

Summary of the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial 2025 preparatory meeting
Towards a Safer and More Effective Peacekeeping: Use of Technology and Integrated Approach, co-hosted by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Korea
in Islamabad on 15-16 April 2025

Introduction and opening session

Over 127 participants from 44 Member States participated in the prep meeting. It provided an opportunity to deliberate upon the issues and explore various ideas to make Peacekeeping safer and effective with a special focus on use of technology and integrated approach.

The Chief Guest, Secretary of Defense, Lt Gen (Rtd) Ali discussed the challenges peacekeepers face, including increased attacks, and weaponization of technology. Mr. Lee, Director General for International Organizations and Nuclear Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea (RoK) shared that his country attached great importance to Peacekeeping and contributed to it both financially and through troops. Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN, Amb Iftikhar pointed out that Peacekeeping was one of Pakistan's major priorities including currently as an elected member of the Security Council and referred to the collaboration with Denmark and RoK on Peacekeeping in the Council.

Mr. Lacroix, USG for Peace Operations spoke about the evolving and complex challenges missions face, giving examples of MONUSCO, UNIFIL and UNMISS. He also mentioned the importance of improving the security and effectiveness of missions, noting the upcoming Peacekeeping Ministerial as an opportunity to reinvigorate support for UN Peacekeeping. Mr. Khare, USG for Operational Support reiterated the challenges peacekeepers face, noted the high fatality rate in 2025 and shared the three priority areas which included i) strengthening medical support (including mental health support), ii) advancing women participation, and iii) improving safety and security of peacekeepers. Mr. Shahkar, UN Police Advisor, spoke to the role played by UN police, particularly related to community policing and to the evolving threats posed by cyber-crimes, narcotic mafia, and transnational criminal gangs.

Session 1: Evolving Challenges in current UN Peacekeeping Operations

Moderator: Lt. Col Wajiha Arshad

- 1- Ambassador Nabeel Munir, Special Secretary (UN), MoFA, Pakistan
- 2- Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, USG DPO
- 3- Maj. Gen. Paolo Sandri, Head Office of Military Policy, Ministry of Defense of Italy
- 4- Col Abdalla Abuzaid, Chief of Peacekeeping Branch, Jordan Armed Forces

Special Secretary (UN), Amb Nabeel Munir stated that Peacekeeping faces interlinked challenges – political, financial and operational – that needed to be addressed with urgency and unity. He mentioned, among others, that the blurring of lines between peacekeeping and peace enforcement places peacekeepers at risk. Amb Nabeel Munir added that the situation was further complicated when host governments do not uphold Status of Mission Agreements. Restrictions on movement, interference in operations, and lack of cooperation severely undermine mandate implementation and the safety of mission personnel. Amb Nabeel Munir noted that Peacekeeping was increasingly underfunded, with over \$1.3 billion in arrears, which jeopardizes the effectiveness of missions but also delays reimbursements to T/PCCs—many of whom operate under tight fiscal constraints, weakening the very foundations of the global peacekeeping partnership.

Mr. Lacroix emphasized the critical role of political processes, stressing that missions are designed to support and facilitate political processes, and stronger commitment from member states was needed. He added that that improving the tool was also important. Other points raised included strengthening the UN (as underpinned by the UN80 initiative), addressing emerging threats such as more sophisticated IED attacks, drones and the digital transformation of peacekeeping. Mr. Lacroix noted the need for more flexibility regarding the rules governing peacekeeping and resource allocation. In response to a question on the financial constraints, he noted, among others, that good advocacy by Member States was needed.

Maj. Gen. Sandri shared that one major challenges in modern peacekeeping is the need to adapt to new technologies in order to stay relevant in an increasingly complex global environment. Faced with criticism and scrutiny, he noted the need for peacekeeping to become more adaptable and responsive. Training and capacity building were essential for ensuring that peacekeeping forces remain effective in such a rapidly changing environment. Col Abuzaid shared that Jordan's contribution to peacekeeping was characterized by its emphasis on flexibility and preparedness, allowing its forces to adapt effectively to changing circumstances in complex mission environments. Speaking to the recent deployment in MONUSCO, he noted the contingent's experience under the sudden escalation of violence, with challenges of lack of preparedness, logistical issues, extreme weather and resource constraints. Adaptability, flexibility, cooperation and professionalism were needed to counter these challenges.

