



**Chairman's Summary**  
**High-Level Regional Conference**  
**Enhancing the Performance of Peacekeeping Operations:**  
**From Mandate to Exit**  
**18-19 November 2018**  
**Cairo, Egypt**

## Introduction

Peacekeeping operations are facing increasing pressure to adapt to riskier and more volatile environments. Today, more than two-thirds of United Nations (UN) peacekeepers are operating in complex settings, characterized by asymmetric security threats, large-scale humanitarian crises, and ongoing violence. This has greatly impacted their ability to operate safely in mission areas and carry out mandated tasks. Meanwhile, with the mounting pressures on budgets, there are growing expectations for peacekeeping operations to use fewer resources to do more with less, and as well as achieve better outcomes in the shortest possible timeframe.

These new operational realities call for a review of 'whole-of-mission' performance to ensure better design and delivery of peacekeeping, from mandate to exit. To this end, there is a need for a clear political strategy to support mandate implementation, embedded in a comprehensive vision to achieving and sustaining peace. Indeed, this is a critical indicator for measuring the effectiveness of peacekeeping and for defining its continued and context-specific relevance. There is also a need for strengthening collaboration between troop/police-contributing countries, the UN Secretariat and Security Council, and host nations to ensure effective mandate design, implementation and review.

With the above in mind, significant reform efforts are already underway in the UN to make peacekeeping more fit for purpose. Building on the reform momentum created by the three 2015 global reviews, including most notably the



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report of the High Level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations (HIPPO), in addition to the recently conducted reviews of eight peacekeeping operations, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres initiated a number of initiatives, including the *Action Plan to implement the Cruz Report on Improving the Security of Peacekeepers*, the System-Wide Gender Parity Strategy, the reform of the peace and security pillar of the UN Secretariat, and the *Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)* initiative and its accompanying *Declaration of Shared Commitments on Peacekeeping Operations*; widely endorsed by UN Member States.

Importantly, the A4P constitutes a vital step towards more effective peacekeeping operations. It refocuses peacekeeping around three key pillars: (i) aligning peacekeeping with realistic expectations; (ii) making missions stronger and safer; and (iii) renewing commitment to political solutions and well-trained and equipped personnel (military, police and civilian). It also calls on key stakeholders to ‘acknowledge and fulfil their respective roles’.

## **The High-Level Regional Conference**

To contribute to the ongoing peacekeeping reform initiatives in a manner that takes into account the views of all stakeholders, the Government of Egypt (Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense and Interior) and the Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding (CCCCPA), with the support of international and regional partners—namely the Government of Japan, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Global Affairs Canada, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and UN Women - organized a high-level regional conference on 18-19 November 2018 in Cairo, Egypt, titled:

### **“Enhancing the Performance of Peacekeeping Operations: From Mandate to Exit”**

The conference provided a platform for top African and Arab troop/police contributing countries to exchange views with senior representatives of





peacekeeping host nations, members of the Security Council, major financial contributors, the UN Secretariat, the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) External Action Service, African regional economic communities and mechanisms involved in peacekeeping efforts in Africa, as well leading global think tanks, scholars, and experts (see Annex 1- Conference List of Participants).

Discussions focused on unpacking the complexities of today's and tomorrow's peacekeeping environments and developing concrete recommendations and action points to strengthen the performance of UN peacekeeping, including through practical, balanced and coordinated implementation of the "Shared Commitments". The conference addressed the various dimensions of peacekeeping performance throughout the mission's lifecycle, including mandate design and implementation; operational readiness; conduct and discipline; safety and security of peacekeepers; leadership; mission support; gender; transition and exit; as well as partnerships in peacekeeping (see Annex II - The Conference Agenda).

