

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

Statement by Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General to the United Nations.

We are honoured to have the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan here to preside over this important debate, and we thank you, Sir, for this initiative. Pakistan is the single largest troop contributor to United Nations peacekeeping. Its personnel are working courageously every day under the United Nations blue flag to bring peace to troubled areas.

This year marks the sixty-fifth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping. Peacekeeping has come to be a flagship activity of the United Nations. Thanks to debates like this one, careful analysis and adjustments in our work, peacekeeping has kept pace with the times. Our operations today are more varied and more complex than ever, and whatever form it takes, multidimensional peacekeeping remains a highly cost-effective investment in progress towards lasting stability. No other international tool is as effective in combining political, security, rule of law and human rights efforts. And our missions are integrating their work with the development efforts of United Nations country teams.

The draft resolution before the Council today (S/2013/27) identifies the many contributions that United Nations missions make towards enhancing security and building sustainable peace. We continue to press for progress in the face of challenges. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support are working to further improve how we plan, manage and support our missions.

We count on the members of the Council and all Member States to support this effort. I call on them to contribute military and police personnel with the professional skills, training and integrity required to fully implement their mandates. I also call on Member States to provide the key military assets and enabling capabilities we need to operate in ever more challenging environments. When Member States show the will to make the right contributions at the right time, we can deploy more quickly and operate more effectively. And I repeat my standing appeal for more women to serve in our operations. I am a proud advocate of gender equality, and I want to usher in the day when our peacekeeping operations benefit from the full participation of women, especially in leadership positions.

We will conduct periodic reviews of our missions to ensure that we have the right mix of skills and capabilities to respond to evolving mandates and changing conditions on the ground. We are improving how we integrate our efforts across the United Nations system to maximize the collective impact of our missions and our country teams. DPKO and the United Nations Development Programme are coming together as the joint global focal point for police, justice and corrections. We are also improving the way we carry out transitions as missions draw down and ultimately close, as we did recently in Timor-Leste. We aim to deploy, work hard, fulfil the mandates that the Security Council entrusts to us, and leave behind strong structures to maintain lasting peace.

But we have to do more than integrate the work of the United Nations system; we have to coordinate with other international partners. In most cases, regional organizations, the World Bank, bilateral donors and countries of the region concerned play a major role. It is often far more difficult to ensure the coherence of this broader international support than to integrate our own United Nations work, but such coherence is critical. That is why we will continue supporting transition compacts and other efforts that align international support behind clear national priorities. I encourage the Council to work harder for greater coherence across the international community,

including with advice from the Peacebuilding Commission.

Today's draft resolution rightly emphasizes that national Governments have the primary responsibility for identifying peacebuilding priorities, in consultation with a broad cross-section of society. Inclusivity and institution-building are critical to preventing a relapse into conflict. Peacekeeping missions play a vital role on both of these fronts. They promote national reconciliation. And peacekeeping missions help support national institution-building, as we are seeing in South Sudan, Liberia and Haiti.

We learned especially valuable lessons from Timor-Leste, where the political commitment of the Government and close collaboration between United Nations and the National Police were critical to success. In too many other cases, however, a lack of political will and sustained commitment to reform on the part of national leaders have undermined progress. Too often, international donors focus on training individuals while neglecting to build institutions.

Institutions responsible for ensuring security and rule of law must be strengthened. Otherwise, when the United Nations reduces its military and police presence, we risk jeopardizing the gains we have made. Host States are ultimately responsible for ensuring the protection of civilians, and effective national institutions are essential to this effort. Our national counterparts must take this obligation seriously, as peacekeeping operations can never act as their surrogate in protecting the civilians within their borders.

It is important to be honest and clear on this point. When national leaders and the international community allow these problems, the local population suffers. Council members bear a heavy responsibility to prevent this, including by engaging directly with host Governments.

I am confident that, together, we can build on more than two decades of success in multidimensional peacekeeping. I look forward to hearing Council members' views on how to continue adapting this indispensable tool to better meet the needs of peoples suffering from the throes and aftermath of conflicts.