

SUMMARY

PREPARATORY CONFERENCE ON CAPACITY-BUILDING, PARTNERSHIPS AND THE FUTURE OF PEACEKEEPING

**MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY
DECEMBER 10-11TH 2024**

The Montevideo Peacekeeping Ministerial Preparatory Meeting took place on 10-11 December 2024, co-hosted by Japan, the United Kingdom and Uruguay. It was an opportunity for Member States to explore a range of issues related to the future of UN Peacekeeping, in line with the theme chosen for the 2025 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial in Berlin.

The central focus of the preparatory meeting was on training and capacity building partnerships, and specifically, how lessons can be learned from recent experiences in training and capacity-building initiatives and better meet the needs that are required now and for future peacekeeping missions. Sessions also featured discussions related to women's roles in peacekeeping, the protection of civilians and police peacekeeping.

SESSION 1

FUTURE OF PEACEKEEPING, NEW MODELS AND RELATED CAPABILITIES

The first session of the Preparatory Ministerial Peacekeeping Meeting emphasized the need for a modular and people-centric approach to peacekeeping, as recommended by the independent study on the future of peacekeeping. Panelists highlighted that peacekeeping must adapt to increasingly dynamic and complex operating environments, requiring cohesion among stakeholders, flexible staffing, and enhanced situational awareness through data collection and intelligence. The study's modular framework was presented as a tool to help imagine a variety of mission types tailored to varying mandates and contexts. However, the successful implementation depends on clearly defined outcomes, adequate resource allocation, investment in key capabilities and adherence to fundamental principles such as human rights, international humanitarian law, and gender responsiveness.

The discussion acknowledged the growing challenges to peacekeeping, including rapid global instability, financial pressures, and the impact of mis/disinformation and hate speech amplified by social media. Speakers underscored the necessity of proactive scenario planning, contingency preparation, and consistent messaging to counter such narratives. It was also noted that efforts should be made to have more agile and adaptable peacekeeping operations, requiring reforms in human resource processes to ensure access to expertise and an agile workforce. The importance of a people-centric approach, utilizing local expertise during transitions, was emphasized as key to sustainable outcomes.

The panelists also explored the inherent challenges of deploying peacekeepers in environments where success is unlikely, cautioning against over-ambitious mandates. They called for realistic expectations, emphasizing that peacekeeping can only succeed where political progress is possible. Looking ahead, the panel identified the importance of establishing concrete policy reform proposals before the Peacekeeping Ministerial in Berlin in May 2025. These proposals should focus on preconditions for success, targeted interventions, and balanced mandates that align with the needs of host governments and the expectations of local populations. Persistent and proactive communication was deemed essential to achieving this cohesion and ensuring the credibility of peacekeeping operations.

SESSION 2

THE FUTURE OF TRAINING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

The second session of the Preparatory Ministerial Peacekeeping Meeting explored the future of training and capacity-building partnerships, emphasizing the importance of adapting to new security challenges such as IEDs, unmanned systems, and the growing influence of mis/disinformation and hate speech. The discussion highlighted the evolution of bilateral and multilateral training programs over the years, showcasing their role in fostering sustainable peacekeeping partnerships and addressing emerging operational needs. Targeted training based on the needs was identified as critical for improving the effectiveness and sustainability of UN peacekeeping operations, with an emphasis on collaboration among Member States, international organizations, and regional actors.

Gender responsiveness emerged as a central theme, with calls for the integration of gender perspectives in planning, analysis, and implementation processes. Developing and supporting women peacekeepers, along with offering gender-responsive training at all levels, was recognized as a key priority. Initiatives focusing on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and enhancing the role of women in peacekeeping were noted as essential for achieving meaningful progress. The session also underscored the value of regional hubs for training, citing examples of specialized programs in engineering, counter-IED measures, and preparation for specific missions.

The session also addressed the critical importance of health and safety for peacekeepers, broadening the scope to include mental health alongside physical health. Innovative approaches, such as telemedicine and digital tools, were introduced to improve personnel management and operational resilience. Future challenges, including workforce improvement and capacity-building, were identified, with solutions focusing on the use of data, e-learning, and strengthened partnerships with regional and international organizations. Overall, the session underscored the need for flexible, inclusive, and well-coordinated training initiatives to prepare peacekeepers for increasingly complex and dynamic operational environments.

SESSION 3

LESSONS FROM RECENT CAPACITY-BUILDING AND TRAINING PARTNERSHIPS

Session 3 examined lessons learned from recent capacity-building and training partnerships, emphasizing the importance of adaptability, multilateralism, and sustainable practices in enhancing peacekeeping operations. The discussion highlighted the significant role of initiatives like the Light Coordination Mechanism (LCM) and the Triangular Partnership Programme (TPP) in fostering collaboration and addressing both immediate and long-term operational needs. These programs have proven effective in strengthening readiness and capabilities by providing tailored training and fostering partnerships among Member States and international organizations.

The session showcased the evolution of training programs, emphasizing their contribution to enhancing interoperability, sharing knowledge, and improving the safety and effectiveness of peacekeepers. Efforts such as cross-sector training in engineering, medical care, and counter-IED measures, as well as initiatives focused on personnel deploying to African Union missions, were recognized as critical for meeting contemporary challenges. The importance of sustaining these efforts through a multilateral framework was underscored, ensuring long-term impact beyond immediate mission requirements.

