

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**REMARKS/VIDEO MESSAGE TO THE 2021 UNITED NATIONS
PEACEKEEPING MINISTERIAL**

New York/Seoul, 7 December 2021

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I thank you all for your commitment to peace – and particularly the host of today’s meeting, the Republic of Korea.

The past seven years have seen a notable increase in support to strengthen United Nations peacekeeping.

We were able to deploy new military and police capabilities more quickly, and to include more women peacekeepers, police and civilians in our operations.

However, we now face the highest number of violent conflicts since 1945.

The COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis, and geopolitical tensions mean conflicts are more complex and prolonged.

Peacekeeping has never been more relevant and its success more urgent.

The Action for Peacekeeping initiative I launched three years ago is aimed first and foremost at making our missions stronger, safer and more effective. A4P plus, which I launched in March, aims to accelerate implementation.

We are taking concrete actions across all areas of A4P plus, from enhancing the safety, security and wellbeing of our personnel, to increasing the participation and expanding the role of women in our missions.

We have made progress on collective coherence around a political strategy with regional partners in South Sudan.

We are also taking forward the Strategy for the Digital Transformation of Peacekeepers, which is central to more innovative, data-driven peacekeeping.

I count on your continued support, particularly to improve protection of the civilians we serve, and of United Nations peacekeepers.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We still face significant gaps in our missions – particularly of aviation and high-tech capabilities.

In Mali, we need helicopters and medical evacuation teams to cover a vast terrain that is inaccessible by road or river.

Long-range Unmanned Aircraft systems are vital to several missions, including in the Central African Republic. They help to protect civilians by enabling peacekeepers to know what is happening around them, day and night.

We need your partnership, to ensure that we are deploying well-trained troops with the appropriate equipment.

Too often, uniformed peacekeepers lack the skills to administer first aid, to plan and undertake a patrol, or to assess information and identify threats.

We need to invest in sustainable, triangular partnerships between countries with resources, those that contribute troops and police, and the United Nations, to provide robust training to our peacekeepers.

I also urge you to join the Secretariat and our missions in redoubling our efforts to prevent and address misconduct by a small number of our personnel, particularly sexual exploitation and abuse, which tarnishes all our work.

We need an integrated, collective approach to risk management, and we must find meaningful and respectful solutions to paternity and child support claims.

Gender parity is critical to our effectiveness. We now have gender parity among Heads and Deputy Heads of missions. And with your help, we are steadily increasing the number of women peacekeepers. I urge you to continue and build on your efforts.

We must enable women peacekeepers to play key roles at all levels and in all operational functions. Women must have the same access to professional development and operational experience as men, so that they can compete for peacekeeping assignments.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I welcome the key themes of the Ministerial, including medical capacity building, technology, reducing our environmental footprint, and increasing the number and the role of women peacekeepers.

As we face new threats and mounting challenges, I urge you to redouble your support.

For UN Peacekeeping to succeed, all of us must play our part.

Thank you for your continued partnership with United Nations peacekeeping operations.