<u>**Security Council Open Debate on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations**</u>
Friday, 6th August 2010, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)

Statement by Ambassador Parham, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations

I warmly thank Under-Secretary-General Le Roy and the Force Commanders for their briefings. Let me take this opportunity to pay tribute to the work of the Force Commanders, both those who briefed us and all the others who are here today, and to the work of all of the **women** and men who are under their command, frequently, as we know, in very challenging circumstances and at great personal risk.

As part of our collective efforts to strengthen the Council's role in peacekeeping, in our presidential statement of 5 August 2009 (S/PRST/2009/24), adopted almost exactly a year ago, we acknowledged the need to improve access to military advice. Since then, we have made some progress, but more can be done to improve the Council's understanding of the operational demands placed on troops and police by the peacekeeping resolutions we draft. If we are going to write realistic and achievable mandates, we need the best possible understanding of what is achievable. We therefore very much welcome the fact, Sir, that you have arranged this meeting today.

That is also the reason why the United Kingdom supported changes to improve consultation and interaction with troop and police contributors in the lead-up to mandate renewal or change, and it is why we support the convening of joint political and military expert meetings to discuss peacekeeping operations, in particular before the United Nations dispatches a technical assessment mission. It is also why we are willing to explore ways to make the Military Staff Committee more inclusive and relevant, in order to help us make decisions that enable peacekeepers to implement their mandates fully.

The ground has already been very well covered by other speakers, but I just have a few comments and questions for the Force Commanders. First of all, we heard from a number of them about the challenge of protecting civilians and the fact that in order to achieve protection of civilian mandates, the forces need more agility and more mobility. But at the same time, they face a shortage of air assets and problems over freedom of movement. So my question on this, for the Force Commanders, is whether or not better technology and intelligence could be an appropriate and effective force multiplier to help them achieve those protection of civilian mandates.

Secondly, with respect to robust peacekeeping or deterrents, robustness in peacekeeping is, of course, a sensitive concept, but we are not talking here about peace enforcement. Nevertheless, in order to be effective in today's highly complex peacekeeping environment, United Nations missions must have the capacity and the will to deter those who would derail the peace process or threaten civilians and United Nations peacekeepers.

As a team from my delegation saw at first hand recently in Haiti, when the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) patrols the streets of Cité Soleil in Port-au-Prince each night, Brazilian troops demonstrate a credibly robust posture that deters any would-be attackers. That is a conscious and deliberate tactic — one which has created an environment in which other United Nations agencies and international organizations can operate safely without the need for armed escort.

Earlier this year, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations expressed its support for this sort of deterrent posture. I would be interested to hear the force commanders' views on this as a concept and on the ability or otherwise of their own missions to establish such deterrence.

On quick impact projects and reconstruction: clearly, there are circumstances where peacekeeping operations should get involved in such projects and in reconstruction, not least in the early stages, to establish credibility with the local communities. But we need to make sure that our peacekeepers' willingness to help does not crowd out those agencies better placed or better funded to support early recovery and reconstruction. We need to know that activities undertaken in the short term will not prejudice longterm sustainable development.

Where international peacekeepers provide the only viable substitute for local services in the short term, we must make every effort to build up local capacity alongside such service delivery and from the beginning. That is why the United Kingdom argues for strict oversight and for limits to be set on funding for quick impact projects and why we support closer integration among United Nations peacekeeping operations, local Governments and other United Nations agencies, donors and international organizations on the ground.

This area is one that General Cruz touched upon in his very helpful briefing. It would be interesting to hear a bit more from him about how he ensures that the efforts of MINUSTAH on the humanitarian and reconstruction fronts are coordinated with other parts of the United Nations in the field to ensure that there is coherence and that there are no problematic overlaps. I would like to make a point on security sector reform in Liberia. We heard from General Afzal that progress on security sector reform in Liberia is slow. It would be interesting to hear from him his views on why that is the case and what we can do to address it.

Under the United Kingdom presidency of the Security Council in August last year, we were fortunate to hear from Lieutenant General Agwai, then the Force Commander of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (see S/PV.6178), and it was striking how succinctly and persuasively he cut to the most pertinent challenges faced by that mission at that point. And listening to the force commanders this morning, I was reminded once again of the enormous value of a view from the field. I would like to thank them very much for taking time out of their annual conference to speak to us. I hope that this tradition can be maintained.