

2023 United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial in Accra
Chair's Summary

Accra, 6 December 2023

On 5-6 December 2023, Ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs and other high-level officials from 91 countries gathered in Accra, Ghana to express their strong support for UN peacekeeping and make a broad range of pledges to strengthen peacekeeping operations. At the first Peacekeeping Ministerial held in Africa, Member States announced new contributions of specialized military and police units, equipment, sustainable capacity-building initiatives, training and multilateral partnerships, with a focus on the five key themes of the Ministerial: women in peacekeeping, mental health support to uniformed personnel, safety and security of peacekeepers, protection of civilians and strategic communications. Participants affirmed efforts to support the digital transformation of UN Peacekeeping and efforts to improve conduct and discipline and environmental management in missions. The Ministerial also provided an opportunity for Member States to voice their support for peacekeeping reform efforts, including Action for Peacekeeping and A4P+, and their commitment to ensure the success of peacekeeping in the present and into the future.

The Ministerial featured two side events: Improving Environmental Management in Peacekeeping and Enhancing Women's Participation in UN Peacekeeping: The Role of Gender-responsive Leaders. The plenary was opened by the Vice-President of Ghana, Mahamudu Bawumia, and the UN's Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, on behalf of the Secretary-General. Ministers participated in three panel discussions. The first panel, chaired by USG Lacroix, focused on the capabilities needed for mandate delivery. Member States spoke to the issues of protection, the safety and security of peacekeepers and leveraging technology. A second panel, chaired by Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, Atul Khare, discussed the necessity of sustainable partnerships for capacity building and training. The third and final panel, chaired by Catherine Pollard, Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, featured a discussion on the conditions for mission success, including critical issues such as host government consent, inclusion, peacekeepers' conduct and strategic communications. Throughout the day, Member States announced specific pledges to peacekeeping in response to the UN's needs and gaps outlined in the previously released UN pledging guide.

Member States committed a significant number of new uniformed capabilities in high-need areas, including aviation (unmanned aerial systems, helicopters and fixed wing aircraft), as well as infantry units, such as infantry battalions, quick reaction forces, and rapidly deployable units. Member States also pledged reconnaissance and critical enabling units, such as engineering units and EOD units. These specialized capabilities will contribute to the protection of civilians while many will also improve the safety and security of peacekeepers.

Member States announced a wide range of training courses on specialized topics and new sustainable capacity building partnerships, including additional support for the Triangular Partnership Programme. Pledges also responded to the need to strengthen safety and security of

peacekeepers, protection of civilians, mental health and strategic communications, including concerns over mis- and disinformation, and hate speech. Many Member States announced pledges aimed to improve environmental outcomes in missions and, in particular, valuable equipment-related projects and partnerships supporting a transition to renewable energy. To strengthen mental health support for uniformed peacekeepers, several Member States announced pledges for the development of digital resources to help implement the Mental Health Framework for Uniformed Personnel. Member States also expressed strong support for the digital transformation of UN peacekeeping and committed to strengthen strategic communications and resources to address mis- and disinformation. Member States affirmed that all peacekeepers, civilian and uniformed, must serve with honour, upholding the standards, image and credibility of the entire UN. Strong accountability for conduct is an intrinsic element of peacekeeping performance.

The Ministerial in Accra and the four lead-up preparatory meetings held by the Peacekeeping Ministerial process co-chairs enabled a sustained discussion on the challenges of UN peacekeeping, as well as the significant success peacekeeping has seen as a cornerstone of multilateralism and international cooperation.

In closing the successful event, Ghana's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, and Ghana's Minister for Defence, Dominic Nitiwul, passed the baton to Germany, whose State Secretary, Nils Hilmer, announced that it will host the next UN Peacekeeping Ministerial in the first half of 2025.