

MINISTER'S INTERVENION

TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

On behalf of the Irish Government, I warmly welcome this summit of UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministers. Defence Ministers are the key decision makers where the deployment of military personnel on overseas operations is involved. The summit provides an important opportunity for defence ministers to engage with colleagues, where we can seek to coordinate our contributions and support for UN Peacekeeping operations.

Last year, Ireland celebrated a 60 year unbroken legacy, of providing forces to UN peacekeeping missions, since 1958. Peacekeeping today, is significantly more complex and more demanding than it was in 1958, when Ireland first deployed its forces in the Middle East. Responding to international crises today, means that we need to enhance both the military capabilities and the citizen engagement capacity of our peacekeepers. While our forces must have the capacity to discharge their military tasks in a professional manner, they also need to have the necessary training to engage proactively with the local population, including women, so as to deliver more effective peacekeeping operations on the ground.

Responding to these challenges, Ireland has provided professional military personnel who have also been trained extensively on the gender, diversity and cultural awareness, Contingents always include female military personnel in frontline roles.

Drawing on the wide range of experience gained by Irish peacekeepers on their many missions world-wide, Ireland provides a World Class Centre of Excellence in the field of international peace support operations and crisis management through our United Nations Training School.

In support of UN Peacekeeping, Ireland is committed to providing:

Two iterations of the **International Protection of Civilian Course** for 20 students will be provided in our UN School in the Curragh in 2019.

Ireland will host a **Buddy First Aid medical course** in Ireland in 2019 for UN TCCs as a follow on to the EU/NATO/UN course in April.

IEDs and anti-personnel mines pose a particular challenge to UN personnel in the Sahel. In 2019, Ireland will provide two **Counter IED Training and Mine awareness training programmes** in Burkina Faso in association with UNMAS in support of the Sahel G5 Taskforce.

Professionally trained Staff Officers are essential to the effective operation of UN missions. In association with the UN, Ireland will deliver two mission tailored **UN Staff Officer Training Courses** in 2019.

Ireland will fund the attendance of personnel from certain TCCs in respect of the above courses. Ireland is also open to providing these training courses in TCC host States.

In making these pledges, Ireland wishes to restate our strong support for the Secretary General's reform agenda on UN peace operations, in particular the targets to increase the number of women in peacekeeping at every level.

Ireland will submit our enhanced PCRS pledges immediately after this conference.