## Key Findings and Conclusions

- 1- The **primacy of politics** should be the hallmark of the UN's approach to conflict resolution. Peacekeeping operations must, therefore, be deployed only as a tool of—and not an alternative to - a clear political strategy that addresses the root causes of conflict and has "sustaining peace" as its ultimate objective.
- 2- It is imperative to ensure **national ownership**, respect for sovereignty of host states, and **regional support** to the context-specific "sustaining peace" strategy.
- 3- Adherence to the **basic principles of UN peacekeeping operations**, including consent of the main parties, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate, is crucial for the mission's success and for ensuring the safety, security and welfare of peacekeepers.
- 4- **Clear, achievable, resourced, prioritized and phased mandates** of peacekeeping operations are a key determinant of peacekeeping



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performance. Phased mandates should reflect an overarching political strategy and must be adaptable to operational realities and changing political dynamics on the ground. For that purpose, Security Council resolutions should provide context-specific benchmarks as an integral component of the mission's plan towards drawdown, transition and exit.

- 5- **Quadrilateral consultations** between the Security Council, the UN Secretariat, troop and police contributing countries, and host nations, particularly ahead of mandate review, changes in mandates and missions' structures, and in the planning for drawdown and exit is essential. It is also important to ensure that senior mission leadership is also engaged in informing these consultations. It is also crucial that decisions by the Fifth Committee of the UN General Assembly (committee responsible for administrative and budgetary issues) on the appropriation of resources and peacekeeping capabilities are informed by the outcome of these consultations.
- 6- **Strengthening awareness, information gathering, management and analysis** within the new UN peace and security pillar is crucial to providing clarity on the objectives, limits, roles, challenges and priorities of UN peacekeeping operations, as well as informing the decision-making process in the Security Council.
- 7- Effective mandate implementation requires **a clear Concept of Operations** and shared understanding of the mission objectives among all relevant stakeholders, including troop and police contributing countries. This is a precondition for enhancing coherence and integrated performance on the ground.
- 8- **More responsibilities should be delegated to the Mission Leadership**, together with the authority to adjust operational priorities according to the





changing situation on the ground. A flexible, nimble and responsive posture will improve the mission's overall performance, by enhancing its ability to foresee and respond in real time to emerging operational security threats, challenges and risks on the ground, as well as opportunities.

- 9- **Readiness of peacekeepers** is a function of adequate resources, operation-specific equipment and technologies, as well as leadership and training. Countries contributing uniformed personnel should renew their commitment to vetted, flexible and rapid deployable and accountable men and women with the necessary training, skills, and experience to implement complex peacekeeping mandates, while adhering to the highest standards of conduct and discipline.
- 10- Innovative **ideas and mechanisms for enhancing readiness** need to be put into practice and evaluated for their impact on overall mission performance. These can include joint pre-deployment trainings for senior military and police officers, mobile training teams to address operational gaps and training needs, in-mission trainings between units operating in geographical proximity, and through increasing financial support for regional training centers of excellence with the aim of harmonizing training methods. At the same time, enhancing cooperation in training and capacity building, as envisioned by the 'light coordination mechanism' is an important step towards developing critical peacekeeping capabilities.
- 11- In this context, there is also a need to **review the process of force, police and equipment generation** to ensure the recruitment and retention of qualified uniformed personnel and the capabilities required for rapid and effective deployment in line with the changing situation on the ground. At the same time, it is imperative to avoid inflicting added financial and administrative costs on troop/police contributing countries, including



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through ensuring transparency in the selection and evaluation, as well as the deployment process of registered units in the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS).

- 12- Recognizing the increasing need for specialized capabilities in peacekeeping operations (such as counter-IED capacities, rapid reaction forces, intelligence and situational awareness, and medical support), it is important to move towards an adjusted system of PCRS that is more responsive to the operational needs of different missions. Similarly, deployment of specialized police teams in the area of organized and transnational crime, countering terrorism, public order management and electoral security, and gender-based violence have proven to be effective in building the capacity of host nations' police forces.
- 13- Commitment to the **UN's zero-tolerance policy for all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse** represents a key determinant of the credibility of the UN's presence and performance on the ground. Contributing countries affirm the individual nature of crimes of sexual exploitation and abuse. At the same time, they are expected to further enhance pre-deployment and in-mission training on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse and to take measures against individual violations in cases of misconduct according to national laws.
- 14- There is an urgent need to address the increasing threat **to the safety and security of peacekeepers** in the field. It is imperative to ensure that peacekeepers are well trained, equipped and capable of effectively and safely implementing their mandate. To this end, there is a need to increase financial resources, as well as technological and information gathering capabilities commensurate with the operational challenges faced by peacekeepers to guarantee their safety and security.



