

REMARKS BY MR MICHALIS GIORGALLAS
MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
ACCRA, 6 DECEMBER 2023

Your Excellency Chairman,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is an honor to represent the Republic of Cyprus at this year's UN Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting in Accra.

At the outset, allow me to pay tribute on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus to all UN service personnel, men and women who have served as peacekeepers around the world, including in Cyprus, to achieve conditions of peace and stability.

We find ourselves at a significant and critical geopolitical juncture. Our world faces complex, multifaceted challenges that threaten international peace and security. In the current turmoil and instability, UN Peacekeeping Operations have a vital role to play.

The Republic of Cyprus has a clear understanding of the necessity and invaluable contribution of the United Nations in the field of peacekeeping.

As one of the longest-running peacekeeping operations in the world, the United Nations Force in Cyprus retains its significance in maintaining the ceasefire on the island, preventing escalation, and protecting civilians.

The ongoing occupation of Cyprus' territory and constant violations by the occupation army of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus, and the latest violations within the buffer zone, contrary to UN Security Council Resolutions, necessitate the presence of UN peacekeeping forces in Cyprus to maintain peace and stability.

In addition to hosting a peacekeeping mission, Cyprus provides access to facilities and infrastructure to support pre-deployment training for UN personnel or to facilitate military mobility for UN peacekeeping operations.

Cyprus supports the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda and welcomes the increasing efforts for greater deployment of women in UN peacekeeping operations.

The United Nations Force in Cyprus is the first UN peacekeeping Force to appoint a woman as its Force Commander and have women lead all its components.

In this context, and aiming to strengthen training capacities for UN personnel, Cyprus pledges to organize and host three different training courses:

Basic Demining Training,

Women Peace and Security, and

Search and Rescue including MEDEVAC Operations.

Our pledges are in line with the training gaps and requirements provided to member states, which reflect the need to enhance missions' capabilities.

The Republic of Cyprus is open to collaborating with other interested member states and partners on these training initiatives, and thus we are eager to join forces with other partner countries.

Thank you for your kind attention.