

Statement by H.E. Mr. Jüri Luik, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Estonia

UN Peacekeeping Ministerial: Uniformed Capabilities, Performance and Protection

New York, 29 March 2019

Madam Undersecretary,

Distinguished Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset I would like to thank Secretary General Guterres for his leadership in bringing us together today and ensuring that UN peacekeeping remains fit and flexible to meet modern challenges. Estonia aligns itself with the statement (to be) delivered by the European Union, and I would like to offer a few remarks in my national capacity.

Let me start by stressing that the UN will maintain its unique leading role in bringing peace and stability to different regions and tackling today's security challenges and problems. The ever-changing international security environment influences directly our Peacekeepers on the ground, facing the complex challenges including the new security dimensions, like cyber and hybrid threats. More often now do UN Peacekeepers find themselves to be the target of aggression. In order to

continue successfully implementing its role, the UN needs to adapt to the changing security environment.

In this light Estonia supports the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative that focusses on the pertinent and critical issues concerning our peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. It is now time to implement these principles in order to make our collective engagement even more efficient. It is also our task to contribute to peacekeeping operations providing specialised and high-performing capabilities in order to most effectively prevent, contain and resolve conflicts and build sustainable peace.

Madam Undersecretary, I would like to focus on three specific aspects:

Firstly, what I have learned from my visits to mission areas is that the UN Security Council mandates for peacekeeping operations must be mission-specific and robust. In addition, a proactive posture requires greater delegation of power to the field and better flexibility for mission leadership.

Secondly, I would like to underline that creating security and stability requires efficient coordination and partnership with international, regional and sub-regional stakeholders in the field. That also demands our own effort, in particular, in improving our intelligence capacity and

situational awareness of the operation areas. We as troop and/or police contributing countries should clearly communicate national caveats to help implement mandates in the best possible way.

My third point touches upon the women, peace and security. Since the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1325 remarkable achievements have been made at the normative level. However, the challenges lie at the level of implementation, so we must continue promoting the role of women in peace and security on national, regional as well as international levels. Running for the UN Security Council for the period of 2020-21 Estonia reaffirms a long-term commitment to pay special attention to the women, peace and security agenda. At the national level, our Action Plan focuses on protecting the human rights, and contributing to empowerment of women in both conflict and post-conflict situations, raising awareness, and enhancing co-operation and information exchange.

Finally, let me conclude by emphasizing that Estonia has always contributed to peace and stabilization operations around the world. Currently we participate in a number of different operations in the Sahel region, the Middle East, Mediterranean Sea and Afghanistan. Estonia will continue to contribute to global peacekeeping efforts and promote these ideas throughout our bid for the non-permanent seat of the UN Security Council for the period of 2020-2021.

Thank you!