Session 2: The Future of Peacekeeping: the Role of Technology

Moderator: Mr. Umer Siddique, DG (UN), MOFA, Pakistan

- 1- Mr. Atul Khare, USG DOS
- 2- Ms. Barbara Nieuwenhuys, Director, Digital Enablement Team, DPPA-DPO
- 3- Col Werner Knappe, Federal Ministry of Defense, Germany
- 4- Col Yeongseok Kim, Leader of Smart Camp TF, ROK Army HQ

Session 2 discussed the question of how to harness technology to enhance the safety and security of Peacekeeping missions given the increasingly volatile and hostile geopolitical landscape. Mr. Khare highlighted that in a volatile and hostile environment, there is a pressing need to harness technology as a force multiplier to enhance safety, security, and assist in decision-making. Technology offers transformative potential. Relying on the toolkit of the 20th century is not viable; instead, missions must strive to deploy the toolkit of the 22nd century. In this context, he quoted examples of UAVs, satellite imagery, ground sensors, data driven management dashboards, renewable energy (he also thanked Pakistan for installing 25kw renewable energy project in Central African Republic). Examples provided included telemedicine in six missions, integrated camp security system, unmanned aerial systems, smart camps to improve sustainability and technology transformative training through the C4ISR Academy for Peace Operations (UNCAP).

Ms. Nieuwenhuys underlined that operational efficiency and decision-making of Peacekeeping missions relies heavily on strong linkages and partnerships. She discussed the UNITE Aware initiative which provides a common digital operating picture of the mission environment, enhances situational awareness and supports integrated patrol planning, incident response, and operational coordination across military, police, and civilian components all contributing to improved security. In Peacekeeping, the platform is deployed in MINUSCA (Central African Republic), and UNFICYP (Cyprus) with deployment in UNMISS (South Sudan) ongoing. She further stressed that we need to employ technology to enhance our ability to use, interpret and analyze data efficiently. The tools and developments Ms. Nieuwenhuys represented a transformation in how missions can operate—from reactive to predictive, from fragmented systems to shared awareness, and from intuition-driven to data-informed decisions.

Col Knappe emphasized the need for Peacekeeping missions to adapt to emerging technology, including because non-state actors (NSAs) were rapidly adopting them. He also spoke to the potential of renewable energy to make camps safer and more sustainable. Referring to the independent study on the Future of Peacekeeping operations: New models and related capabilities, Col. Knappe said that technology was essential to address emerging challenges for Peacekeeping operations. He expressed Germany's support for UNITE Aware. Col Knappe pointed out that technology will be the center of discussions in the Ministerial and noted that in addition to financial and troops pledges, technological pledges are also needed.

Col Kim showed a video documentary on the Smart Camp Project by RoK in South Sudan. Discussing this project, he said that this pilot project introduced innovative solutions such as renewable energy systems, water and waste management systems, and intelligent perimeter surveillance systems. These advancements were complemented by food and fuel inventory systems, and facility management systems. Initiatives like these demonstrate the potential of integrating technology to enhance operational effectiveness in challenging environments.

Responding to a question on challenges to the integration of technology in the UN system, Mr. Khare said that local community trust issues, costs, lack of training and challenge of human technology interface were some of the challenges which hindered the integration of technology in the UN system. Col. Knappe added it was the responsibility of TCCs to train the soldiers on proper use of technology. The suggestion of technology contributors was made, with Mr. Khare responding that COE (Contingent Owned Equipment) countries already existed in the system. Col. Knappe added that Germany had introduced an initiative-ECC (Equipment Contributing Countries) but it was important to note that there were equipment related maintenance and payment issues. On the cost of technological solutions, Ms. Nieuwenhuys highlighted that not all technical solutions for the safety and security of peacekeepers were costly and sometimes it was our collective commitment that was needed to, for example track vehicles.

Session 3: Countering threats to safety and security using technology

Moderator: Mr. Takakazu Ito, Senior Programme Manager, TPP, DOS

- 1- Major General Cheryl Pearce, Acting Military Adviser, DPO
- 2- Brig. Gen. Imran (Retd) – Ex HoD PKT, CIPS
- 3- Mr. Raymond Kemei, Programme Officer, UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

The moderator emphasized the significance of cross-pillar training and collaboration between the UN and TCCs, referring to the Triangular Partnership Programme (TPP), which had been instrumental in integrating counter-IED training based on real mission scenarios. Maj Gen Pearce, the UN Acting Military Adviser, noted that peacekeepers now faced a mix of kinetic warfare and asymmetrical threats, which require new strategies and capabilities. She highlighted that technology should not be seen in isolation but must be backed by political support from host states, member states, and the Security Council. Maj Gen Pearce concluded by calling for continued innovation in technology, especially in monitoring ceasefires and addressing threats such as cyberattacks and information operations.

