



# Security Council

Eightieth year

**9969**

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Tuesday, 29 July 2025, 10.10 a.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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*President:* Mr. Ahmad ..... (Pakistan)

*Members:*

Algeria.....	Mr. Bendjama
China.....	Mr. Sun Lei
Denmark.....	Ms. Lassen
France.....	Mr. Dharmadhikari
Greece.....	Mr. Loverdos
Guyana.....	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
Panama.....	Mr. Alfaro de Alba
Republic of Korea.....	Mr. Kyung-Chul Lee
Russian Federation.....	Mr. Polyanskiy
Sierra Leone.....	Mr. Kanu
Slovenia.....	Mrs. Blokar Drobič
Somalia.....	Mr. Mohamed Yusuf
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ..	Ms. Quinn
United States of America.....	Mr. Kelley

## Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

United Nations peace operations

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Maintenance of international peace and security**

#### **United Nations peace operations**

**The President:** In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations; Ms. Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee, Assistant Secretary-General for Africa in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations; and Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, President and Chief Executive Officer, International Peace Institute.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Mr. Lacroix.

**Mr. Lacroix:** I welcome this opportunity to brief the Security Council, and I thank Pakistan, in coordination with the Republic of Korea and Denmark, for organizing today's important discussion on adapting peace operations for the pursuit of political solutions.

Today's deliberations are timely, as the review on the future of all forms of United Nations peace operation is ongoing, and today's deliberations will form an important contribution to that review. As requested by the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), the aim is to provide strategic-level and future-oriented recommendations that reinforce peace operations and adapt the United Nations toolbox to evolving needs. Peacekeeping operations have proven to be critical instruments in advancing peace processes and supporting lasting political solutions. By providing security guarantees, facilitating inclusive dialogue and supporting nationally owned transitions, peacekeeping has helped to steer complex post-conflict settings towards stability and reconciliation. Peacekeeping missions have facilitated transitions from civil war to lasting peace in Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and many other countries, laying the foundations for peaceful societies.

They continue working towards this objective, as in the Central African Republic, where the engagement and robust action of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic was instrumental in getting armed groups to the negotiating table, resulting in the signing of the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic. The Mission continues to support its implementation, including through the launch of disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation efforts with two major armed groups — a recent breakthrough. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo used its good offices role to facilitate dialogue and reduce violence during the 2023 election.

Resolving and mediating conflict is an inherently complex and uncertain endeavour, with no guaranteed path to success. United Nations peacekeeping missions are often deployed in highly volatile environments, where political processes are stalled, trust among conflict parties is low and the humanitarian situation is dire. Progress is incremental, fragile and uneven. A breakthrough one moment may be followed by setbacks the next. Yet even modest gains can be critical in preventing a relapse into widespread violence and saving lives. For peacekeeping missions to be effective in their efforts to pursue political solutions, it requires strategic coherence and unified political engagement. Let me highlight four critical areas where we should optimize our collective leverage.

First and foremost, the role of the Council is indispensable, not only by mandating missions but by ensuring that missions' political strategies receive sustained political support on the ground. When the Council speaks collectively, the legitimacy of peacekeeping operations and the political processes that they support are reinforced. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2773 (2025) in February formed the foundation on which Council members built diplomatic efforts to offer a lasting political solution to the protracted crisis in the east of the country. Not only at the Council table but also bilaterally, Council members have a crucial role to play in providing strong, united support for the peace operations that the Council decide to deploy and by encouraging the parties to the conflict to stay on the path to peace.

We continue to see the implication of the polarization across the United Nations membership. As I have stated here and in related forums, without the strong united political support of Council members, peacekeeping missions are relegated to only achieving what I call the intermediate goals of peacekeeping. We should not discount the value of these, which include managing conflict, maintaining ceasefires and protecting hundreds of thousands of civilians every day, but it is a less desirable and more expensive outcome than Council members providing the requisite political support that would enable peacekeeping to reach its ultimate objective of enabling the parties to the conflict to reach durable peace — one they can maintain following the successful drawdown of a peacekeeping mission.

Secondly, it is vital that the United Nations mission and its leadership act as constant and unwavering ambassadors for peace. Through good offices, engagement and communication, they must maintain the confidence of the host State and the parties to the conflict, understand their perspectives and needs and constantly look for opportunities to advance peace. This also means using the tools of the mission as dynamically as possible to respond to political circumstances as they evolve.

