

## **Statement by Sri Lanka for the UN Defence Ministerial 2019**

**Made by Dr Rohan Perera PC - PRUN**

Chair

Excellences, Delegates attending the 2019 United Nations Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial

Ladies and Gentlemen

At the very inception I wish to thank the Departments of Peace Operations and Operational Support and all others involved in making the Defence Ministerial 2019 a reality.

Sri Lanka is a long standing committed troop and police contributor to global peace initiatives for many years.

Few years ago though the country itself had a demanding task for its armed forces, Sri Lanka's commitment towards global peace was highlighted when troops and equipment were pulled out from the ongoing domestic operations and was deployed in support of the UN Peace missions.

Today Sri Lankan peacekeepers support the United Nations in its most hostile and demanding deployments, namely in Central Africa, South Sudan and Mali.

It was just a few week days ago that two Sri Lankans paid the supreme sacrifice and a few injured when discharging duties in support of the Mission in Mali. Despite such incidents, like many other nations who suffered the same fate, Sri Lanka will continue with our commitments toward the global peace and proceed further with the peacekeeping objectives uninterrupted.

Like all TCCs, time and again Sri Lanka too experienced varied difficulties and many obstacles were encountered in the process. However, smooth working relationships that exist between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Secretariat made it possible to overcome such difficulties and the troops continued to perform effectively.

Sri Lanka also advocates a zero tolerance policy towards Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. Thus by being a voluntarily signatory to the compact proposed by the Secretary General on zero tolerance, we demonstrated our commitment at the highest political levels towards zero tolerance.

Further, Sri Lanka became one of the first to accept the proposal by Canada on the eve of the last Defence Ministerial in Vancouver when the Vancouver Principles were proposed.

Sri Lanka also became one of the first Troop Contributor to fulfill the initiative of the Secretary General on reaching the 15% mark on deploying of Female Military Experts in Missions.

The wealth of experience the Sri Lankan troops and the Police have gained during the past has helped the UN Field Missions in numerous ways. Consequently the quality of our contribution has increased tremendously.

In conclusion I wish to reiterate that, Sri Lanka will uphold the pledges already made, including that of all-female combat troops, continuing with our efforts to contribute towards global peace and harmony.