

**Statement by Finland
at the Secretary-General's High-Level meeting on Action for Peacekeeping**

Statement by

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Mr. Secretary-General, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for organizing this event and emphasizing the importance of peacekeeping for global security. Finland's contribution to UN peacekeeping operations began in 1956. Ever since, we have continuously developed our capabilities to deliver in this field.

I am proud to tell you that with some 500 uniformed personnel Finland is now the seventh biggest European contributor to UN peacekeeping. A large share of our contribution, over 300 troops, is concentrated to UNIFIL. We plan to continue our UNIFIL presence until 2020. We have also significantly increased our contribution to UN police. Over 20 percent of Finnish police peacekeepers are women, meeting the UN target.

Mr. Secretary-General,

In striving for peace and security, we have to put political processes and solutions at the forefront. We need to acknowledge the importance of conflict prevention and mediation.

To improve peacekeeping performance, well-defined and well-planned mandates by the Security Council are crucial. The resources need to be sufficient to meet the mandates, and the personnel must be well trained and equipped.

UN peacekeepers work in very complex and dangerous environments, and often serve in situations where there actually is no peace to keep. In their work, United Nations peacekeepers must meet the highest possible standards. Here preventing and combatting sexual exploitation and abuse is of utmost importance.

Women's full participation and empowerment in peacekeeping operations also increases the effectiveness of the operations.

Mr. Secretary-General,

Let me conclude by assuring you that Finland is absolutely committed to the efforts to improve peacekeeping as well as to the comprehensive UN reforms. Now it is time for their effective implementation.

Thank you.