

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to begin by thanking the Government of the Republic of Ghana for being a generous and exceptional host to our delegation. We are proud of Ghana for being the first African country to host the United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting.

Excellencies,

We are meeting at a very challenging time for peace in today's world order. The world today is polarized with heightened geopolitical tensions, new and evolving conflicts and limited enabling conditions to address matters of international peace and security. For 75 years, United Nations Peacekeeping Operations have served as our organization's most effective tool to practicalize our vision for war to peace transitions. Many success stories have been registered, and so have the challenges also multiplied. The unprecedented nature and dynamics of today's conflicts continue to put our most effective tool to its greatest tests. In recent years however, our frustrations have led some to question the whole idea of UN Peacekeeping in light of the significant challenges being faced by some missions to achieve their mandates. To these questions of doubt, I wish to quote the wise words of the former UN Secretary-General and Ghanaian Statesman Mr. Kofi Annan, who said that "More than ever before in human history, we share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that is why we have the United Nations."

The unprecedented threats to peace that our world is facing today require multilateral solutions led by the United Nations with a renewed commitment from all its Member States to address these challenges. Despite the burdensome and

complicated mandates, growing threats and hostilities on the ground, dwindling resources for peacekeeping amidst hostile geopolitical realities, United Nations Peacekeepers continue to render extraordinary service to humanity by helping to restore peace in some of the most dangerous conflict-zones around the world. UN Peacekeepers represent our collective decision to act in the pursuit of peace, protecting civilians from violence, and building trust amongst belligerent parties to reach a sustainable peace process.

The Government of The Gambia reaffirms its strong support and commitment to UN Peacekeeping Operations and will always prioritize its role as a Troop and Police Contributing Country to the United Nations as our contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. We remain committed to the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping Initiative as well as the A4P+ which has sustained the momentum in our collective efforts to improve peacekeeping.

The Gambia recognizes the importance of adopting innovative ideas to respond to the existing challenges faced by peacekeeping operations and is forging strong partnerships with other T/PCCs to address its critical gaps. The Gambia is also committed to improving the performance of its officers in the various UN missions by creating more training opportunities to build on existing capacities. We are also committing more resources to address our capability gaps and needs.

The Gambia also remains committed to prioritizing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda within the context of Peacekeeping Operations as we continue to accelerate efforts at the national level to increase our female participation in peacekeeping by incorporating a gender perspective in all our military and police deployments. We are also working closely with several partners to avail more capacity-building opportunities to our women officers in order to increase their deployments in areas requiring special skills.

In light of our willingness to increase our contribution to the good work of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, I have the honour to announce the following pledges by the Government of The Gambia, to serve in future deployments in addition to our existing contributions:

1. One (1) Quick Reaction Force Company
2. One (1) Transport Company
3. One (1) Military Police Company
4. 10 Staff Officers
5. 15 Military Observers

I thank you for your kind attention.