

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

Statement by Mr. Momen, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations.

At the outset, let me commend the leadership of Pakistan in guiding the work of the Council in January 2013. I applaud the hard work of your delegation, Sir, in preparing informative concept note before us (S/2013/4). We also thank the Secretary-General for his statement delivered this morning.

We align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and we welcome today's adoption of resolution 2086 (2013), on peacekeeping.

We subscribe to the views expressed in the concept note that United Nations peacekeeping operations are more effective and cost efficient compared to other similar operations. Several studies, including by the Rand Corporation, Oxford University economists, the United States Accountability Office and others testify of the fact that the United Nations can complete a mission most effectively with lower costs. In fact, it can accomplish a mission at around 12 per cent of the total cost that would be incurred by the United States of America in a unilateral intervention. As members may be aware, the total United Nations peacekeeping budget is less than 0.5 per cent of global military expenditure.

The multidimensional aspect of United Nations peacekeeping demonstrates its commitment to the broader membership and ensures neutrality, greater legitimacy, acceptance and effectiveness. That dimension therefore needs to be maintained in the future, while the base of troop-contributing countries (TCCs) is expanded.

With limited resources, United Nations peacekeeping has demonstrated unparalleled success in its past operations. Since its inception, the United Nations has undertaken 67 field missions. Among many other things, those missions have enabled people in dozens of countries to participate in free and fair elections, and helped to disarm more than 400,000 ex-combatants in the past decade alone. Despite the significant achievements, as the Rand Corporation mentions, the Organization continues to exhibit weaknesses in operations, which remain under-manned and under-funded and whose military forces are often sized not on the basis of actual need. It not only challenges the achievement of mandates but also generates potential threats to the safety and security of peacekeepers. We therefore stress that the mandates for peacekeeping missions should be clear, specific, achievable and, most important, adequately funded to achieve their objectives, while ensuring the safety and security of peacekeepers themselves.

Modern peacekeeping mandates go far beyond then traditional roles of truce supervision. Peacekeepers nowadays address both inter- and infra-State conflicts. Missions have become diversified, multidimensional and more complex, engaging military, police and civilian personnel. They provide support to safety and security, political processes, electoral assistance, inclusive dialogue and reconciliation, conflict management, basic services, economic revitalization and core Government functions, among other things. In other words, they are the principal actors in laying the foundations for peacebuilding.

As their mandates are enhanced, so are their needs and requirements. In that context, it is important that TCCs are consulted from the very beginning of a mission until the end of its last stage, especially when decisions are being taken about its mandate, human resources and other requirements.

The concept note has highlighted several issues regarding the integration of peacebuilding tasks in the context of multidimensional peacekeeping. In response, my delegation would like to stress the following points.

First, in the context of multidimensional peacekeeping, the elements of peacebuilding can be incorporated at an early stage. In doing so, the views of the host country, the advice of the Peacebuilding Commission, where appropriate, and the lessons learned and best practices of from TCCs may be requested for determining mission needs. Special emphasis needs to be given to determining force requirements, taking into account their future contribution in peacebuilding efforts.

Secondly, once the requirements are determined, TCCs may be requested to form composite units for deployment, including the military, police and civilian personnel required to address the multidimensional needs of integrated missions. That will allow us to tap the benefits of comparative advantages of experienced peacekeepers. At the same time, that is likely to bridle cost overruns associated with hiring external experts. Similarly, the inclusion of civilian experts in related areas within the composite unit may bring greater harmony and coherence among the various actors in the field as well as cost-effectiveness in the operations.

Thirdly, women represent almost 50 per cent of our total population. Their rights and roles in preventing conflict and rebuilding society cannot be overemphasized. They deserve equal rights in the context of the peace process and nation-building. Unfortunately, they become the principal victims of conflict and, in the recovery process, they are often neglected. We therefore stress that women should be included systematically throughout the entire process in the areas of conflict resolution, mediation and economic recovery, local Government, the rule of law and other related areas of nation-building.

Fourthly, the needs of multidimensional missions are multifaceted. They require trained personnel for addressing issues related to military and police affairs as well as issues of civilian engagement. Therefore, training for peacekeepers should be customized so as to address all those needs through the inclusion of a unit-based training programme. We are ready to offer our training facilities in Bangladesh, at the Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operations Training centre.

Finally, United Nations peacekeeping is a collective endeavour and the pride of the United Nations. Its success is the outcome of the concerted efforts of all stakeholders. Its future success will depend on the forging of such partnerships on the basis of experiences and lessons learned. We look forward to further strengthening those partnerships in all areas of our possible cooperation and contribution.