

UN Peacekeeping Ministerial 7-8 December 2021

Elements for EU's intervention on UN Peacekeeping Performance & Accountability (Session III)

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Ministers,

Your Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- It is a pleasure and an honour to be here today and I would like to thank the hosts the Government of the Republic of Korea for the invitation to speak on behalf of the EU [*High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy Josep Borell unfortunately could not attend today*]
- Since 1948, more than one million of men and women from [125 countries](#) served in over seventy UN peace operations. These are remarkable numbers, illustrative of the instrumental role that peacekeeping has been playing in the efforts to fulfil the primary purpose of the United Nations - to maintain international peace and security.
- Allow me to pay tribute to the thousands of peacekeepers that have and are as we speak putting their lives in harm's way, often in the most complex and challenging of environments. Let me also pay tribute to those who have lost their lives while serving under the United Nations flag. We are all indebted to them and to their courage.

- UN **peacekeeping continues to be a vital instrument** to advancing peace and security in the world; a crucial means to create conditions and pave the way for achieving sustainable peace. As UN Secretary-General Guterres reminds us ever so often, peacekeepers cannot be deployed as a substitute to political processes. Peacekeeping should only be deployed **in support of political solutions** to conflicts that address root causes and drivers of conflicts, including human rights violations.
- EU is the strong proponent of multilateral solutions in support of peace and security. And we are **ready to work with UN for more effective, more inclusive and more networked multilateralism** in the future as called for by the Secretary General in Our Common Agenda.
- As policy-makers, we also have a special responsibility to ensure that blue helmets are endowed with the means to effectively deliver their mandate. **Strengthening the performance of peacekeeping is absolutely crucial** to ensuring that peace operations are fit for purpose and capable of effectively addressing the challenges posed by the changed nature of conflict and the highly complex environments they are called to operate in.
- I would like to stress the EU's and its Member States' **unwavering support** to Secretary General Guterres' relentless and determined efforts **to make peacekeeping more effective and more efficient.**

- Collectively, **EU Member States are the second greatest contributors to the UN peacekeeping budget.** But the EU's engagement goes far beyond the financial dimension.
- The EU-UN cooperation on crisis management dates back to early 2000s and is in the DNA of EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Since then, we have built a **strong and mature partnership** based on complementarity of roles, and capitalising as much as possible on our respective comparative advantages.
- In fact, **all of the 18 EU's** currently deployed crisis management **missions and operations cooperate closely with** several members of the **UN family**. 13 of those EU missions and operations share the same theatre with a UN mission [e.g. our capacity building and training missions in Mali, Central African Republic and Somalia]. In some cases we even share camps.
- This year, the EU has worked closely with the UN Secretariat to review cooperation between our missions and operations and to define a **new set of forward-looking UN-EU priorities for the period 2022-2024.**
- This **renewed partnership framework** reflects the EU and the UN's shared commitments to the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda; to conflict prevention and the importance of political solutions to achieving (and sustaining) peace but also to more **effectively address the evolving threat landscape, cross-cutting challenges and conflict multipliers** such as climate change and environmental degradation, new and emerging threats,

including disruptive technologies, hybrid, disinformation as well as the global COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences.

- We also insist on the **centrality of respect for human rights and international humanitarian law** and the importance of ensuring accountability through tackling impunity.
- The **COVID-19** pandemic has clearly **demonstrated** the **importance of ensuring complementarity** and **enhancing synergies** to address operational needs and challenges in the field. **Closer cooperation with partners is essential for better performance**, and for making better use of increasingly scarce resources.
- Performance is also dependent on the success of our efforts to work in a more integrated approach. In order to improve the coordination of the various EU instruments, we have established the **European Peace Facility** bringing together existing funding for EU military operations, our support to peacekeeping operations by partner organisations as well as expanding our ability to support military capacity building in partner countries.
- The global pandemic exposed even more the world's fragilities. The multilateral system has taken a hit and is continuing to suffer. While coordinating on the immediate needs and challenges, we must recognise that pandemic has not changed the long-term needs of the different countries, but has rather amplified pre-existing challenges. It is likely that these trends will intensify in the next 5-10 years.

- Thus **we will be expected to achieve more with less**. UN peacekeeping will need to adapt to the new realities of conflict, identify the instruments to address new challenges, and be more robust in tackling the drivers of conflict. Addressing challenges such as climate change considerations or impact of new technologies both in conflict analysis and in mission planning will be essential.
- But it also means that we will have to continue to look for more innovative ways in which we work now and put much more emphasis on building stronger and more robust **network of partnerships**.
- In response to the new strategic landscape, EU is developing the **[EU] Strategic Compass**, which will guide our external action in the next 5-10 years. In the four **operational chapters** [1) Act; 2) Secure; 3) Invest; and 4) Partner] the Compass focusses on how the EU can be **more effective and flexible in its operational engagement** for example through mandates that are more robust and by filling our missions and operations properly.
- At the same time, we also need to **improve our readiness**, for example by investing more in advanced planning and by developing operational modules that train, exercise and prepare together but also by investing more and better in **capabilities** and **innovative technologies** and by improving our ability to react to hybrid and cyber threats.

- We undertake all these actions to **strengthen the EU's** ability to act. This however goes hand in hand with strengthening our relation with partners. That is why the Strategic Compass will also address ways **to enhance cooperation with international organisations, including UN**, but also bilateral partners.
- By strengthening our partnerships framework, the EU aims to be a **more reliable and credible security provider** and a more effective contributor to the global efforts to promote peace and security.

Thank you.