Brig. Gen. Imran (Retd) shared his perspective on countering IED threats and the critical role of training. He acknowledged the growing threat of IEDs and explosive ordinance in Peacekeeping operations, noting that all peacekeepers, regardless of rank, were vulnerable to these indiscriminate threats. General Imran shared that effective counter IED strategy had three pillars; i) preparing the peacekeepers, ii) defeating the device, iii) degrading the network. Mr. Kemei from UNMAS provided additional insights into the ongoing efforts to mitigate IED threats through technology and training. He shared statistics from casualties that have impacted

UN personnel for the last 5 years where there are 41 fatalities and 280 injuries. With most casualties reported in MINUSMA before the mission ended in June 2023. He further highlighted more casualties are reported in Africa Union mission in Somalia. Mr. Kemei also highlighted the rise of weaponized drones as a new threat to peacekeepers. While AI tools are not yet widely used in the field, he stressed the need for such technologies to help predict and counter IED threats more effectively. Mr. Kemei also emphasized the importance of local intelligence and community feedback in counter-IED strategies.

Session 4: Role of regional and cross regional organizations supporting UN Peace Operations

Moderator: Mr. Umer Siddique, Director General (UN), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan

- 1- Ambassador Munir Akram – Former Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN
- 2- Ambassador Tri Tharyat, Deputy Minister for Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia
- 3- Col Bedda Gatabi, African Union Department
- 4- Mr. Dawit Yirga, Researcher, Security Council Report (video message)

Amb Akram, former Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, identified the African Union (AU) as the only regional organization actively engaging in both peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations, which positions it as a leader in multidimensional peace operations across Africa and beyond. He proceeded to discuss UN Security Council Resolution 2719, aiming to enhance peace enforcement capabilities. While the resolution faced challenges, including issues with financial contributions and reluctance from some Council members regarding the hybrid peace operation model in Somalia, it was a step toward strengthening regional capacity in peace enforcement. Amb Akram suggested the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to consider a regional security architecture, mentioned the active regional role of CARICOM in Haiti and shared that Europe may need a UN Peacekeeping mission if a ceasefire was reached in Ukraine given an EU mission will likely be unacceptable to one of the parties.

Amb Tharyat highlighted ASEAN region's contributions to peacekeeping, with over 4,000 peacekeepers from ASEAN countries participating in various UN Peacekeeping missions. He further described the ASEAN Peacekeeping Center Network (APCN), established in 2011, which has become a critical platform for regional collaboration in peacekeeping, focusing on training and the exchange of best practices. Amb Tharyat also emphasized the growing role of technology in modern Peacekeeping operations and ASEAN's contribution through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in improving Peacekeeping effectiveness.

Col Gatabi discussed the AU's critical role in supporting peace and security. He explained the key pillars, including the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the African Standby Force (ASF). While noting the role of the AU, he also acknowledged that no single organization could tackle Africa's complex security challenges, such as the rise of terrorist groups like AL Shahab, Boko Haram, ISIS and Al-Qaeda. Col Gatabi highlighted the need for strong partnerships between the AU and the UN, particularly through the Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. While the AU's peace support operations (PSOs) have been vital, Col Gatabi stressed the importance of sustainable funding and the need for case-by-case implementation of UN-assisted funding for AU-led PSOs, as called for in resolution 2719.

Mr. Yirga, discussed the growing reliance on (sub)regional organizations in supporting UN peace operations, particularly in volatile environments where armed groups and terrorists were prevalent. He discussed the gap between host countries' expectations and what operations can

realistically achieve, noting that this disconnect increased the need for regional peace operations, especially by the AU. Mr. Yirga pointed out that regional and subregional mechanisms are often first responders to crises, but sustaining these deployments is challenging due to resource constraints. 2719 aimed at addressing funding needs for AU-led PSOs, but its implementation still faces challenges due to unpredictable funding and delays.

