Movement, I would like to make some additional comments in my national capacity.

The nature and scope of United Nations peacekeeping operations have evolved over the years since the first deployment, in 1948. That evolution has come with challenges and complexities. In order to overcome challenges and meet the changing demands, the creation of conditions enabling the success of missions is essential at an early stage. Similarly, the international community, in particular the Security Council, must at all times muster the necessary political will to send a clear message expressing its resolve to act.

It is our conviction that peace is a cornerstone to the foundation of sustainable development. It is therefore essential that it be promoted and that, whenever it is in danger, efforts be made to maintain and preserve it. While each operation is unique, hard lessons from past experiences can serve as guides in new operations to avoid repeating past mistakes.

While peacekeeping continues to be an essential means of assisting people in conflict areas suffering from the scourge of war, strong emphasis should be placed on prevention and peacebuilding. Once conflict is resolved, the task of peacebuilding is equally challenging. It often requires a number of corrective measures by weighing reconciliation on the scales of justice. Such efforts require well-trained, disciplined and motivated personnel.

Regional and subregional organizations are equally important partners in solving conflicts throughout the world, as provided for under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. It is therefore important to strengthen the early-warning capacity of regional organizations to monitor and detect potential conflicts and contain them before they become full-blown.

The contribution of women in peacekeeping operations requires special acknowledgement. Often, women in peacekeeping missions serve as a source of inspiration to women and girls in conflict-ridden parts of the world. On its part, Namibia has heeded the Secretary-General’s call by nominating women to serve in various United Nations peacekeeping missions.

While many conflicts today are between local actors, external actors must refrain from fuelling conflicts and instead use their influence to assist in finding amicable solutions to conflicts. That is why Namibia believes in respect for the sovereign equality of all States. That principle constitutes a pillar of international law, and indeed serves as the bedrock of peaceful relations among nations.

Namibia was a beneficiary of a United Nations peacekeeping mission between April 1989 and March

1990, when the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG), composed of peacekeepers and monitors from many parts of the world, assisted in its transition to independence. Our experience has demonstrated the importance of national ownership of peacebuilding and the responsibility to guard it. The success of UNTAG's mission also stimulated a sense of responsibility for Namibia to play its modest role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

My delegation wishes to highlight the importance of enhancing cooperation among troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat. We believe that that will contribute to an inclusive and informed decision-making process that could positively impact ongoing peacekeeping operations.

In conclusion, let me also take this opportunity to pay special tribute to the men and women from many nations, including your own country of Pakistan, Mr. President, who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty while trying to bring peace to conflict-ridden parts of the world. As we speak today, there are still many peacekeepers on various missions trying their best to make the world a better and more secure place for us to live in. It is not an easy task. Yet, in the face of multiple challenges, they always show an enduring determination to bring hope to people in despair and to put a smile on the faces of children in conflict areas.