Key insights also emphasized the importance of flexibility and innovation in training methodologies, including the use of e-learning and online courses to expand accessibility. Capacity-building efforts were highlighted as essential for achieving A4P and A4P+ priorities, with specific focus on integrating lessons learned into ongoing programs. The sustainability of training, along with its ability to adapt and evolve, was identified as vital to ensuring peacekeeping missions remain effective and resilient in the face of emerging global challenges.

SESSION 4

ENHANCING WOMEN'S ROLES IN PEACEKEEPING

As the anniversaries of Security Council Resolution 1325 and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action approach, the session focused on reflecting on progress, addressing ongoing challenges, and renewing commitments to advancing the roles of women in peacekeeping. Peace operations are more effective, inclusive, and resilient when they fully integrate women's leadership and perspectives. However, structural barriers continue to limit equitable participation, particularly in leadership and operational deployments, underscoring the need for sustained action to achieve gender equality in peacekeeping.

The session emphasized the importance of leveraging platforms like the Pact for the Future to accelerate commitments and implement concrete measures for women's full and meaningful participation. The discussion explored strategies to create safe, respectful, and enabling environments and identified lessons from national and multilateral efforts to strengthen the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda.

Despite progress, challenges remain, including insufficient representation of women in senior military leadership roles and addressing workplace cultures. Progress has been noted in achieving gender parity in some areas, such as police units, and in implementing innovative solutions like smart camps to improve facilities. Participants stressed the importance of fostering inclusive work environments, reducing gender biases, and addressing harassment to create spaces where women feel safe and supported.

Efforts to overcome barriers include conducting accurate assessments of challenges, fostering interoperability among troop-contributing countries, and addressing gender stereotypes that influence women's participation in combat and leadership roles.

The session concluded with a call for long-term, sustained commitment to transform structures and accelerate progress, ensuring that women play indispensable roles in building sustainable solutions and advancing international peace and security.

SESSION 5

PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS: 25 YEARS OF POC MANDATES

The session commemorated the 25th anniversary of Protection of Civilians (PoC) mandates in UN peacekeeping, with a focus on the evolution, achievements, and future priorities of these mandates. It highlighted how PoC contributes to preventing the escalation of conflicts, supporting local mediation efforts, and fostering justice and the rule of law. Peacekeeping operations were emphasized as essential for political processes, providing physical protection, and creating conditions for humanitarian assistance. The session underlined the adaptability of all actors involved and the importance of continuous learning to enhance the effectiveness of PoC.

Panelists reflected on significant achievements, such as the conceptual shift from traditional peacekeeping to multidimensional missions, which integrate PoC as a core component. Challenges persist, including gaps in resources, misinformation, and the complexity of integrating various mission components. Discussions stressed the importance of teamwork, flexibility, and human-centered approaches. It was noted that early warnings and scenario-based exercises are critical to ensuring preparedness and effective responses. The role of regional organizations alongside the UN was explored, recognizing their potential while underscoring the UN's comparative advantage in managing PoC mandates. The integration of women in military contingents and proactive crisis leadership were highlighted as areas for further progress.

The importance of communication with local populations was emphasized as a way to counter misinformation and build trust. Strategic use of social media and technological advancements were identified as tools to improve the effectiveness of PoC, although limitations in resources remain a concern. Finally, the session called for greater accountability and clarified roles within missions to enhance operational coherence and effectiveness. Participants stressed the host state's responsibility in PoC and the need for collaboration between missions, local communities, and international partners to address emerging challenges and strengthen the protection of civilians.

SESSION 6

THE FUTURE OF PEACEKEEPING POLICING: CURRENT AND FUTURE REQUIREMENTS

The session on the future of UN policing emphasized its critical role in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, acknowledging both the growing demand for police expertise and the challenges posed by the withdrawal of large multidimensional operations. Opening remarks highlighted UN Police's successes in rebuilding police organizations, fostering community trust, and enhancing safety in conflict-affected areas. A holistic approach to the criminal justice chain was underscored as essential, integrating police, justice, and corrections support to ensure accountability and sustainable rule of law. The discussion also addressed gaps in resources and capacity, particularly in recruiting specialized personnel and providing long-term support.

Panelists recognized policing as a key component of exit strategies for UN operations and highlighted its integration into future peacekeeping models. The need for specialized skills, gender-responsive approaches, and community engagement based on professionalism and transparency was emphasized. Strategic partnerships with entities such as UNODC, Interpol, and regional organizations were identified as vital for smooth transitions and effective policing. Examples from MONUSCO in the DRC illustrated the importance of sustained support for justice and corrections, including supporting prison reform to prevent instability and crime.

Speakers noted the value of intelligence fusion between police and military to enhance public safety and counter disinformation. Gender mainstreaming was highlighted as a political decision requiring strong governance to overcome resistance. Future models for policing were explored, including standalone missions and the use of Specialized Police Teams, whose demand has grown in recent years. Strengthening the UN's Standing Police Capacity was noted as a way to provide broader support, including in non-peacekeeping settings. The session concluded with calls for Member States to pledge resources at the 2025 Ministerial and emphasized the importance of producing tangible results, sustaining peacebuilding benefits, and investing in conflict prevention through robust policing efforts.