

**Statement by H.E. Ms. Pema Choden, Foreign Secretary, Royal Government of Bhutan at session 2 of the 4<sup>th</sup> UN Peacekeeping Ministerial on the theme Partnerships, 7-8 December 2021 (virtual).**

1. Bhutan has come a long way since we first joined the peacekeeping fraternity in 2014.
2. Having been the first country to sign the Rapid Deployment Level Agreement with the UN in December 2017, I am happy to share that Bhutan is preparing to deploy a Light Quick Reaction Force to MINUSCA in the coming months.
3. This is significant as it comes at a time when Bhutan is commemorating the 50th anniversary of membership in the UN. On behalf of the Royal Government of Bhutan, I wish to express our deep appreciation to the UN and Member States for your trust and confidence in our ability to meaningfully contribute towards the maintenance of international peace and security.

Excellencies,

4. Long before sustainability and environmental issues featured on the global agenda, our monarchs envisioned the protection and preservation of Bhutan's environment as a national priority. This has translated into a national commitment to remain climate neutral for all time to come. In keeping with this national commitment, and towards advancing the UN Climate Neutral Strategy and Greening the Blue Initiative, I have the honour to convey the following pledges on behalf of my government towards reducing our Contingent's carbon footprint, and impact on the local environment and natural resources. Our Contingent has already been trained in environment friendly management practices and when deployed will:
  - I. Use solar panels for lighting purposes in the barracks and camp area, and environmentally friendly diesel generators;
  - II. Use mobile kitchen and mobile ablutions whenever troops operate from temporary operating Bases;
  - III. Include a dedicated Environment Officer to ensure that all hazardous waste such as POL, tyres, electronic waste, and batteries are disposed of as per mission environment rules. Proper waste disposal method will be carried out to segregate wet, dry, plastic and electronic waste;
  - IV. Share trash management, and energy and water conservation practices with the local community in the place of deployment;
  - V. Carry out plantation of trees around the company location in accordance with existing policies of the host country; and

VI. Standard Operating Procedures and guidelines will be developed for hygiene and sanitation in the startup operation.

While modest, we hope that our pledge will have a positive impact and minimize environmental damage.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate the Korean Government for the Seoul Initiative on Technology and Medical Capacity Building in Peacekeeping which constitute the core elements of the Action 4 Peace plus (A4P+) initiative

TASHI DELEK