

STATEMENT BY MR. T.K.S. ELANGO VAN, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 33 – COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS AT THE SPECIAL POLITICAL & DECOLONIZATION COMMITTEE OF THE 64TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 29, 2009



Mr. President,

With over 100,000 peacekeepers, a US\$ 8 billion budget and expanded mandates, Peacekeeping remains at the heart of the activities of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

My delegation attaches the highest importance to the issue of Peacekeeping.

India has been an active participant in peacekeeping since the word itself was invented in 1956. We have, over the past five decades, contributed more than 100,000 peacekeepers to 40 UN operations. We continue to provide troops and policemen to the most difficult operations that the UN conducts.

India sends these soldiers and policemen under the flag of the United Nations. India is steadfast in its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations. We believe in the principles for which the United Nations stands for.

Mr. President,

I would like to take this opportunity to align ourselves broadly with the statement by the Delegation of Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. President,

A number of initiatives are presently underway to examine the current state of peacekeeping. We take note, with appreciation, of the efforts of the British and French delegations in this regard. We also take note of the Security Council Working Group and the Secretariat's New Horizon project.

As a nation that has provided and continues to provide the United Nations thousands of soldiers and policemen, in addition to a large proportion of operating air assets, we feel that the principal challenge facing peacekeeping is the nature of the Security Council's mandates. The manner in which they are generated is an area of major concern.

It is the view of my delegation that mandates are too broad and too ambitious. They have very little correlation with the ability of the organization to deliver.

We reiterate the importance of the Brahimi committee recommendation that mandates be clear and achievable. We also reiterate that this will not be possible without substantively involving countries who contribute manpower and resources to Peacekeeping Operations.

Mr. President,

We are also disturbed that questions of substantive interpretation of the mandates - with repercussions beyond the immediate - are often left to the judgment of mission personnel in the ground. This can result in untenable situations, particularly for military officers, who operate best when there are unambiguous instructions and objectives. Unrealistic mandates have led to situations where mission personnel are forced to ask national contingents to undertake tasks and utilize Contingent Owned Equipment in a manner that is inconsistent with the legal framework under which they are deployed.

Mr. President,

We take note, with appreciation, of the most recent Security Council Presidential Statement on Peacekeeping. The statement has stressed the importance of substantive and timely triangular consultations between the Security Council, Troop and Police Contributing Countries and the Secretariat. In this connection, we welcome the initiative by the Security Council to hold consultations with Troop and Police Contributing Countries prior to renewal of mandates. This is a step in the right direction.

Mr. President,

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, DPKO, is involved in the creation of police doctrines and benchmarks related to the Rule of Law operations. While we have no argument with the need to set standards, we need to remind ourselves that standards should be set in a manner which is realistic and relevant to the operating environment in which UN peacekeepers deploy. Doctrines and standards must not become like mandates – statements, rather than a blueprint for action. We feel that a greater effort needs to be made to involve developing countries in the generation of these doctrines.

Mr. President,

My delegation is of the view that the future effectiveness of DPKO lies in its ability to develop governance capacities in affected countries. DPKO needs to engage countries that have experience and knowledge in developing these capacities in the recent past. There are nations that have undergone successful post-colonial nation-building exercises analogous to what is being experienced in areas where the DPKO is deployed. The Council needs to meaningfully engage these countries.

Mr. President,

Field Support needs far greater attention. It is our view, based on the experience of supporting the large contingents that we currently have under deployment, that the Department of Field Support, DFS, needs far greater internal coordination and client-orientation. It has also been our view that the Department of Field Support needs to function as a military support operation with a lean command structure. We feel that there is a need for far greater engagement of Member States on functioning of the DFS.

Mr. President,

As I conclude, I would like to salute the peacekeepers from India and from other nations who laid down their lives while serving in UN missions.

I would also like to reiterate India's commitment to work with the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security including through the mechanism of Peacekeeping.

Thank You.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)