

Opening Session of the General Assembly Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations  
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Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States by H.E. Mr. Csaba  
Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Hungary to the United Nations

Madam Chair,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

Madam Chair,

The threats to international peace and security are changing, so are the tasks set out for the United Nation's peacekeeping missions. This flagship activity of the UN has developed immensely over the last decade. However, the UN needs to continue to adapt to the challenges we face. The New Horizon process initiated by the Secretariat in 2009 is an essential framework for further developing and enhancing UN peacekeeping, and provides the basis for building a renewed political consensus on the strategic context of peacekeeping. Based on our common achievements reflected in the C34 report from 2010, this years C34 provides an important opportunity for the membership to give vital input to continued efforts to implement the UN peacekeeping reform agenda, thus shaping the future of UN peacekeeping.

Let me underline that the EU strongly supports UN peacekeeping, and continues to be a close partner in this endeavour. The EU will be fully engaged in this C34 session to work closely with all partners in order to follow through on agreed commitments and to further enhance UN peacekeeping. In this context, the EU welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on the "Implementation of the Recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations", providing crucial input to the C34 deliberations.

Madam Chair,

Please allow me to take this opportunity to touch briefly on the EU's main priorities for this C34 session:

- First, policy development. The EU is deeply convinced that peacekeepers - civilians, military and police - can play a critical role in peacebuilding by supporting national governments to develop their peacebuilding objectives, backed by international partners. It is important that peacebuilding activities are considered in planning processes, and that the role and tasks of the peacekeeping operations in carrying out peacebuilding are explicitly defined and clearly identified in the mandates of peacekeeping operations. The EU looks forward to the early peacebuilding strategy for peacekeepers, currently being developed by the Secretariat. The EU expresses its continued support for the work and advisory role of the Peacebuilding Commission, and looks forward to the recommendations in the review of the Peacebuilding architecture being taken forward. Furthermore, the EU recognizes the role peacekeepers can play in enabling socio-economic recovery and encourages the Secretariat to give due consideration to the socio-economic impact of peacekeeping operations. In the last session of the C34, important progress was made on protection of civilians. However, more needs to be done to improve the planning and implementation of protection of

civilians mandates. The EU welcomes the Strategic Framework for the elaboration of mission-wide protection strategies distributed earlier this year. The EU recognizes the efforts to further improve overall guidance, training and reporting on protection of civilians, and would see merit in the Secretariat developing benchmarks to measure the effective implementation of PoC mandates. The EU encourages the Secretariat to enhance protection of civilians coordination at the headquarters level, as well as to explore how missions can better coordinate in the field. The EU welcomes the intensified dialogue on a robust approach to peacekeeping, as there is a clear need to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions, including by addressing the requirement for peacekeeping missions to be able to deter threats to mandate implementation, the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel, and ongoing peace processes. The EU also welcomes the intention of the Secretariat to facilitate a broader dialogue on the political dimensions that must accompany a robust posture, and encourages the Secretariat to develop the necessary doctrine and training to support a robust approach to peacekeeping.

- Secondly, capability development. Underlining the role and responsibility of the TCC's and PCC's, the EU encourages the Secretariat to continue work to develop, as requested, the comprehensive capability-driven approach across a range of areas. The EU fully supports the pilot project initiative on capability development launched by the Secretariat, and the short-term objective to establish baseline capability standards. The EU recognises the capability gaps that exist in missions and will work with partners to find solutions to these issues. Peacekeeping training can be further strengthened by expediting the recruitment of personnel in the training function of the DPKO. The EU fully recognizes the growing demand for police, rule of law, SSR and DDR functions in UN peacekeeping, and looks forward to the recommendations of the civilian capacities review. The EU welcomes the establishment of the justice and corrections standing capacity. The UN's partnership with regional arrangements, including the AU and EU, plays an important role in UN peacekeeping, and should be further strengthened.

- Thirdly, field support. The EU continues to strongly support the development of the Global Field Support Strategy, and welcomes the close involvement of the membership in this process. The Secretariat should work to make sure that the GFSS leads to the expected results and efficiency gains, throughout the entire cycle of peacekeeping missions, including a reduced environmental impact of UN peacekeeping missions. As work continues on developing the GFSS, it will be increasingly important to get a clearer picture of the concrete expected de facto results of the strategy.

- Fourth, planning and oversight. The EU is encouraged by the improvements in the functioning of the UN headquarters, however there is room to further strengthen the planning and assessment process, as well as the involvement of TCC's and PCC's in the planning and monitoring of missions. The issue of unity of command structures continues to be an area of the highest importance for the capacity to deliver in the field. The EU hopes that Member States' views will be given thorough consideration in the current evaluation on command and control structures and looks forward to the Secretariat's findings.

Madam Chair,

In addition to the four main areas in the New Horizon process referred to above, let me also indicate the importance the EU attaches to continued efforts to implement Security Council resolution 1325 on women and peace and security, and its subsequent resolutions. The EU supports a swift operationalisation of the indicators, as decided upon by the Security Council, to track implementation of UNSCR 1325 and with a view to enhance the response as regards the prevention of sexual violence, protection of women's rights in conflict and post-conflict situations, and women's participation in all aspects of conflict resolution and peace processes. Further, the EU welcomes the DPKO's child protection policy, and requests full implementation of the policy.

The EU believes that recent decrease in numbers of reported allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations is a result of UN's determination in implementing the policy of "zero tolerance". These efforts must continue. The EU also supports the Secretariat's efforts in the implementation of the UN Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Staff and Related Personnel.

Madam Chair,

Let me also take this opportunity to indicate that there is room for improvement in the work of the Special Committee, and we welcome this being reflected in paragraph 228 of last year's report. The EU takes note of the recently launched informal dialogue to improve the work of the committee, and the EU will continue to support the work to achieve real progress on this issue. It is of paramount importance that the C34 continues to be a vital forum in developing and enhancing UN peacekeeping, and in making sure that we follow-through on commitments made.

Madam Chair,

The EU recognizes the crucial role of all men and women serving in UN peacekeeping missions, and honours the sacrifices of those who have paid the ultimate price in that service. In this context the EU firmly emphasizes that the safety and security of all UN personnel is a paramount concern and recalls the primary responsibility of host states and parties to a conflict for safety and security of peacekeepers. The EU strongly condemns targeted attacks on UN personnel, and all criminal acts against them, in particular kidnapping and carjacking. The EU also condemns any forms of restrictions to the freedom of movement of United Nations peacekeeping personnel within the mandate. While acknowledging the enhancements regarding risk assessment and in establishing a security level system as well as the progress made towards the use of advanced technology, the EU calls for continued efforts to improve safety and security for personnel serving in UN missions.

Madam Chair,

As stated before, the main challenge for all of us working on UN peacekeeping now, is to ensure that the gaps between needs, expectations and performance are minimized. The overall ambition should be to increase efficiency and strengthen the UN's capacity to deliver, and to have a real impact on the ground.

To conclude, let me emphasize that the UN continuously needs to adapt to the challenges we face. This ambition and the New Horizon reform agenda shall be key components in our deliberations in this committee during the coming weeks. The challenges of tomorrow must be met by our commitment to work on solutions that yield concrete results on the ground. With this we can make sure that the C34 remains a key UN body on all aspects of peacekeeping. The EU is looking forward to this C34 session, and we are aiming at a constructive dialogue and a substantive outcome.

Thank you very much.