

A Keynote address from MND at the Session II, 7 December

This is Suh Wook, Republic of Korea Minister of National Defense.

I am deeply glad to give a keynote address on partnership, training and capacity building, a core value of the UN and the second topic of the peacekeeping ministerial. Further, I express my gratitude to UN under secretary generals and foreign and defense ministers.

2) First, I give my gratitude to 87,000 UN peacekeepers who are devoting themselves to world peace and security in areas of conflict across the world.

Under the name of the Blue Helmet, over a million peacekeepers have participated in peacekeeping operations since 1948 in 71 UN missions. Currently, there are 12 active missions performing their duties for the peace and reconstruction of their host nations.

The UN values of peace, stability and prosperity have sowed their seeds and reaped their fruits through the noble accountability and sacrifice of these peacekeepers.

3) However, the political and security landscape of these mission areas are becoming more complex with their unpredictability deepening.

Hostile actions are deteriorating, but medical facilities and social infrastructure are vulnerable. Non-traditional security threats, such as the emerging threats of climate change, pandemics and cyber threats, are also major challenges.

They are among the reasons that call for efficient utilization of limited personnel and resources.

4) Accordingly, in 2018, the United Nations announced the Action for Peacekeeping, containing the means to overcome challenges facing PKO. This year, the UN specified its implementation strategies to increase efficiency via Action for Peacekeeping Plus.

The Strategy for the Digital Transformation of UN Peacekeeping, announced recently, emphasizes the utilization of technology in responding more effectively to potential threats in PKO.

The Republic of Korea supports such efforts by the UN, and together with the UN and member states, looks to play its role in the substantial implementation of the A4P+.

5) Raising the safety and strengthening the mission capabilities of the peacekeepers will be one of the major core tasks pursued by the UN. For such, we must construct close partnership among member states and expand training programs based on cooperation.

6) For these ends, I will introduce the specific contribution means of the Republic of Korea today.

I will explain the Republic of Korea's pledges, including the major topic of technology and medicine, and UN's priority requirements of helicopter provision, training, and enhancing the capabilities of women and police in PKOs.

We will now watch a brief video on these pledges.

7) First, we will play a leading role in transitioning UN on-site missions to future Smart Camps.

As seen on the screen, the Republic of Korea has proposed a blueprint of the smart camp that is safe, efficient and eco-friendly, by applying ICT.

Based on UN requirements, we have explored 14 technology tasks and reviewed implementation potential and validity. Starting next year, we will begin pursuing model programs for on-site missions while applying Smart Camp technologies.

I request the member states' active participation in effectively improving the facilities, equipment and resources of the missions and their sites.

8) Second, we will enhance the peacekeeping missions' medical and disease prevention capabilities.

The Republic of Korea established a level-2 hospital in Mali in 2018. In addition, Korea will dispatch an additional medical support team to the UN Mission in South Sudan and support the first aid capacity building of the peacekeepers. In long term, we will support expert education by dispatching training instructors to Ethiopia's Medical Training Center.

9) Third, in order to fulfill the aviation assets, a priority requirement of the UN, we will contribute 16 500MD helicopters to the African mission. By establishing a partnership to troop contributors such as Kenya, we will support the foundation of a UN aviation unit. We will build a model cooperation example by including the provision of helicopter maintenance and operation to the interested nation when necessary.

If synergy is created between Korea's provision of helicopters and partner nations' operation experience, I am certain it will contribute greatly to the safety assurance and operational capabilities enhancement of the peacekeepers.

10) Fourth, we will share our abundant experience operating engineering units with the UN member states.

We will provide engineering equipment and instructors to the ASEAN members by constructing triangular partnership among the UN, Korea and troop contributors. Furthermore, based on light coordination mechanism, we will strengthen tangible cooperation, including supporting training and equipment in the mine removal field.

11) Fifth, we will contribute to enhancing the capabilities of women and police in PKOs, a core area of interest of the UN.

Together with the UN Women, we will host UN female military officer course and provide tailored training related to gender issues. Further, we will review system reforms to continuously enhance women's participation in PKO.

12) Lastly, we will support to utilize the outstanding capabilities of the Korean National Police in UN's crime prevention and cyber response.

We will contribute to the related activities by dispatching additional police peacekeepers and newly dispatching cyber forensics and investigation experts. Furthermore, we will also operate UN police education courses and simultaneously support the development of self-sustainment of police in Africa.

By fully mobilizing available capabilities of the military and police, Korea will support the integrated capacity building of the UN Mission.

In conjunction, by additionally allocating one million dollars to the Trust Fund for Peacekeeping Operation, we will support the smooth implementation of the UN's Smart Camp Projects, Casualty Tracking System and Digital Transformation Strategy.

13) Under Secretary Generals and Representatives,

Having grown with the assistance of the UN 70 years ago, the Republic of Korea now seeks to play a leading role in peacekeeping while faithfully implementing the six pledges discussed earlier.

I hope through today's conference, wisdom and insight are shared to enhance the partnership and capabilities among member states. I trust that the member states will also partake in the international efforts for world peace, stability and prosperity through active partnership construction and cooperation examples. Thank you.