

**Statement by H.E., Mr. Savvas Angelidis, Minister of Defence of the Republic of
Cyprus
at the**

**UN PEACEKEEPING MINISTERIAL:
UNIFORMED CAPABILITIES, PERFORMANCE & PROTECTION
United Nations Headquarters, General Assembly Hall, New York
29 March 2019**

Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

Peacekeeping continues to be the most important tool we have at our disposal to disrupt the conflict cycle. As long as we are not successful in preventing conflict, then we are collectively responsible to mitigate its effects and bring it to an end, serving the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security

As the host country of a long-running United Nations peacekeeping operation, Cyprus holds that the mandates of PKOs must be clear and simple, no matter how complex a conflict is. UNFICYP is a case in point; the Force's mandate has proven flexible enough to see the Force through very significant changes on the ground, throughout its presence.

PKOs must be tailored to the conflict they seek to address and they are instrumental in ensuring stability and a conducive climate that can generate peace agreements. In addition, the enduring consent of the host government for the presence and operations of a UN Force and synergy with the host, must be there constantly if the PKO is to be effective, and if self-sustaining peace is to follow its withdrawal.

The protection of civilians, particularly vulnerable populations like IDPs, women and girls, is a primary objective of PKOs. In addition to being trained on International Humanitarian Law and gender issues, PKOs must lead by example through eliminating sexual exploitation and abuse. The growing number of women peacekeepers and women in posts of high command is key to this end, though long-overdue. We are proud that UNFICYP, is the first UNPKO led by women in all three of its components: military, police and civilian.

The principles of conflict prevention and peacekeeping— and not political considerations — must determine the deployment, mandate and duration of PKOs. The UN Secretariat has this expertise and the UNSC should examine each case on its merits, based solely on the criterion of maintaining international peace and security. It is in this context that Cyprus has supported the “Action for Peacekeeping” initiative as well as the UNSG's efforts to focus PKOs on performance and their ability to deliver on their mandates. We welcome the progress achieved so far to this end, including the development of a comprehensive performance policy on peacekeeping.

Before closing, Mr. Chairman, allow me to express my country's deep appreciation to all Member States which have contributed financial, troop and police resources to UNFICYP over the years and to recall that my government covers a third of UNFICYP's budget through voluntary contributions and will continue to do so. UNFICYP is an effective UN peacekeeping operation because of its steadily good performance in accordance with its mandate. Its presence remains indispensable until such time as to ensure the end of the illegal Turkish occupation and the restoration of peace and international legality.

Thank you.