

**Security Council Open Debate on Peacekeeping Operations: New Trends June 2014,
Security Council Chamber**

Statement by Mr. Sinhaseni Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations.

Mr. President, let me begin by expressing my delegation's sincere appreciation to the Russian delegation for its presidency of the Council this month and to you, Ambassador Churkin, for organizing this open debate and the well-drafted concept note (S/2014/384, annex). I also thank the Secretary-General for his substantive briefing on the issue.

Thailand has always attached great importance to United Nations peacekeeping as one of the most effective tools in assisting conflict-ridden countries to return to the path of peace and security. We have participated in over 20 United Nations peacekeeping operations. United Nations peacekeeping operations have evolved over the years. It is therefore most timely and appropriate that the Council take stock of the emerging trends, assess their implications and prepare itself to meet the challenges ahead. As we learned from the Secretary-General's briefing and from the concept note, a number of discernible trends in modern-day peacekeeping operations can be identified. My delegation wishes to highlight two points.

First, the success of United Nations peacekeeping operations is anchored in the basic principles of United Nations peacekeeping, namely, the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence and in defence of the mandate. However, recent developments towards more robust and proactive peacekeeping may not be strictly consistent with such principles.

The majority of current United Nations peacekeeping missions operate in a situation of protracted intra-State conflict. In that context, what does "consent of the parties to the conflict" entail? There is the consent of the host country. However, it is not the practice of the United Nations to seek the consent of non-State actors, since engagement with non-State actors has political implications and must proceed with caution. That means, therefore, that peacekeepers are often deployed in politically sensitive environments or in the absence of a commitment to a political solution on the part of all of the key parties to the conflict.

Regarding the principle of impartiality, a case in point is resolution 2098 (2013), which created the Force Intervention Brigade and authorized it to neutralize armed groups in support of the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. That raises the question of impartiality. Do United Nations peacekeepers become a party to the conflict on the side of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo? An affirmative answer to that question has serious legal implications for the protected status of the peacekeepers as well as for their safety and security.

Let me now turn to the protection-of-civilians mandate in relation to the principle of the non-use of force. While there is no argument regarding the need to safeguard civilian lives, to do so effectively may require peacekeepers to use force against those who pose threats to civilians. It is indeed legitimate to use force in defence of the mission's mandate. However, when a mandate clearly necessitates the use of force, such as the authorization given to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali to use "all necessary means" to deter threats and to take active steps to prevent the return of armed elements to key population centres, that creates a strain on the principle of the non-use of force.

Secondly, it is not possible to achieve durable peace if women are not included or are left on the margins. We observe that, since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), there have been greater efforts to mainstream a gender perspective and increase women's contribution to United Nations peacekeeping. Women, peace and security is now a mandate component of 12 United Nations peacekeeping operations, including the newly created United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic. Thailand warmly welcomes the recent appointment by the Secretary-General of the first female peacekeeping force commander, Major

General Kristin Lund of Norway, as the Force Commander of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus.

Despite the progress made, the proportion of female peacekeepers remains very low. Women represent approximately 10 per cent of the United Nations police personnel and less than 3 per cent of the total United Nations military personnel. We therefore still have a long way to go before the full potential of women's contribution to peace and security is realized. We are of the view that the gender-mainstreaming effort must continue to be prioritized in United Nations peacekeeping. It may be necessary to revisit the issue, in particular by working on how to translate the vision of women, peace and security into reality on the ground.

United Nations peacekeeping is now a collective enterprise with multidimensional aspects, each of which merits careful consideration. I have touched upon two emerging trends and their implications. To meet the challenges ahead, we wish to reiterate that important policy discussions and decisions pertaining to United Nations peacekeeping should be conducted and taken in a consensual manner. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations — whose members includes troop-contributing countries, police-contributing countries, host countries, Council members and other interested countries — is the appropriate forum for such an exercise. In addition, effective and regular consultations among the Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries should be held regularly, and such discussions should form the basis for decisions authorizing United Nations peacekeeping missions and their mandates.