

**Statement of USG Lacroix at the closing ceremony of the 2021 Seoul UN Peacekeeping
Ministerial
8 December 2021**

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Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we continue to confront the COVID-19 pandemic your participation in the 2021 Peacekeeping Ministerial in Seoul is a reminder that peacekeeping is a truly global enterprise that requires the cooperation and contributions of all of us.

For those of you who have pledged to send your troops and police to our missions, we are truly grateful for all the effort, investment, and trust you have placed in us.

We are doing our utmost to respond to the wide array of challenges facing our peacekeeping operations. This includes increasingly complex and volatile conflicts constituted by fragile political agreements, international organized crime, terrorism and growing socio-economic disparities.

During this year's Ministerial process, our discussions focused on generating the specialized capabilities necessary as well as your political commitment to peacekeeping and to A4P+.

I am grateful for the announcement of specific pledges of key peacekeeping capabilities, including those that contribute to long-term and sustainable capacity-building efforts.

This includes the generous contribution of helicopters by our host, the Republic of Korea.

Our efforts to strengthen performance as well as the safety and security of UN peacekeepers are two sides of the same coin. We cannot have one without the other.

The pledges that we have received will contribute to both. To complement this, the UN will continue all efforts to be more agile, flexible and responsive, while ensuring higher levels of protection for peacekeepers and civilians.

Through A4P and A4P+, we have reiterated our commitment to the pursuit of durable political solutions.

The pledges that you have committed are necessary. But they alone will not lead us to our ultimate goal, which is to leave behind countries and societies that are stable and peaceful.

Achieving this requires that we engage in consistent and coherent political action. And for this, I count on your continued support and cooperation.

Your commitment to the Women, Peace and Security agenda, including women's participation in peacekeeping is welcomed. I appreciate T/PCCs efforts thus far in contributing more women personnel to our operations and hope your pledges will move us closer to our goal of achieving the UN's gender targets for uniformed personnel.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The risk of sexual exploitation and abuse, and other misconduct, is ever present. I am grateful for your focus on maintaining the highest standards of conduct and discipline and on actively working with us to manage the risks of sexual exploitation and abuse.

This commitment must be made, and constantly reiterated, at the highest levels. And this commitment must be matched by concrete actions, including to find fair and meaningful resolution to pending paternity and child support claims that arise from allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse. We count on Member States to work with us on this collective accountability.

As we draw to a close, I would like to reiterate my sincerest gratitude to the Republic of Korea for hosting this year's Ministerial and to all of our co-chairs for their exceptional support to its preparation. It has not been without its challenges. COVID-19 has reminded us that we must all continuously adapt. And that you have done with exceptional success. Thank you.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the brave women and men who serve in the name of peace. We remember their sacrifices and their service.

They deserve nothing less than our unrelenting support.

I am confident from everything I have heard in these two days that we have made great strides in providing UN Peacekeeping with the capabilities, support and partnerships they require to succeed.

Going forward, I look forward to continuing to work with all of you as we strive to bring peace to those most in need.

Thank you.