**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**--**

**REMARKS TO THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL:**

**“ADVANCING ADAPTABILITY IN UN PEACE OPERATIONS — RESPONDING TO NEW REALITIES”**

**New York, 24 March 2025**

**[all-English]**

Mr. President, Excellencies,

I thank the government of Denmark for convening this high-level discussion.

United Nations peace operations safeguard people and communities in some of the most desperate places on earth.

These operations comprise both peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

Their work ranges from early warning to preventive diplomacy…

From peacemaking to verifying peace agreements to protecting civilians…

From negotiating ceasefires to helping parties implement them on the ground…

To electoral support and observer missions.

Collectively, these operations represent a critical tool at this Council’s disposal to maintain international peace and security in a variety of contexts.

Since the first special political mission and peacekeeping operation were deployed in 1948, our peace operations have grown, adapted and evolved.

Time and again, they allow us to mount tailored responses that have saved lives, reduced violence, prevented the expansion and spillover of deadly conflicts, and stopped atrocities.

Peace operations are designed not only to be an effective example of multilateralism in action — but a cost-effective one.

At their best, they show how when the UN comes together to address challenges, the burden is diminished on individual countries alone.

But as we all know, peace operations face serious barriers that demand new approaches.

Wars are becoming more complex and more deadly.

They last longer, and are more enmeshed in global and regional dynamics.

Negotiated settlements have been harder to achieve.

Meanwhile, our peace operations are confronted with a complex interplay of threats — many of which do not respect national borders.

Terror and extremist groups, organized crime, the weaponization of new technologies, and the effects of climate change are all testing our capacities to respond.

And, I regret to say, geopolitical divisions are undermining peace.

The bilateral and multilateral arrangements that — for decades — have managed tensions and maintained stability are eroding.

Violations of international law, human rights and the UN Charter are rampant — seemingly without consequence.

Trust is in short supply among — and within — countries and regions.

All of these challenges and more throw fuel on the fires of conflict.

Meanwhile, our peace responses are struggling.

We see a persistent mismatch between mandates and available resources.

And we see increasing differences of views — including in this Council itself — around how peace operations should work, under what circumstances, with what mandates they should be deployed, and for how long.

Excellencies,

This is a grim diagnosis, but we must face facts.

The good news is that, through the Pact for the Future, Member States committed to working to adapt peace operations for the future.

This is an important opportunity to gain a shared understanding of what makes peace operations successful …

What is hindering their effectiveness …

And what new models we can use to make them more adaptable, flexible and resilient — while recognizing the limitations in situations where there is little or no peace to keep.

My recent proposals to you in the context of Haiti are a good example.

We must keep working for a political process — owned and led by the Haitian people — that restores democratic institutions through elections.

And the UN has a clear role to play in supporting stability and security, while addressing the root causes of the appalling crisis.

The UN stands ready to assume the responsibility of the logistical and operational expenditures — including transportation, medical capabilities and support for the national police — that can support an international force established by Member States that is able to confront the gangs in Haiti and create conditions for peace.

And the salaries of the force are paid through the trust fund that already exists.

This is a good example of how we can design a tailored and collective approach to peace operations in an extremely complex and dangerous environment.

Other examples of adapting our peace operations include UNIFIL, which recently developed an adaptation plan to support the parties to uphold their obligations under resolution 1701…

And our operations in Abyei, Sudan, where we reconfigured our peace operations into a multinational force.

We also increasingly see the enormous benefits of strengthening cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.

Security Council resolution 2719 is an important example.

This breakthrough has lifted our partnership with the African Union to a new level as we work to establish peace enforcement missions under the responsibility of the African Union, supported by the United Nations.

We are now working actively across our two Secretariats to meet the vision of the resolution, and I urge Council Members to fully support this work.

Excellencies,

It’s time to build on these examples and continue adapting our peace operations for current and future challenges.

Work is now underway to review all forms of peace operations, as requested by Member States in the Pact for the Future.

The review will aim to critically examine these tools and propose concrete recommendations to make them fit for today.

This will include extensive consultations with Member States and others to inform — and inspire — recommendations.

The review will build on the analysis presented in the New Agenda for Peace.

It will be informed by the first comprehensive study of the history of special political missions in the 80 years of the United Nations, which will be released soon.

And it will reflect the Pact’s call to ensure that peace operations engage at the earliest possible stage in planning transitions with host countries, UN Country Teams and local and regional groups.

The review also aligns with the Pact’s call to this Council to ensure that peace operations are guided by clear and sequenced mandates that are realistic and achievable — with viable exit strategies and transition plans.

And it will draw on the discussions taking place in preparation for the Peacekeeping Ministerial in Berlin in May focusing on the future of peacekeeping.

Excellencies,

Throughout, we will hold extensive consultations to capture as wide a spectrum of views as possible and to benefit from worldwide expertise.

From Member States, host States, troop- and police-contributing countries and financial contributors…

To regional organizations, civil society and academia, and our own leaders and experts within UN peace operations and the Secretariat.

And the review will, of course, help inform our efforts through our UN@80 initiative, to find efficiencies and improvements across our work in light of the continued funding challenges we face as an organization.

Excellencies,

Today’s open debate provides a vital opportunity for the Council to share perspectives and ideas to inform the review process.

I urge all Members to support it.

And I call on this Council to continue working to overcome divisions and disagreements around peace operations, and build the unified and consistent political support our peace operations — and the women and men who conduct them — need and deserve.

Thank you.