

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR HARDEEP SINGH PURI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
ON THE THEMATIC DEBATE ON 'TRANSITION AND EXIT STRATEGIES IN
PEACEKEEPING' AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON FEBRUARY 12, 2010

Mr President,

India would like to thank the French Presidency for organizing this thematic debate on the issue of Peacekeeping. This is the fourth time in seven months that the Indian delegation is speaking in the Security Council on peacekeeping, a fact that attests to the centrality of this activity at the UN.

I would, at the outset, also like to thank the French delegation for their recent efforts that have led to improvements in the consultative mechanisms of peacekeeping. My delegation is appreciative of the spirit behind these initiatives. We also note with appreciation the efforts of DPKO to reach out to Member States in the ongoing work of developing operational concepts. I am optimistic that this spirit of cooperation will find reflection in the forthcoming deliberations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the C-34.

The concept paper circulated by the French Presidency for today's debate is comprehensive and useful.

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

Mr President,

The Council today has to manage its primary responsibility of responding to threats to international peace and security, in an environment that has changed very substantially since 1945. The Council has to deal with situations that have complex multi-dimensional aetiologies. These cannot be labeled or categorized easily. They have also proved to be very tenacious and have defied straightforward solutions.

We are in this situation because the Council ever so often mandated operations without a clear understanding of what was required. In the rush to "do something", it got into a situation where objectives were confused. Mandates were unrealistic. Timeframes were too ambitious. A "band aid" approach was used and the resources allocated for the task, financial, logistical, and above all, human, were pegged at minimal levels. Our conclusions are reinforced by the joint DPKO-OCHA study on the Protection of Civilians, and I *quote* "confusion over the Council's intent is evident in the lack of policy, guidance, planning and preparedness." *unquote*

It is evident that the Council requires a new paradigm and new approaches if it is to discharge its responsibilities.

Mr President,

We first need to recognize that there are no short-cuts to peacekeeping. We are not dealing with classical belligerents who are looking for a quick victory. We are dealing with forces that have a stake in continuing instability. We are dealing with forces that flourish in the absence of the rule of law and in the presence of violence and intimidation. We cannot deal with these forces unless we are committed for the long-haul. Transition and exit strategies need to be approached accordingly.

80% of UN peacekeeping resources, financial and manpower, are deployed in post-Colonial societies. The problems that they face are not unique and have been confronted in many nations in Asia and Africa. It stands to reason that successful post-colonial nation building experience is the most relevant in understanding how to approach successful management of complex peacekeeping operations.

I am proud to represent a nation which has been an active participant in UN peacekeeping since 1956 and has contributed more than 100,000 peacekeepers to 40 UN operations. I also speak on behalf of a country is a well-established and successful democratic polity that responds to the aspirations of one of the most diverse populations of the world; a country that is among the fastest growing economies of the world.

Imperialist thinking at the height of the colonial era described all such countries as ungovernable. Facts and history speak otherwise.

Mr President,

Peacekeeping and peacebuilding are not mutually exclusive. It is our understanding that both need to continue simultaneously over extended periods of time. Precipitate withdrawal of peacekeepers is a recipe for disaster and is a temptation that should be avoided at all costs.

As a peacekeeping operation gathers momentum, it requires more resources – not less. The military component will have to be supplemented, and not supplanted, by police and rule of law capacity and a capacity for development administration. By development administration capacity, we mean the ability to respond to the basic aspirations of the people beyond law and order.

It is also important to remember that UN operations are essentially in aid of national authorities and national capacities. National authorities usually have a good idea of what they require. The Council and the Secretariat must not just listen more to national governments but also listen carefully.

There is no substitute for national capacities. The only role the UN can play is to help in creating conditions where these capacities can be exercised. We believe that support for national authorities is key in two areas. One is Security Sector Reform and the other is in provisions of primary inputs for socio-economic development.

Security Sector Reform in particular, needs far greater coordination, cohesiveness and unity of purpose. The training, equipment and working methods of national police and other rule of law institutions must be structured in a manner that is consonant with the wishes of national authorities and not the priorities of donors. In the case of economic development, national authorities, as the experience of the Peacebuilding Commission indicates, are capable of developing strategies and plans. What they need is resources and social investment.

Mr President,

Peacekeeping, which is the main contribution of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security, has a budget of US\$ 7.8 billion. This is a little more than 0.5 per cent of worldwide military expenditures. The concept paper circulated by the Presidency points out, MONUC has a ratio of 1 peacekeeper per 3500 inhabitants. This is also the equivalent of 1 peacekeeper every 120 sq.km. It needs very little imagination to grasp the utter insufficiency of 17,000 peacekeepers in the task of providing support to national authorities in an area of responsibility of the size of Western Europe.

It is evident that resources for peacekeeping are utterly inadequate.

It stands to logic that an increase in the number of quality troops is the first requirement. It also stands to logic that troops require proper equipment and enablers. We would like to see an increase in the deployment of police and rule of law capacities.

The current composition of the DPKO as it exists today does not have the capacity to plan for the nation-building activities that are central to peacebuilding. This capacity requires to be developed and will require a multi-disciplinary approach involving the development pillar of the UN and greater cooperation with countries in the global South.

Mr President,

It is very difficult to use objective parameters to determine an exit point from complex peacekeeping operations. A peacekeeping operation will have succeeded if there is durable peace. Durable peace can only follow from a successful peace agreement. The conditions that can lead to a successful peace agreement are also difficult, if not impossible, to define. Peace processes and political settlements cannot be subjected to budgetary discipline and evaluation by administrators. The creation of peace, as we are all learning in many different parts of the world, is not a business process. It is a complicated political undertaking with many imponderables.

The Security Council is not bound by benchmarks on when and where it decides to intervene. Each decision is unique and subjective judgments are involved. Similar subjective judgments will be involved on when an operation can be wound up.

Mr President,

I would like to conclude by referring to the issue of accountability. Should there not be an accountability requirement for those who mandate? Surely, their responsibility cannot end with the generation of mandates. If unachievable mandates are generated for political expediency or if adequate resources are not made available, who should bear responsibility? A deficit in the willingness and ability to enforce mandates is leading to an erosion of credibility of the UN.

Mr President, let me thank you again for organizing this debate. India pays tribute to peacekeepers who have fallen, most recently in Haiti, and reiterates its commitment to contribute, through its peacekeepers and its national capacities, to the promotion of peace and security and to the role of the United Nations.

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