

Mr. Secretary- General,
Ministers,
Excellencies,

At the outset, let me express my satisfaction for participating at this 2021 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial and to voice my country's support and join the collective efforts to improve UN peacekeeping.

North Macedonia is taking steps to translate these commitments into concrete action, especially in the area of training capabilities, which would lead to increased number of peacekeepers from our country and achieving the gender participation targets. In that context, North Macedonia will continue to deliver on the Woman, Peace and Security Agenda, which is our guide in the comprehensive peace and security efforts.

Moreover, North Macedonia will continue to focus on training and capacity building based on existing partnerships with partner countries to generate specialized performing capabilities in support of UN peacekeeping.

With the aim of strengthening our uniformed capabilities and performance, we are committed to ensure that peacekeepers can effectively protect civilians, defend human rights and gender equality, and sustain peace.

On sustaining peace, we all have to agree that conflicts cost much more to States than prevention. Therefore, conflict prevention must be at the heart of peacebuilding, which remains essential for transitions and delivering sustainable peace and stable societies.

Excellencies,

UN Peacekeeping operations, although facing challenges, are a fundamental instrument for maintaining peace and security in the world. Therefore, North Macedonia fully supports the Secretary-General's efforts to continue the UN peacekeeping reform and will continue to be part of the collective action for peacekeeping.

In closing, I would like to pay tribute to all UN peacekeepers, past and present, who have served and serve at great personal risk and sacrifice, often in the most difficult and dangerous environments, to protect those in most need, restore stability or promote peace. Moreover, since the start of the global Covid -19 pandemic, UN peacekeepers are facing greater challenges and threats than before, since they have to cope with the impacts from the pandemic while having the continued responsibility to support and protect the people in the countries they serve.

I am convinced that the commitments and pledges from this Ministerial meeting will contribute to improving the ability of peacekeepers to effectively and safely protect those they serve.

Thank you.

