

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

Statement by Mr. Kim Bong-hyun, Permanent Mission of Republic of Korea to the United Nations.

It is my distinct honour and privilege to attend this open debate and to address one of the most important issues in the work of the Security Council. Today's thematic debate, under the agenda item "United Nations peacekeeping: a multidimensional approach", is timely and appropriate, since maintaining international peace and security nowadays requires more integrated and comprehensive approaches to peacekeeping, post-conflict peacebuilding, and development.

The Republic of Korea warmly welcomes you, Sir, in presiding over this meeting, and commends the leadership of the Government of Pakistan for organizing today's open debate. My delegation also extends its high appreciation to the Secretary-General for his presence and informative briefing.

The scope of United Nations peacekeeping activities has continually expanded. The mandates of modern-day peacekeeping missions have become more diversified and multidimensional to meet the changing demands on the ground since the first mission in 1948. In this regard, I duly recognize the strengthened structure of United Nations peacekeeping operations under the initiative of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

My country, the Republic of Korea, experienced a devastating war between 1950 and 1953, and has developed from being the beneficiary of an early United Nations military intervention and the recipient of development assistance to being a contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations and a new donor of development cooperation with many developing countries. Out of this unique peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding process in my country, I would like to offer my own perspective on this issue. Our commitment to these operations is firm, and our goal of ensuring their relevance for the future is clear. To succeed, we must build an integrated framework that can encompass the changing realities of the conflict and post-conflict landscape.

We can identify important elements to be considered in making the integrated framework: fragile post-conflict situations, potential relapses into conflicts, and the international development cooperation mechanism. While peacekeeping mandates in the most traditional sense are still valid, the modern realm of United Nations peacekeeping activities should overlap with that of peacebuilding and development cooperation. It is therefore timely that the Security Council should take stock of the instruments of peacekeeping, clarify its multiple dimensions, and decide on its future.

Having said that, I would like to emphasize the following.

First, an international development cooperation mechanism should be considered and incorporated into multiple dimensions of peacekeeping operations. Peacekeeping operations can learn lessons from the principles and guidelines of the international development cooperation regime that has been developed and agreed upon by the United Nations funds and programmes, agencies and other development institutions. In particular, development cooperation strategies for fragile States, which are now being developed and applied to several States by the Development Cooperation Directorate of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, can be included in the planning process of peacekeeping operations. We encourage the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to closely cooperate with development actors when it drafts a peacekeeping operation plan for a specific country.

Secondly, before laying out specific mandates for a mission, the resources of the United Nations country team and civilian sector should be taken into account in order to properly determine the scope of a mission and the capacities it requires. The available expertise and capacities of other national and international partners, including regional and subregional organizations, should also be taken into account. Doing so will help reduce potential duplication of work and ensure the continuity of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the development of the host country. In short, the aim is to balance long-term goals with the short-term realities on the ground, harmonizing the two whenever possible.

Thirdly, the significance of national ownership cannot be overemphasized in sustaining peace, security and development. The Republic of Korea has learned the importance of national ownership through its own experience. Immediately after the war in 1953, the Korean people, with a strong sense of national ownership, worked hard to achieve security, peace and development with United Nations assistance, and have come a long way during the past half century. This is why we believe that the peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts of the United Nations should be designed to strengthen the sense of national ownership of the people affected by conflicts.

Fourthly, it is not practical to apply the same strategies to all missions. There is no one-size-fits-all set of peacebuilding priorities that is good for every peacekeeping mission. Tailored strategic assessment is crucial in configuring any peacekeeping mission. Their mandates should therefore be clear and feasible.

Fifthly, the protection of civilians, especially women and children, under imminent threat of physical violence must be taken into account in the early phases of mandate drafting and throughout the life cycle of United Nations peacekeeping missions.

Lastly, women must be included as active participants at every stage of peacebuilding, peace agreements and development programmes, including in decision-making roles. Women are essential partners in any peaceful society and contribute to the three pillars of sustainable peace, namely, economic recovery, social cohesion and political legitimacy.

Since joining the United Nations, in 1991, the Republic of Korea has participated in 19 missions. Recently, our engineering contingent in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti was redeployed home after having successfully fulfilled its mandate of recovering and restoring national infrastructure following the earthquake in Haiti in 2010. In March we will dispatch another engineering unit to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to implement the mandate to build UNMISS's capacities for early peacebuilding and reconstructing the horizontal infrastructure in South Sudan. One Korean infantry battalion with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon has also successfully conducted its surveillance and civil-military operations since being deployed in 2007.

My delegation stands ready to continue our multifaceted contributions to the noble cause of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, with a view to a more secure and sustainable peace around the globe. The Security Council has made great strides in streamlining that process, and its momentum must continue. We look forward to working within the Council on multidimensional ways to make, keep and build peace.