

**Ministry of External Affairs
UNP Division**

**Draft Speech for Minister of State for Defence
2023 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial Accra, Ghana
05-06 December 2023**

Thank you, Chair

Your Excellency, Secretary-General of the United Nations

Hon'ble dignitaries of the Republic of Ghana

Excellencies

Dear colleagues and friends

1. I thank the Government of Ghana for hosting this 2023 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial and for the warm hospitality extended to all of us.
2. UN authorities coordinating peacekeeping efforts and this Ministerial also merit our deepest appreciation.
3. The world order and its attendant geopolitics is in a state of flux today. This Ministerial offers us a platform to share our thoughts and re-energize our collective efforts to meet global challenges.

Excellencies,

4. Over 7 decades, India as the largest troop contributing nation, has contributed over 2,75,000 troops to 53 of the 72 UN peacekeeping missions. India was also the first country to deploy an all-female Formed Police Unit in Liberia from 2007 to 2016. More than 170 Indian peacekeepers have made the supreme sacrifice while serving in UN Missions.
5. Recognizing UN's requirement for capacity building, India's Centre for UN Peacekeeping in New Delhi has provided training to Indian peacekeepers, as well as to more than 90 partner countries.

6. Peacekeeping, today, is an increasingly complex task. India has always stood ready to support the architecture for protection of civilians. India believes that the primary responsibility of ensuring the safety of populations rests with national Governments. At the same time, it is important to protect the protectors. We need to make more efforts in this direction.

Excellencies,

7. For our collective efforts to be successful, peacekeeping Missions need clear, unambiguous and realistic mandates. Only mandates with resolute UNSC consensus can give strength to the work of peacekeepers on ground. Mandates should also be unambiguously communicated to local communities in the conflict zones. Exaggerated or misplaced expectations among local communities, arising due to misinformation about the mandate, need to be corrected.

Excellencies,

8. I am glad to share India's pledges which keep in mind the dynamic challenges faced by peacekeeping missions. We have pledged specialised military and police units, including Quick Reaction Force and Police SWAT Units. Our commitments also include specialised air assets, and equipment like counter IED and Surveillance Units. Sensitive to gender responsiveness in peacekeeping, an all-Women Formed Police Units and more female engagement units have been pledged. These pledges showcase India's unwavering commitment towards peacekeeping, and to our capabilities as a first responder with global reach, and a net security provider. We look forward to working for the cause of peace along with all of you.

Thank you.