New York
30/10/2018 - 21:48
Statements on behalf of the EU

**EU Statement - United Nations 4th Committee: Comprehensive review of peacekeeping operations**

30 October 2018, New York - European Union Statement by Mr. Guillaume Dabouis, First Counsellor, Head of Political Section, Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, at the 73rd Session of the United Nations Fourth Committee, Agenda item 56: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Mr. Chairman,

Peacekeeping operations continue to be a vital instrument in advancing peace and security in the world. Peacekeeping is a crucial means to create conditions and pave the way for political solutions. Under ever increasing pressures in the field faced by our military, police and civilians personnel, an open and frank debate between all stakeholders is opportune, both at the GA and the UNSC.

We would like to warmly thank USG Lacroix and USG Khare for their briefings which gave us a valuable and comprehensive picture of the state of play. We are grateful for the work done by the Secretariat and we value the partnership between all actors involved.

The EU and its MS strongly support the Secretary General's initiatives to make the UN's delivery more effective and efficient on the ground, especially the A4P initiative, highlighting the need for a stronger focus on performance and accountability, improving the safety and security of peacekeepers,
implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda, strengthening the impact of peacekeeping on sustaining peace, ameliorate peacekeeping partnerships, strengthening the conduct of peacekeeping operations and personnel, and last but not least, strengthening the protection provided by peacekeeping operations, including the key role played by peacekeeping missions to protect civilians, emphasising the protection of women and children and other vulnerable groups, and the contribution peacekeeping missions make to the international efforts to promote and protect human rights. And we welcome that the SG has continuously called for the primacy of politics, as peacekeeping operations should only be deployed in support of political solutions, never as a substitute.

Over the last couple of years a number of major reviews, in particular the HIPPO report, brought forward a series of recommendations aimed at improving the future of the global peace and security architecture. The EU and its MS welcome the UN Secretary-General's continuous efforts to implement the Secretariat's reform of the peace and security architecture as endorsed by the General Assembly in its Resolution 70/199 of Dec 2017 and 72/262 of 5th Committee in July 2018.

By constantly aiming for greater efficiency within the wider peace and security pillar, the reforms inscribe our efforts as part of a long-lasting and all-encompassing objective. These efforts launched by the SG need to be accompanied by commitment and contribution by all members. Only by providing the adequate resources to meet given mandates, will our combined efforts deliver on our expectations. Moreover, we expect all stakeholders to play their part in a renewed collective commitment to implement SC resolutions.

The EUMS have a collective approach in order to support strengthening the management of performance. This has to be achieved by strengthening the UN’s working methods with stronger leadership, accountability and transparency. We also welcome the recent adoption of UNSC Resolution 2436 (2018) on PK performance.

The EU and its Member States reaffirm their commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the basic principles of peacekeeping, such as the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate. We underscore that peacekeeping operations should observe these important guiding principles and we underline the need for the full delivery of the mandates of peacekeeping operations, which are specific to each situation and whose full implementation is key to achieving greater peace and security.

In this regard, the EU and its Member States continue to stress the paramount importance of political solutions to conflicts, prioritizing modes of prevention. Prevention and mediation - making full use of the SG’s good offices, the early involvement of UN Special Political Missions, UN regional and bilateral peacebuilding and mediation tools and public diplomacy – must become the primary tool in this undertaking in a cost effective manner. Likewise, efforts to sustain peace must be on the agenda throughout, and the peacebuilding efforts must be integrated with peacekeeping efforts from an early stage, with all actors playing their respective parts, in order to manage transitions more effectively.

We welcome the UNSG’s emphasis on increased accountability and his efforts to strengthen the system’s ability to deal with sexual exploitation and abuse swiftly and decisively. The EU Member States have consistently expressed their support to the policy of zero-tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse, and the approach of zero-impunity for all civilian, military and police personnel in UN and other international peace operations.

We assure UNSG Guterres of the EU's and its MS' support for his efforts in partnership with others, which requires a truly global partnership. As such, the EU welcomes the emphasis that UNSG Guterres puts upon the EU-UN Partnership as key to global peace and security.
With partnerships at the centre stage of both of our ongoing efforts to try to ensure that we better serve the needs of those suffering from instability, insurgencies and conflict. We share an unprecedented commitment to our strategic partnership on peacekeeping and crisis management; which we have just recently agreed to reinforce through strengthened cooperation in eight priority areas for the coming three years (2019-2021). The first priority area entails working more closely together to strengthen the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. Furthermore, we set out to strengthen our cooperation in the field through increased reciprocity in asset-sharing, coherence and continuity, and from the initial stages of planning, to transition and exit. We agree to work on ensuring that a conflict prevention lens is applied across our priority areas, through enhancing our joint situational awareness and strategic communication efforts. The EU will try to help build partnerships among its Member States and partner countries (T/PCCs) in support of UN peacekeeping, with particular focus on critical enablers such as training and capacity-building. We will continue to hold bi-annual Steering Committees to discuss operational needs, agree on benchmarks and ensure the strategic direction of our partnership; all to better align our efforts and improve our modalities for cooperation in different areas.

