

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL****REMARKS AT SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE ON
TRENDS IN UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING
New York, 11 June 2014**

[As Delivered]

I thank the Russian Federation for providing this important opportunity to collectively examine trends in UN peacekeeping.

Mr. President before I read my official statement, I would like to thank you for your very kind words and your words of encouragement and support. I am touched by your official and personal support for my work as Secretary-General. I can assure you, Members of the Council and other Members of the United Nations that I will devote my energy and time to work together with you to achieve peace, stability, development and human rights. I count on your continued support and leadership. Thank you very much.

This is a key moment for this flagship UN activity.

We face huge peacekeeping challenges. New phenomena are affecting our work. And new approaches are on display.

I would therefore like to highlight four aspects of peacekeeping that are particularly important for discussion at this time.

First, UN peacekeeping operations are increasingly mandated to operate where there is no peace to keep.

We see significant levels of violence in Darfur, South Sudan, Mali, the Central African Republic and eastern DRC, where more than two-thirds of all our military, police and civilian personnel are operating.

Second, some UN peacekeeping operations are being authorized in the absence of clearly identifiable parties to the conflict or a viable political process.

When there is no clear path towards peace, crises will inevitably recur and peacekeeping operations are much more likely to struggle to meet their mandates.

In Mali, no comprehensive agreement was in place, and the situation remains precarious. In the Central African Republic, while there was a political framework for transition, the process has been gravely undermined by inter-communal violence. In South Sudan, conflict has re-emerged.

Third, UN peacekeeping operations are increasingly operating in more complex environments that feature asymmetric and unconventional threats.

Whether acting in self-defence or implementing our mandate to protect civilians, we need to ensure that UN peacekeeping operations are undertaken in full compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law obligations.

Fourth, we need to build on what I see as the renewed commitment of the Security Council to respond to our changing world.

Resolution 2098 on the Democratic Republic of the Congo was a milestone.

It signalled the resolve of the Security Council to address the changing nature of conflict and the operating environment of UN peacekeeping.

And it matched that resolve with credible capabilities, provided thanks to the contribution of troop contributing countries.

The results are tangible improvements of the lives of people living in eastern DRC.

However, a broader discussion is needed on how UN peacekeeping should adapt to new demands and what capabilities and resources it needs to adapt.

We must also ask what are the limits of UN peacekeeping and whether it is always the right tool.

As we approach the 15-year anniversary of the Brahimi report, it may be necessary to again take stock of evolving expectations of UN peacekeeping and how the Organization can work toward a shared view of the way forward.

To this end, I have asked the Secretariat to initiate work on a review of UN peacekeeping.

Mandates, political leverage, logistical support, training, accountability, rules of engagement, technological innovation, and clarity on caveats of troop- and police-contributing countries are just a few areas that may warrant review.

Laying the groundwork for the extension of State authority, including building justice and corrections capacities, is also essential in the first phases until national and other partners are able to take over.

Reinforced efforts to ensure adequate force protection and capabilities may be required.

We must also use all possible forms of technology that can enable our peacekeeping personnel to operate more safely and cost-effectively.

We will continue to consult with the legislative bodies on the deployment of unmanned unarmed aerial vehicles based on the experience we have gained with their deployment to MONUSCO.

Speed is also critical. When civilians are under imminent threat, every minute counts.

While there have been improvements in the mechanisms and speed with which the United Nations deploys uniformed personnel, it does not have a standing reserve force that it can deploy on short notice once a Council decision is taken.

It must rely on its Member States for force generation coupled with its own strengthened planning.

It is important that we all work together to ensure we are able to deploy or reinforce our missions, when necessary, as quickly as possible.

We need to have a clear-sighted view of what capabilities peacekeeping will need to meet the challenges ahead.

Peacekeeping will need to be more mobile, more flexible and adaptable.

It will be important for the Security Council to address significant capacity gaps.

With the recent establishment of the Office for Peacekeeping Partnership we now have in place a further means of assessing the deployments of uniformed personnel.

And we have a mechanism to identify areas that require adaptation and improvement, in partnership with Member States.

Ensuring effective command and control is another key challenge.

When they choose to contribute a contingent to a particular operation, troop and police contributors should work with the mission leadership as one.

We need cohesive and unified command structures, and we count on our troop and police contributors to work towards this common objective.

Finally, in addressing these new challenges, our engagement with regional organizations must continue to deepen and diversify.

Arrangements that will allow us to draw more effectively from regional standby capacities could help us meet the need to respond rapidly in new and changing environments.

We are engaged in a dialogue with the African Union, European Union and the Collective Security Treaty Organization to this end.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The continued use of UN peacekeeping by the Security Council testifies to its continuing relevance and its unique universality and legitimacy.

The demand for peacekeeping will remain.

But this has also raised concern as the global budget to support operations approaches \$8 billion.

We must be responsible and accountable stewards of the financial and human resources entrusted to us.

But we should also recall that UN peacekeeping is a strong and effective tool that is protecting people, saving lives and helping countries to emerge from conflict. These effects are real and measurable.

We must be prepared to make the necessary investments in peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

And we must bring to bear the full range of tools at the disposal of the international community to consolidate peace and achieve an enduring political solution to conflicts wherever we are called to act.

Thank you.

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