

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

Statement by Mr. Sabyeroop, Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations.

At the outset, I should like to express my delegation's sincere appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate on the topic of United Nations peacekeeping. I also thank you for the concept paper provided to assist our discussions today (S/2013/4, annex). I thank the Secretary-General for his remarks earlier this morning and would like to align my statement with the statement delivered earlier by the Permanent Representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Since the first United Nations peacekeeping mission deployed more than 60 years ago, we have seen time and time again how critical and pivotal peacekeeping has been to the maintenance of international peace and security. And as peacekeeping has evolved to keep up with the changing landscape of conflict and diplomacy, we have increasingly realized that modern-day peacekeeping can and should also play a meaningful role in the process of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustainable development. Peacekeeping missions can and must assist in creating an enabling environment to help countries establish the foundations of peace, reduce the risk of backsliding into conflict, and establish conditions for recovery and long-term, sustainable development.

The international community must continue to strive in this direction to enable peacekeeping missions to continue to play and enhance their meaningful role. We have already seen what has worked in this respect and where we believe we should focus more of our efforts.

First and foremost, peacekeeping missions must be conducted in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and relevant Security Council resolutions. They must also adhere to the three basic principles of United Nations peacekeeping operations, namely, consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate. Peacekeeping operations must also respect the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of States. My delegation wishes to stress the importance of providing clearly defined mandates, a unified line of command, and an efficient use of existing resources.

Secondly, we see the need to explore further the concept of peacekeepers as early peacebuilders. As the resolution adopted today rightly points out,

“while primary responsibility for successful peacebuilding lies with governments and relevant national actors, multidimensional peacekeeping missions bring comparative advantages in early peacebuilding” (*resolution 2086 (2013), para. 9*).

My delegation fully supports this point. We must strive for the early formulation of integrated and coherent approaches to post-conflict development, based on host-country priorities, through dialogue and close cooperation. In this regard, troop- and police-contributing countries must also be included in the dialogue at every stage of peacekeeping operations, particularly at the early stages of mandate drafting, where we feel that they can contribute experiences and lessons learned in the field.

My delegation firmly believes that the promotion and protection of the interconnected issues of peace and security, development and human rights provide for long-term solutions, not only for conflict resolution but also for preventing conflicts from arising altogether. Guided by these principles, Thailand's peacekeepers in Timor-Leste, Haiti, Darfur and the Gulf of Aden have made it

a point to also assist in local and community development, sharing experiences and best practices in agriculture, health and water resource management with local villagers.

Thailand is continually adapting and strengthening its peacekeeping roles and capacities to best suit current developments in peacekeeping and field requirements, in line with the mandate of each United Nations mission. Presently, we are considering the participation of small numbers of specialized troops — such as army engineers, medical units and female officer units — in peacekeeping missions. They are trained to understand the unique situation of post-conflict populations, to fully respect different cultures and beliefs and to serve as consultants, engineers and friends.

(spoke in French)

My delegation also welcomes the reiteration in the resolution of the importance of the gender dimension in peacekeeping, in particular with regard to promoting the participation of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. We highly appreciate the Secretary-General's call for stronger action to meet the challenges to integrating women at all levels and within the United Nations structure itself.

For its part, in September 2012 Thailand established a subcommittee on women and the promotion of peace and security under the National Committee on the Policy and Strategy for the Advancement of Women. Thailand has always attached great importance to supporting the role and impact of women peacekeepers in the field. However, through the creation of this national mechanism and the recently established National Women's Development Fund, we have focused greater attention on formal commitments to empowering Thai women and on further developing our capacities and contributions in this regard.

Coherence and coordination at all levels are critical. Troop- and police-contributing countries need to understand how to continue to train our own peacekeepers in the most appropriate manner. It is therefore critical to enable our peacekeepers in this way to continue to play increasingly meaningful roles towards the ultimate goal of helping to create the pillars and foundations of sustainable development in conflict- affected States.

We wish to see the further strengthening of cooperation and consultations among troop-contributing and police-contributing countries, the Council, the Secretariat and all relevant United Nations agencies in more open and frequent consultation processes. I also assure the Council of my delegation's readiness to continue to engage in any future deliberations on peacekeeping missions and activities.