

## **Speech by Prime Minister Mark Rutte at the United Nations High Level Event on Action for Peacekeeping, New York, 25 September 2018**

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you Secretary-General Guterres, for your inspiring words. And thank you for sounding the alarm on the state of UN peacekeeping in March this year.

Given our own experiences in the UN mission in Mali, I share your concern.

Many UN missions operate in complex and dangerous environments. We must take action to ensure effective protection of civilians, lasting peace after conflict, and the best possible support for our Blue Helmets. Because the high casualty rate among peacekeepers is alarming.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands has supported the A4P initiative from its inception. I had the honour to chair the open debate in the Security Council in March, where the initiative was launched. And the Kingdom of the Netherlands is proud to have played an active role in the process that led to today's Declaration of Shared Commitments.

Today, we are sending a strong message. On paper. Today, we are taking this important step towards better peacekeeping. On paper. But tomorrow we face the crucial task of translating our words into action.

So what needs to be done?

- First and foremost we need all stakeholders in peacekeeping to take their share of responsibility
- We need the Security Council to formulate achievable mandates and exercise political pressure when needed
- We need member states to provide the UN with sufficient troops who are properly trained and equipped
- We need the Secretariat to further improve the UN's force generation with innovative concepts like rotation schemes for critical enablers
- And to make sure we keep the momentum, I would suggest that the Secretary-General regularly evaluates the progress of Action for Peacekeeping

As a sign of our commitment, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Rwanda will organise a preparatory conference in The Hague on 14 and 15 January, in the run-up to next year's Defence Ministerial.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Today, the international community is showing that it is serious about its commitment to support peace operations and making a difference in the lives of millions of women, men and children. Now is the time to put words into action.

Thank you.