

**Security Council Open Debate  
Cooperation Between the UN and Regional and Subregional Organizations  
Peace Operations: the UN-African Union Partnership and its Evolution  
December 2014, Security Council Chamber**

*Statement by Mr. Mawe Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations.*

Ireland joins with all other speakers and wholeheartedly condemns the tragic killing of schoolchildren and others in Pakistan today. In the words of my minister, it was an attack of savage brutality that targeted innocent children in their place of study. I wish to express my heartfelt condolences and those of the Irish people to the families of the victims and to the people and the authorities of Pakistan.

Permit me to also thank the Chadian presidency for organizing this important debate. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations with regard to peace operations is a subject of key importance, and I welcome the opportunity to provide Ireland's perspective.

I would also like to align myself with the statement delivered just moments ago on behalf of the European Union (EU).

This subject is a significant one. Today, more than half of the peacekeeping missions and just over 80 per cent of peacekeeping troops are deployed in Africa. In addition, almost 50 per cent of the more than 100,000 peacekeepers currently deployed by the United Nations are from African countries. Furthermore, some of the most challenging missions the United Nations is currently undertaking are in Africa — in Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Such missions highlight the changing nature of peacekeeping, and they provide a serious test of how we carry out peacekeeping missions. The contributions from African countries to those demanding missions are also evident, including, for example, from Tanzania, South Africa and Malawi to the decisive Intervention Brigade of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We previously discussed United Nations-African Union (AU) cooperation in July (see S/PV.7228). In resolution 2167 (2014), adopted during that debate, the Council requested the Secretariat and the African Union to undertake a lessons learned exercise on the transitions from AU to United Nations peacekeeping operations in Mali and the Central African Republic. We look forward to learning of its findings.

Looking more widely, Ireland welcomes the establishment of the High-level Independent Panel to Review Peacekeeping Operations, led by José Ramos-Horta, and looks forward to active engagement with it in the coming months, especially when it considers the question of cooperation with regional organizations. In making our contribution to the review, we will draw on our own considerable experience of peacekeeping and our strong commitment to the United Nations in addressing how peacekeeping needs to evolve to meet the new demands. We will be conscious in particular of the need to ensure that the protection of civilians is at the heart of mandates for peacekeeping operations.

We also need more consistent and systematic application of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on the same subject and to address the root causes of why women

and girls are so disproportionately affected by conflict. We need to ensure that peace operations in Africa and elsewhere have the capabilities to protect civilians and the participating troops themselves. We also need to address issues such as rapid deployment, improved intelligence and performance assessment. We need to ensure effective command and control arrangements, which underpin the success and the credibility of operations. The United Nations also needs to seek ways to develop internal capacities — for example, in terms of police, courts and local authorities — so that conflict-affected countries, including in Africa, can build and sustain peace themselves. Those are issues that apply to all peacekeeping operations, but as I mentioned already, the balance of operations in Africa means they apply there in full.

The successful implementation of increasingly complex mandates means that neither the United Nations nor individual Member States can work alone. Increasingly, the African Union and regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are taking the lead in maintaining peace and security in Africa and in meeting the many security challenges that the continent faces. That is a positive development. The generation of the African Standby Force is another positive development, and we look forward to seeing it fully operational before long.

However, work remains to be done. Challenges to be overcome include improving the transition of missions, enhancing the logistical capacity of AU forces, addressing long-standing issues in relation to financing missions and ensuring complementarity and coherence across regional and subregional peace operations.

Joint planning of peacekeeping operations also needs to improve. We welcome the cooperation between the AU and the United Nations in Somalia, the joint planning between ECOWAS and the AU on Mali and the successful coordination between the AU and the United Nations on the transfer of authority in the Central African Republic from the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic. In addition, we strongly support all efforts to enhance three-way cooperation between the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations. Effective triangular cooperation will be critical to successful peacekeeping operations in the coming years. Nationally, Ireland makes a significant contribution to the training of African security forces, both through participation in EU training missions in Somalia and Mali and on a bilateral basis. In September, at the peacekeeping summit referred to by the representative of Japan just now, which was co-hosted by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and United States Vice-President Biden, we committed to further assisting the development of peacekeeping capacities among our key partner countries in Africa. We look forward to establishing a programme drawing on the expertise of Irish peacekeepers and reflecting United Nations best practices.

Ireland, as a long-standing contributor to United Nations peacekeeping and an active contributor to EU-led missions, sees huge value in an ever-closer relationship with the African Union in the areas I have referred to. We support a holistic approach to preventing and resolving conflict that draws on all available tools and processes. We look forward to continuing to work with all partners in that regard.