

United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial

5-6 December 2023 | Accra, Ghana

Statement by H.E. Rohitha Bogollagama, Special Representative/Special Envoy of the President of Sri Lanka

Duration: 3 minutes

Excellencies,

On behalf of H.E. the President and the Government of Sri Lanka, I extend warm greetings to the esteemed members of this Peacekeeping Ministerial. Sri Lanka also commends the Republic of Ghana for hosting this event.

Peacekeeping is one of the most effective tools we have for the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security. We are hopeful that this Ministerial will contribute to our collective effort to strengthen the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations and their impact on the communities.

I am proud to recall that Sri Lanka has been a committed contributor to UN Peacekeeping over six decades. Since then more than twenty one thousand Sri Lankan peacekeepers have played an important role in many peacekeeping endeavors.

Through active and unwavering participation in most challenging peacekeeping missions, Sri Lanka plays an important role in promoting an environment favorable to resolving conflicts peacefully, through "Action for peacekeeping". This includes bolstering diplomatic endeavors aimed at securing enduring solutions. Operating within the rapid changing in character of conflicts, these personnel are committed to fulfil their roles as peacekeepers by making significant contributions to the promotion of sustainable peace, stability, and development.

Sri Lanka acknowledges the formidable challenges the peacekeeping missions are confronted with, operating in regions with persistent conflicts, heightened violence and challenging terrains and compliments the 'Agenda for Peacekeeping'. Sri Lanka is concerned with the safety and security of peacekeepers including their mental health. Nine Sri Lankan Peacekeepers have made the supreme sacrifice during their Tour of Duty.

However, Sri Lanka is committed to the obligation as a Troop Contributing Country, in the interest of global peace and security. The continuity of presence is of paramount importance for Sri Lanka's Peacekeeping Operations. Sustained engagement in these missions' enables Sri Lankan personnel to build long-lasting relationships with local communities, and enhance the effectiveness of Sri Lanka's contributions. It also ensures a stable and reliable presence that can adapt to evolving circumstances and contribute meaningfully to the pursuit of lasting peace and security in regions that they serve.

Sri Lanka will continue to commit for peacekeeping endeavors of UN. For this noble cause, The Government of Sri Lanka is willing to pledge high performance specialized units that are required diversified tasks for Action for Peacekeeping

(Note: The pledges are Annexed hereto, in order to be presented in the relevant session, as appropriate)

Excellencies,

Sri Lanka strongly believes in partnerships and joint endeavors to facilitate sustainable peace that can support initiative on regional cooperation for peacekeeping for Central and South Asian region and be committed to make it a reality.

Our military personnel are well-prepared to undertake new missions in the global quest for peace. We consider this an opportunity not only to continue our contributions to global peacekeeping but also to showcase the capabilities of our dedicated personnel. Sri Lanka seeks a positive response from the United Nations in this regard, as we remain fully committed to the pledges we have made to support the noble cause of international peace. Sri Lanka is ready to engage with the Department of Peace Operations to further strengthen our contribution to UN peacekeeping.

In conclusion, Sri Lanka pays its highest tribute to the fallen Blue Helmets, with humility, recognize and commend their achievements.

Thank You.

Annex: Pledges

1. Specialized police troops with 160 personnel + 40 SWAT personnel who are trained and equipped for FPU is ready to deploy with all COE.
2. To enhance the women in peacekeeping specially designed training is conducted on VIP protection, parameter guard, security of Venerable points with specialized combat skills and drills. These troops are ready for deployment and can deploy as a Female Force Protection Company with 184 personnel.
3. Specially trained personnel on protecting, Vulnerable and Key points with guard dogs and sniffer dogs are kept stand by in order to deploy a Force Protection Company with 150 personnel. They are also trained on explosive detection and control of entry exit points.
4. 650 Infantry troops are trained for various peacekeeping tasks, are ready for deploy for any infantry task in any challenging mission where robust action is deemed necessary.
5. Specially selected personnel who are highly mobile trained and equipped with motorized armored protection vehicles/Motorbikes/Light vehicles (4x4) which can reach to any area with minimum delay ready to as Deploy Quick Reaction Force Company with 110 personnel.
6. Special Forces company with 150 personnel who are highly trained and specialized on Hostage Rescue, Special Reconnaissance, VIP Protection, Rescue operations, Long range patrols and specialized in counter terrorism drills are trained for specialized UN operations. Annually Special operation action on UN peacekeeping environment is conducted to maintain the readiness. Motorbike mounted platoon size force also included for rapid action and deployment.
7. Two Explosive Ordnance Demolition Company who is specialized and experienced troops capable of handling IEDS and clearing mines are kept on standby. Females are also trained for EOD tasks.
8. We would like to announce that, redeploy the Combat Convoy Company which is repatriated from MINUSMA as a Battalion with 685 Personnel. Professionalism was well displayed during the TOD at Mali and ready to deploy after repatriation in another mission as equipment can be utilized for peace operations.
9. Men and women who are trained for Air Field Support duties are ready for deployment with 60 personnel.
10. Men and women peacekeepers who are trained to handle communication equipment to maintain the communication during peace operations including on digital platforms are ready to deploy a Signals Company with 101 personnel.

11. Men and women who are trained on military police duties can be deployed in any mission on any condition as two Military Police Company with 132 personnel each.

12. Field Engineering Construction Company with 192 personnel is ready to deploy with necessary COE.

13. Two medium helicopter utility units which comprises of Bell 212 and Bell 412 helicopters are ready to deploy in quick notice.

14. Sri Lanka Institute of Peace Support Operations Training Center is ready to conduct Trainings/Exercises for all troop contributing countries. Training facilities can be given to conduct international peace operation training and exercise.

15. Deploy Military Staff Officers/Military Observers and Individual Police officers for any level of headquarters and for any mission. Highly qualified Men and Women staff officers who are competent in handling staff duties in any operational environment.