<u>**Security Council Open Debate on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations**</u>
Friday, 6th August 2010, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)

Statement by Ambassador Apakan, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations

I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this interactive meeting with the force commanders. They are doing an excellent job under truly difficult conditions, and we owe them our deepest gratitude. The insight they bring from the hot spots of operational theatres is very valuable, and we very much appreciate their presence here today. In fact, we have always stressed the need to improve the Council's access to military advice, not only before mandate approvals and renewals but throughout the whole life cycle of a mission. Today's meeting thus provides a good example, which should continue. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary- General Alain Le Roy for his briefing. Today, as requested, I will focus on practical issues, but rather than making comments, will limit my intervention to five sets of questions addressed to the Force Commanders. First, on mandates given by the Council, we all agree that mandates should provide strategic and political guidance that helps to address the operational challenges that missions face in the field. They must also be feasible and realistic, rather than theoretical and overambitious in a way that fails to take into account the limitations of specific missions. Do the Force Commanders believe that is currently the case, and how can the Council better craft mandates that match the situation on the ground and are a better guide in the field? I know that other colleagues have also raised these questions.

Secondly, the linkage between peacekeeping and peacebuilding is crucial to attaining lasting peace. In this regard, peacekeepers are often identified as early peacebuilders. As the practitioners on the ground, do the Commanders feel that way and, if so, are they sufficiently equipped to discharge those peacebuilding responsibilities? If not, who should lead peacebuilding in the field?

The linkage between peacekeeping and peacebuilding is also seen as a reflection of the critical relationship between security and development. That point has been covered by my Brazilian colleague. How do the Commanders see this connection, and do they think there is a sufficient level of coordination and cooperation between peacekeepers and development actors, either on the ground, at the operational level, or here, at Headquarters, at the strategic level?

Thirdly, without capacity no strategic guidance can ensure the achievement of our political and operational objectives. In that respect, what are the most critical capacities that missions lack in the field, and how could that gap be most effectively closed? Fourthly, the need to improve the quality of consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries is constantly stressed, and we fully agree with that, but what sorts of difficulties arise at the operational level due to inadequate consultations at the strategic level, and what might be the means of redressing this problem?

My final question concerns interoperability. The troops led by the Force Commanders are from different countries and represent varied cultures, thus ensuring that interoperability among them must be a massive challenge. An effort is ongoing in the Secretariat to generate standardized training models and a global training network, which we support. But what are the problems that the Commanders currently face, and how can we help them overcome them? I know these questions require long and detailed answers, which may keep us here longer, but I wanted to highlight them as areas where we could greatly benefit from the first-hand input of our Force Commanders.

In conclusion, I would like once again to thank the Force Commanders who are present here and ask them to convey our sincere gratitude to the servicemen and **women** in blue helmets who are putting their lives in danger every day and night in order to maintain peace and security.