

STATEMENT BY DR. ANUPAM RAY, COUNSELLOR, ON UNITED NATIONS
PEACEKEEPING AT THE SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
FEBRUARY 24, 2009

Madam Chair,

Let me begin by congratulating you and other members of the bureau on your election. My delegation attaches the greatest importance to the issue of Peacekeeping and to the work of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. We will cooperate with you fully in conducting the business of this session.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to align itself broadly with the statement made by the Delegation of Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We thank Under Secretaries-General Alain Le Roy and Susan Malcorra for their remarks. We take note of the report of the Secretary General on the recommendations of this Committee.

Madam Chair,

There has been an enormous expansion in the activities of the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. According to the figures in Under Secretary General Le Roy's statement yesterday, the number of UN peacekeepers has increased almost ten-fold in less than a decade. This expansion shows no signs of abating. 18 UN missions are already in the ground and 2 more have been mandated by the UN Security Council. To this expansion has been added an increasing complexity in the mandates of the missions, the evolving operating environments in which peacekeepers function, the ever-changing nature of conflict, and burgeoning logistical and support requirements of these missions.

Any organization that faces such demands would be hard pressed to manage such changes. It would, therefore, be safe to assume that much action, and deliberation, is required to ensure the ability of the United Nations and of the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support to bear this heavy and growing burden.

Madam Chair,

As Member States, it is our responsibility to give clear instructions to the DPKO, DFS and the peacekeepers and provide them the resources and the authority to successfully conclude their mission. The mandates of the missions, the resources made available and the command and management structures of the operations should not by themselves become burdens.

The first step in this process is to ensure that Troop Contributing Countries, who bear the overwhelming majority of the human, and increasingly, the material costs of peacekeeping operations, have a clearly defined role of shaping mandates. The process of consultations between the Security Council, Troop Contributing Countries, and the Secretariat to achieve clear and achievable mandates must become a meaningful process. Triangular consultations between them are vital and must take place at an early stage and in a structured manner. Triangular consultations must also be held whenever mandate changes are being contemplated. In a time of increasingly robust mandates, this would ensure clarity on the part of the Member States about the objective of the mission and how it is to be achieved. For this clarity, the experience of the TCCs is a necessary input when defining a mandate.

Troop Contributing Countries also have the intellectual capital, derived from recent experience in nation-building, to deal with the situations that many of the current peacekeeping missions seek to manage and improve. Many TCC military, paramilitary and police officers also have a range of operational and staff experience that are of an order and nature that would be difficult to match. This ability, experience and knowledge do not, unfortunately, seem to find reflection in the policy formulation and planning processes in the DPKO and DFS. In view of the considerable experience that TCC candidates have, it is odd to be told that suitable candidates are not available for appointments from TCCs at senior management levels. This deficit in levels of representation from TCCs, in the planning process, in all stages and aspects of UNPKOs, requires urgent rectification in order to ensure greater effectiveness in functioning of DPKO and DFS.

Madam Chair,

We have taken note of the observations of the Secretary General in his report to this committee (A/63/615) about the restructuring of the DPKO - in particular that the institutional capacity and operational capability of UN peacekeeping has increased markedly. We have also taken note of the comments of Under Secretary General Le Roy that the restructuring processes are nearing completion. We would like to know more about the efficiencies, economies and capabilities that have been augmented by this process.

We have taken note of the sections of the report that deal with coordination between the DPKO and DFS. We would be particularly interested to know about the

functioning of the Integrated Operational Teams and whether they have been able to improve delivery of services in a resource-efficient manner.

Madam Chair,

We endorse the observation of the Secretary General that the role of the police in bridging the security gap has become a key feature in UN Peacekeeping Operations. It has been our experience that civilian police and para-military capacities are often more appropriate for dealing with the types of situations that the United Nations is increasingly likely to face in respect of peacekeeping in the years to come. We accordingly follow, with interest, the functioning of the Office of the Rule of Law and Security Institutions in general and the office of the Police Advisor in particular. In this context we have noted that the Standing Police Capacity has commenced operations. We have also taken note of the proposal to create another Standing Capacity to deal with justice and correctional systems in the Office of the Rule of Law and Security Institutions.

While on the subject of civilian peacekeeping, my delegation would like to convey its belief that the brunt of adverse security environments is borne by the weak and the deprived, and by women and children. In this context India strongly favours the induction of more female peacekeepers and encourages the DPKO to be more proactive in this process. The recognition accorded to the work of the female Indian Formed Police Unit in Liberia is an indication of the usefulness and impact of female peacekeepers in such situations.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our position that we are in favour of a policy of zero tolerance in respect of disciplinary and conduct issues. We strongly favour efforts to raise awareness of those with managerial and command responsibilities and the establishing of standards of conduct, training and investigation. Careful preparatory training in terms of a multi-cultural, pluralistic and tolerant outlook is as important as subsequent swift punitive action, once culpability is established.

Madam Chair,

It is important for my delegation to stress the fundamental nature of the Guiding Principles of Peacekeeping. Of particular importance are impartiality and the principle of consent of parties. Peacekeepers should go only where there is a peace to keep, i.e. where there is a credible peace agreement. The reversal of this sequence can lead to and has led to disastrous consequences.

My delegation would also like to point out that troops are contributed by contributing countries to a larger cause: that of peace in far off lands. The safety and security of UN peacekeepers must be of paramount concern to this organization, in whose name they serve.

Madam Chair,

A number of initiatives are underway to look at ways and means to strengthen the instrument of UN Peacekeeping in the context of the challenges that it will face. The Security Council and this Committee are seized of the matter. The Secretariat, Under Secretary General Le Roy has briefed us, is preparing its own internal review, the "New Horizons" report. A number of other efforts are also underway. My delegation would like to stress two points in respect of these efforts. Firstly, my delegation would like to stress that duplication must be avoided and the need for all these initiatives to complement each other. Secondly, and equally importantly, there is a need to consult and harvest the experience and insight of those who have actually participated in Peacekeeping in the field and in the Secretariat.

India stands solidly committed to assist the UN in the maintenance of international peace and security. We have a proud history of UN peacekeeping dating back to its inception in the 1950s. We have contributed nearly 100,000 troops, and participated in more than 40 missions. India has also provided and continues to provide eminent Force Commanders for UN Missions. We salute the 118 Indian peacekeepers, as well as those from other countries, who have made the supreme sacrifice and laid down their lives while serving in UN Missions.

Madam Chair,

In concluding my delegation would like to point out that peacekeeping is a prime example of how innovation can be applied to the principle of the Charter. The fact that that this word is not mentioned in the UN charter has not prevented the construction, over the last six decades, of an edifice that has become a cornerstone of international diplomacy. We are at a time when the demands on the institution and on the Member States are unprecedented in their scale and intensity. My delegation believes that unless Member States apply this sense of innovation to the structures of the UN and principles of the Charter, the United Nations will face a crisis that will handicap its ability to bear the responsibilities of keeping peace in the world in the years and decades to come.

Thank You.

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