We look forward to further deepening, but also widening this partnership to increasingly work in a trilateral format with, for example the African Union whenever relevant and useful. Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that partnership and cooperation of the international community is essential for providing support in the efforts of stabilisation and reconstruction after the initial crisis and conflict has ended.

Mr. Chairman,

The protection of civilians and the prevention of atrocities must be the common denominator of relevant peacekeeping operations' mandate. We welcome the emphasis on regular assessment of the mission's political and protection effect, the extent to which the mission and T/PCCs have the capabilities to fulfil its protection mandate and the additional political and practical support required.

The EU and its Member States attach great importance to the child protection and conflict-related sexual violence mandates and urgently call upon the UN to ensure that Missions structures are optimised to ensure Missions are able to effectively protect women and children in situations of armed conflict.

The EU welcomes efforts to incentivize an increase in the meaningful participation of women in United Nations peacekeeping operations, at all levels and in all areas of expertise. The EU stands ready to work with the Secretary-General on a revised strategy to double the number of women in military and policy contingents of UN peacekeeping operations over the next five years. We continue to support adequate financing of gender components in missions and the integration of gender targets as an indicator of individual performance in all compacts with senior managers at United Nations Headquarters, and in the field, to ensure gender-responsive and effective peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Chairman,

UN peacekeeping operations need to be equipped to respond where they have clear, coherent and achievable mandates. Exit strategies, should be explored from the outset. Where it is appropriate, early consideration should be given to transitions. In all cases, arrangements should take into account elements which will contribute to the assessment of the overall efficiency of the missions, once terminated.

Local ownership is an important factor in protecting civilians. We welcome the suggestion for mission wide strategies and guidance to engage with the local populations. Similarly, corruption should also
be recognized as a driver of conflict and instability. Strengthening police, justice and corrections institutions are crucial measures to safeguard the rule of law and create the necessary preconditions for lasting and sustainable peace. New ways to increase the dialogue and input of policing advice in UN peacekeeping must also be pursued.

Adequate force generation remains a challenge when taking into account the mission planning. There is a need for UN Member States, including EU Member States, to match political intent and operational might in order for peace operations to succeed. Our work forward should continue to facilitate adequate force generation, especially in terms of key enablers and others critically needed capabilities. We welcome innovative approaches to force generation, such as the development of rotation plans and smart pledges. The 2018 Vancouver ministerial meeting highlighted ways in which strategic force generation and force planning can contribute to performance improvements over time, and to enhancing the overall effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations peacekeeping.

Related to training, we believe that the request for adequate training certificates is a step in the right direction. Training and equipping mission personnel, before and during deployment, whether they belong to a military, police or civilian component, on the basis of consolidated standards is important in order to ensure mission success, recognising the respective responsibilities of the Secretariat and TCCs. This is especially relevant in increasingly complex environments and could also be enhanced in cooperation with regional actors.

We also note that, in implementing a more field-centred approach, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping also encouraged the Secretariat to drive forward with a more comprehensive capabilities and performance framework and to improve command and control architectures. Within our UN-EU partnership, many of the challenges that we face when cooperating on the ground, could be solved by further empowering the field.

The commitment, professionalism and accountability of mission leadership remain key to the effective implementation of mission mandates

Mr. Chairman,

We underline the importance to reduce the overall environmental footprint of UN peacekeeping operations. While adequate resources needed for peace operations should be ensured so that they can deliver on their mandated tasks, these resources should to be used in an effective and efficient way, as well as in an accountable and transparent manner.

We cannot overstate in this regard the importance of the provision of an efficient operational and logistical support. Such support must serve the overall performance of peacekeeping operations, and be delivered in a reactive manner, adapted to the conditions on the ground.

In light of the complex and dangerous environments that missions are operating in, we underline the critical role of information and intelligence for mandate delivery, including personnel protection and the protection of civilians. We also encourage the use of modern technology in peacekeeping and make additional efforts to ensure the security, safety and adequate medical support of the UN peacekeepers. We support efforts by the UN to further develop these capacities for current and future missions.
Mr. Chairman,

The EU remains a key partner in this endeavour, not only by supporting UN Peacekeeping operations, but also by deploying our own missions within the framework of our Common Security and Defence Policy. We continue to advocate for a better definition of the role of regional organisations within UN-led interventions, facilitating - when appropriate - rapid deployment, acting in complementary to UN operations, as it is the case with EU Training and Capacity-building Missions and Operations within the framework of SSR or deployed in a bridging capacity. In this regard, we also continue to support the development of African peace capacities, which increasingly contribute to peace and security on the continent.

Mr Chairman,

The EU and its Member States stand ready to continue to engage in this work constructively.

I thank you.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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