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*United Nations Ministerial, Seoul 2021 – New Zealand Defence Statement*

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Kia ora koutou katoa,

I am Air Marshal Kevin Short, New Zealand's Chief of Defence Force and it is my honour to deliver this statement on behalf of New Zealand.

I wish to thank the United Nations (UN) and the Republic of Korea for hosting this year's UN Peacekeeping Ministerial, and for inviting New Zealand to participate.

This Ministerial offers a key opportunity to strengthen the United Nations' field operations by closing capability gaps and building capacity through partnerships.

UN Peacekeeping missions are universally born with one worthy goal in mind - to support countries to navigate the difficult path from conflict towards peace.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated how peacekeeping operations need to be agile to serve and protect vulnerable communities in a changing environment.

At home the New Zealand Defence Force is playing a critical role in our Government's COVID-19 response, named Operation PROTECT which is New Zealand's largest military operation since we deployed to Timor-Leste in 2002.

A period of force regeneration and training will be required for our forces after OP PROTECT due to the size of the commitment and duration.

New Zealand remains a strong supporter of peacekeeping operations around the globe. We have contributed to over 40 peace operations in 25 countries since the Second World War.

Our current UN contributions see our personnel deployed to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) and the United Nations Mission In South Sudan (UNMISS).

The NZDF also supports our Pacific partners to build capacity, including through Mutual Assistance Training Teams.

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Over the next few years the work of peacekeeping missions will arguably be more important than ever. We must all do our part to ensure that UN peacekeeping operations are adequately resourced and fit for purpose, so that we can navigate the new peace and security landscape.

New Zealand welcomes the direction provided by the Secretary General through Action For Peacekeeping and Action For Peacekeeping Plus. I was fortunate enough to discuss these with General Diop in October earlier this year.

We wholly support the UN's Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028 and the Women Peace and Security agenda.

We also welcome the positive collective strides captured by this year's UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations' Review and Report.

In closing, I reiterate my sincere thanks to the UN and the Republic of Korea for hosting this Ministerial, and the opportunity to deliver this statement.