

**Security Council Open Debate on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2014, Security Council Chamber**

*Statement by Mr. Percaya, Permanent Mission of Indonesia to the United Nations*

I should preface my remarks by congratulating you, Madam President, on assuming the presidency for the month of February. We also thank you for convening this open debate and for your helpful and well-structured concept note (S/2014/74, annex).

My delegation thanks the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, as well as the Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross, for their respective briefings.

While this year marks 15 years of pronounced focus and engagement by the Security Council on the protection of civilians, the international community continues to witness the deplorable fact of increasing civilian deaths. The Council's efforts, particularly in mandating a number of United Nations peacekeeping operations with the protection-of-civilians tasks, have heightened international attention and led to the development of an important normative framework on this issue. Yet many challenges have to be tackled to satisfactorily enhance the safeguarding of people during conflicts.

With that background in mind, Indonesia welcomes the adoption of the presidential statement (S/PRST/2014/3), which reiterates the commitments regarding this issue and reaffirms many important elements from our previous relevant presidential statements.

We recognize that protecting civilians is one of the most challenging tasks of United Nations peacekeeping. As the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2013/689) notes, peacekeepers are mandated to carry out increasingly complex missions in increasingly dangerous environments. That necessitates that all peacekeeping stakeholders — not least the Council — ensure that there is full clarity on the concept and operationalization of the protection of civilians and the provision of requisite equipment and resources, with robust and rapid support to and coordination with Blue Helmets and United Nations civilian staff at all times. We value the various significant steps on improving the capabilities of the United Nations peacekeeping operations in that regard.

It is also important to be mindful in this deliberation that the protection of civilians is the primary responsibility of the host country. But human life is most precious, and human dignity must be safeguarded regardless. Indonesia strongly believes that United Nations missions should conduct their tasks without prejudice to the primary responsibility of the host Government to protect civilians. In that context, I would like to mention three points.

First, it is crucial to understand the local dynamics — how the civilian populations try to protect themselves — and to develop strategies that can effectively address threats to civilians at the earliest phase of mandate planning. Indonesia concurs with the concept note that there is a lack of pre-mandate planning and assessment on the protection of civilians. It is therefore very important for the Secretariat and the Security Council, in consultation with the host Government and troop- and police-contributing countries, to develop a sound pre-assessment of the protection of civilians. There should be well-functioning mechanisms based on realistic assessments that can identify early threats before mandate planning, as well as during the various stages of missions.

Secondly, the coherence of efforts on the protection of civilians by the Security Council, the Secretariat, troop- and police-contributing countries, host Governments and other relevant actors cannot be emphasized enough. That collaboration and cooperation can set up the necessary political dialogue to mitigate hostilities on the ground between the parties in conflict and harness the required equipment and resources, yielding essential support and situational awareness for the United Nations missions.

We stress the importance of regular evaluation and reporting on the implementation of protection-of-civilians mandates by United Nations peacekeeping operations and an open dialogue between the Secretariat and Member States, including in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, to undertake a comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

Thirdly, Indonesia wishes to emphasize the importance of ensuring that the implementation of protection-of-civilians mandates does not exceed the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping missions. Indonesia recognizes the importance of monitoring, evaluating and reporting by United Nations peacekeeping operations on the implementation of their protection-of-civilians mandates in that regard. While the approach must be holistic, we reiterate that protection mandates should be clear and achievable, with explicit goals and guidelines for Blue Helmets. Moreover, the senior mission leadership should maintain close coordination and have a clear understanding of the mechanisms available to work on the protection of civilians.

In that context, we also underscore that the relevant planning processes, guidance materials and training modules, before and during deployment, should be based on information gleaned from contemporary missions and be up to the mark.

Indonesia concurs, in that regard, with the call made in 2012 by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations on the importance of widely disseminating information among peacekeeping personnel about the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian and human rights and refugee law, including in training materials, in order to enable them to better understand the interconnections between the implementation of the protection-of-civilians mandate and those fields of law and to act accordingly.

Furthermore, as peacekeeping has grown to encompass the broader humanitarian approach, it is worth underlining the importance of strengthening our efforts to increase the number of female peacekeepers in United Nations peacekeeping missions. Their role and presence in United Nations peacekeeping missions have been critical, including in supporting peacebuilding and protecting civilians.

For its part, Indonesia is committed to enhancing the capacities of its peacekeepers in the area of the protection of civilians before deployment and will continue to improve its training on that issue at our peacekeeping training centre, the Indonesian Peace and Security Centre.

Finally, we hope that the fifteenth anniversary of the Council's initial engagement on this issue will further the promotion of the culture of protection and strengthen cooperation and synergy among the concerned entities inside and outside the United Nations system.