Responding to a question on whether 2719 can serve as a template for building future consensus on regional organizations and the UN, Amb Akram responded that the resolution was a painstakingly negotiated compromise, and that different regional needs will require different approaches. The focus in regions like the Middle East would likely be on peace observation, rather than peace enforcement, as seen in the case of Somalia. In response to a question on balancing expectations of regional organizations and the UN in managing peace and security, Amb Akram said that the organizations will have their own perspectives due to their political compositions. Achieving coherence is challenging but possible, as seen with 2719, which established some convergence on financial aspects. However, further negotiations and compromise was needed on a case-by-case basis, especially when conflicting regional priorities arise, as seen in cases like Somalia or Eastern DR Congo. On a question regarding the next steps for the implementation of 2719 and how can the AU increase its contributions, Col Gatabi said that efforts to operationalize 2719 were progressing through joint technical teams and workstreams. The AU already started funding some peace operations through its Crisis Reserve Facility, though there was still work to be done to ensure sustainable funding. The AU must continue to mobilize resources, with contributions from countries like China and Japan already helping. The AU's Peace Fund needs to be a central part of this strategy. On the application of 2719, a member in the audience noted the well-known US concern about applying it to Somalia.

Session 5: Partnerships and performance for more effective peacekeeping

Moderator: Ms. Flaminia Minelli, Chief of Policy and Best Practices

- 1- Mr. Faisal Shahkar, UN Police Adviser, DPO
- 2- Major General Silver Kayemba, Chief Defense and Security Advisor to the Chief of Uganda's People's Defense Force
- 3- Brig Gen Shafqat Iqbal Gondal (Former Sec. Comd UNMISS)
- 4- Col Jiho Jang, HMA&TPP Support Officer, ROK Army HQ
- 5- Mr. Alexis Berthier, Deputy Director for Political Affairs, UN Directorate, French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs

The moderator opened the session by emphasizing the ongoing efforts to enhance the effectiveness of UN peacekeepers. Mr. Shahkar, the UN Police Adviser, discussed the critical role of the UN Police Division in enhancing peacekeeping operations. He emphasized the importance of strong collaboration between the UN Secretariat, host states, police contributing countries, regional partners, and training institutes. He detailed how UNPOL assists Member States in pre-deployment readiness and conducts mission inspections to assess police performance, noting that these assessments lead to actionable improvements. Mr. Shahkar further emphasized the need for pre-deployment and in-mission training, particularly in areas like environmental policing, data management, and analytical skills.

Maj Gen Kayemba focused on the importance of partnerships in enhancing peacekeeping operations, especially through the Triangular Partnership Program (TPP). He emphasized that successful peacekeeping requires not only pledging forces but also ensuring proper equipment and training. He drew on Uganda's experience in AMISOM, discussing how Uganda transitioned through various mandates. Maj Gen Kayemba cited Uganda's successful counter-IED training as an example of how collaborative efforts strengthened peacekeeping operations.

Brig Gen Gondal, former Sec. Comd UNMISS, then discussed the role of partnerships in peacekeeping operations, focusing on the UNMISS mission in South Sudan. He emphasized the need for local legitimacy in peacekeeping and cited Uganda's creation of women patrols as a model for improving community trust. He also noted the importance of early warning systems and proactive peacekeeping efforts in mitigating risks. Brig Gen Shafqat emphasized the importance of partnerships with local community and NGOs and international bodies to achieve desired goals through building trust. He concluded by stressing that effective peacekeeping requires a strategic partnership that integrates military strength, local legitimacy, humanitarian efforts, and long-term development.

Col Jang spoke about Korea's significant contributions to UN peacekeeping operations through the Triangular Partnership Program (TPP), which enhances the capabilities of troop-contributing countries (TCCs). He discussed how Korea's involvement in the TPP began in 2021 and focused on its engineering training in Cambodia. He discussed plans for further expanding TPP training in 2025, inviting more Asian TCCs to Korea and getting additional support from other member states. Col Jang reaffirmed Korea's commitment to strengthening global peacekeeping through the TPP and its role in enhancing TCC capabilities. Mr. Berthier emphasized the critical role of partnerships and training in making Peacekeeping missions more effective. He also addressed the challenges of coordination, peacekeeper evaluations, multilingualism, and women's participation. Looking ahead, he stressed the importance of continued collaboration to create a more effective and efficient peacekeeping force and highlighted the upcoming Ministerial as crucial for advancing these goals.