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- 15- The development of a **comprehensive and integrated performance policy framework** that identifies clear standards of performance for assessing and evaluating all UN civilian and uniformed personnel working in and supporting peacekeeping operations is welcome. There is a need to ensure **balanced and objective distribution of responsibilities** among countries contributing uniformed personnel, the UN Secretariat, and financial contributors to UN peacekeeping operations. Performance evaluation should therefore be measured against political, operational and tactical aspects. Greater transparency and accountability in mandate implementation is central to strengthening mission performance.
- 16- **Comprehensive performance assessment of peacekeeping operations** (as envisioned by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment System) should be an agile and continuous process that takes a “whole-of-mission” approach, and must therefore consider the following: (a) the viability of the ongoing political process/strategy for conflict resolution; (b) the country-specific operational environment; (c) the challenges and opportunities at the strategic, operational and tactical levels throughout the mission’s life cycle; and (d) the complementarity of efforts to resolve the conflict, by regional and international stakeholders, with that of the UN and its peacekeeping mission.
- 17- It is important to advance a transparent selection processes of **capable and accountable leadership** that are based on merit and competence, improved training and mentoring programs for selected and prospective leadership, and a cadre of experienced future candidates for senior leadership positions. There is also an urgent need for broader representation by uniformed personnel contributing countries in senior leadership positions in the field and at Headquarters.



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- 18- **Increasing the meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping** is crucial for more effective performance, improved community-policing and protection of civilians. There is, therefore, a need for greater commitment and measures to incentivize the recruitment and deployment of women in the military and police components of UN peacekeeping operations, and in particular, to increase the number of women taking on police/military combat roles, as well as leadership positions. Canada's *Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations*, a pilot initiative to develop and test innovative approaches to increasing women's participation in UN peace operations was highlighted as an example of what States, and the UN, can do to work towards UN targets on women's participation in peace operations, as articulated in UNSCR 2242.
- 19- It is important to adequately resource and **prioritize the peacebuilding components of relevant UN peacekeeping missions** throughout their lifecycle. There is a particular need to increase the contribution of peacekeeping missions to peacebuilding and sustaining peace during mission transitions and drawdown, as articulated in the Presidential Statement of the Security Council on 27 December 2017 (S/PRST/2017/27), in order to support continuity and sustainability of peacebuilding activities. The role of the Peacebuilding Fund in support of critical peacebuilding-related processes and activities is crucial to ensure smooth transitions. The Peacebuilding Commission should also be more consistently called upon to contribute to advancing longer-term perspectives required for sustaining peace during mandate formation and renewal.
- 20- **Integrated planning for transition and exit**, including identifying the desired objectives and key tasks, should be considered at the outset of the peacekeeping mission and adapted to changes in the operational environment. This requires the UN peacekeeping mission to work more





closely with host nations, UN country teams, and regional and sub-regional organizations to fulfill the goal of sustaining peace after transition and exit.

- 21- **Partnerships with regional organizations**, such as the AU, the EU and the League of Arab States (LAS), are crucial for enhancing peacekeeping performance in Africa, through complementarity of roles and synergies at the operational and political level and the adoption of a regional approach to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. There is therefore a need to ensure alignment in the implementation of a joint cooperation framework, including The Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhancing Partnership in Peace and Security signed on April 2017, and the recently agreed 2019-2021 priorities to reinforce the longstanding UN-EU Strategic Partnership on Peace Operations and Crisis Management. Stronger cooperation with the League of the Arab States is also crucial.
- 22- **The UN-AU partnership** should be further advanced through strategic planning, joint field visits, reviews of peacekeeping operations, and more regular consultations between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council in their respective decision-making processes, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Egypt stands ready to advance this partnership during its upcoming chairmanship of the AU in 2019.

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