Responding to a question on how to communicate with the population, the panelist said that effective communication was essential for peacekeepers to avoid danger and gain the trust of locals. Regular patrolling and engaging with communities helped in building trust and ensuring safety. It was crucial to understand local sensitivities and speak the local language when possible. Responding to a question about training, the panelists responded that training was essential for preparing peacekeepers. On removing the barriers to women's participation, one panelists said that the barriers can be reduced through targeted outreach and training. On a question on improving communication interoperability between different countries, the panelists said that communication interoperability can be enhanced by joint training programs and courses, such as those conducted by the UN in regional service centers. This helps peacekeepers from different countries work effectively together in the field.

Session 6: Towards an integrated approach: peacekeeping, prevention, and peacebuilding

Moderator: Mr. Qasim Aziz Butt, Director (UN), MOFA, Pakistan

- 1- Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN
- 2- Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, ASG for Peacebuilding Support, PBSO
- 3- Mr. Toru Morikawa , Director-General, Secretariat of the HQs for the International Peace Cooperation, Cabinet Office of the Government of Japan

The session addressed how peacekeeping, prevention, and peacebuilding must be connected to address the evolving global security challenges. Amb Iftikhar highlighted the importance of a holistic and integrated approach to peacekeeping, one that encompasses the entire peace continuum from prevention to conflict resolution, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. He discussed the origins of Peace Building Commission and Pakistan's role in its establishment and noted that it brought together all the relevant actors. Ms. Spehar emphasized the critical role that peacebuilding efforts play in addressing the root causes of conflict, complementing peacekeeping operations by ensuring long-term stability and sustainability. She recommended peacebuilding to be more integrated into peacekeeping operations, ensuring that it becomes a

key priority from the outset of missions, not just during transitions. She also highlighted the importance of improved peacebuilding financing, aligning the efforts of member states, and incorporating lessons learned from both successful and unsuccessful peacebuilding missions.

Mr. Morikawa emphasized the importance of an integrated approach to sustaining peace, especially during transitions and drawdowns of peacekeeping operations. Drawing on Japan's initiatives in South Sudan and Uganda, he highlighted the critical role of capacity-building, the implementation of peace agreements, and the need for sustainable peace efforts that include the active participation of local stakeholders. He also stressed the importance of integrating peacebuilding into peacekeeping from the beginning of missions and expressed a commitment to further enhancing the role of the Peacebuilding Commission.

A question on what tools could be established to measure the impact of preventive efforts that resonate with both donors and local communities. The panelists responded that evaluating the impact of peacebuilding is challenging. The Peacebuilding Impact Hub has been developing repositories of best practices, conducting empirical impact assessments, and gathering compelling narratives of improvements in conflict zones to measure the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts. Responding to a query on the risks of expanding peacekeeping mandates to include peacebuilding activities with limited resources, the panelists said that peacekeeping and peacebuilding were interrelated but distinct processes. To a question on effectively using technology to enhance the safety of peacekeepers, especially considering the evolving risks and the legal implications, the panelists said that the increasing use of technology, such as drones, in peacekeeping missions could enhance safety but also raise legal and ethical concerns.

Closing Session and conclusion

The closing session covered a recap from the previous prep meeting in Indonesia and an outlook to the Ministerial in Berlin. The Chief of General Staff, Lt. Gen Raza, delivered closing remarks, and suggested, among others, four measures to make peacekeeping more effective: realistic mandates by the Security Council, missions to invest in local mechanisms to ensure sustainable peace, adequate financial and material support provided to all the Missions and the adoption of new technology. The Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Senator Dar, welcomed that the meeting had fostered rich dialogue and brought forward practical ideas to make peacekeeping safer and effective. He also shared an eight-point strategy to make Peacekeeping more effective, namely strong political backing, clear mandates for the Missions, inclusion of TCCs important, resources to match mandates, ensuring professional standards through performance assessment, strengthening regional and cross-regional partnerships, making Peacekeeping a part of broader peace continuum, focusing on the safety and security of peacekeepers and making peacekeeping part of broader political strategy.

The two-day Preparatory Meeting in Islamabad provided an opportunity to discuss the key challenges being faced by UN Peacekeeping with a special emphasis on making it safer and more effective through the use of technology and an integrated approach.