Thirdly, it is equally important for our efforts to be closely coordinated and aligned with regional and subregional actors whose political leverage and proximity to crises can be decisive in shaping positive political outcomes. Partnership at the strategic and tactical level with regional partners can enable us to devise a shared vision and clearly define roles and responsibilities to fulfil that vision, including sustained and complementary political engagement that can dramatically enhance the chances for conflict resolution. We must continue working to strengthen our relationship with regional and subregional actors, including, most notably, the African Union (AU). Resolution 2719 (2023) represents a historic milestone that creates the potential to enable African Union operations to obtain assessed contributions. While this is, of course, the primary purpose of this resolution, the joint road map between the AU and the United Nations is designed to reinforce political solutions, accountability and compliance, and therefore has the potential to bring our two organizations closer together while increasing the chances of more complementary political engagement.

Fourthly, leveraging the investments of troop- and police-contributing countries more purposefully is critical. These Member States are political stakeholders whose engagement can reinforce mission credibility and national ownership. As a top troop-contributing country and elected member of the Council, Pakistan brings both operational insight and political weight, a dual role that exemplifies how TCCs and PCCs can contribute to shaping strategic outcomes in peacekeeping contexts. Of course, there are many other troop- and police-contributing countries represented around the table of the Council. I thank all of them.

By utilizing the vision of the Charter of the United Nations and coherently drawing upon the network of global, regional and bilateral actors and institutions that are in place, we have the ability to help parties to resolve conflict. As we are collectively reflecting on the future of peace operations, it is worth recalling how

effectively United Nations peace operations themselves can fulfil this promise. For decades, peacekeeping operations have brought together civilian and uniformed capabilities to support and advance political goals and assist countries to make the difficult transition from conflict to peace.

The parties to the conflict will always have the most sway. However, United Nations peacekeeping can help to build confidence and increase the chances for peace. They can help stabilize a tense security situation, act as a deterrent, or prevent escalation to create space for a political process to take root.

A clear example is Cyprus, in which in more than half a century of United Nations peacekeeping, the situation has remained calm. This stability is the result not of the absence of underlying tensions but of the mission's vigilance and quiet effectiveness. It is a context in which small, minor incidents could easily escalate without the constant vigilance of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. The mission's role in preserving stability and preventing incidents from escalating cannot be overstated. Of course, this is one example out of many of the important role of many peacekeeping missions in preventing a relapse of hostilities.

The capacity of a peacekeeping mission to operate at the grassroots level, translating high-level agreements into increased dialogue, local solutions and the immediate reduction of violence, is crucial to the achievement of sustainable peace. Nowhere has a mission had more impact than when a political settlement improves the lives of the people at the local level. From Africa to Europe and Latin America, peacekeeping missions have been at the forefront of supporting local peace initiatives.

Sustainable peace remains elusive when people feel at risk and protection crises, which so often spill across borders, persist when inclusive political solutions are absent. Protection creates space for political solutions and political solutions in turn strengthen protection. This is why political and protection approaches must be pursued in tandem.

However, peace operations, in general, and peacekeeping missions, in particular, will not be able to do their utmost to enable a country's transition from conflict to peace or simply to implement the mandates provided by the Security Council if they are not given the requisite resources to do so.

As the United Nations, we recognize that we have a responsibility to seek efficiencies, wherever possible, as stewards of Member States' resources. The Secretary-General's UN80 initiative encapsulates this. UN80 focuses on three parallel work streams — efficiencies improvement in how we manage and operate, reviewing how mandates are implemented and exploring structural and programme realignment across the United Nations system.

While we continue to seek efficiencies, including but not exclusively through UN80, I would like to reiterate the Secretary-General's request to Member States that they should pay in full and on time their assessed contributions. Our ability to keep the peace requires it.

It goes without saying that a united, forward-looking and ambitious Security Council remains vital in fulfilling its Charter responsibility to maintain international peace and security. I encourage the Member States and the members of the Council, in particular, to fully leverage peacekeeping operations as unique political and operational tools of the Council.

I also wish to express my gratitude to the overwhelming majority of Member States that support peacekeeping operations. Their exceptional support was evident during the Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference in May in Berlin, Germany, which saw an unprecedented turnout of 135 Member States, 52 of which were represented

at the ministerial level, and I again thank Germany for hosting this very successful meeting.

Adapting peace operations to better pursue political solutions is a worthy endeavour as a further step towards sustainable peace, and even more so in these troubled times.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Lacroix for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Pobee.

**Ms. Pobee:** I thank the Permanent Mission of Pakistan for convening this important briefing and creating this opportunity to hear the views of the members of the Council as we conduct the review of United Nations peace operations mandated by the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1).

The Pact recognized United Nations peace operations, which comprise peacekeeping operations and special political missions, as essential instruments of multilateral action for peace. For nearly eight decades these operations have enabled the United Nations to deliver tailored responses to critical peace and security challenges.

Today, however, their work is shaped, in new ways, by a number of trends. The post-cold-war era has ended, and a multipolar order is emerging. The frameworks that States have used in the past to manage disagreements have eroded. Lack of trust among States is hindering collective action on urgent issues that pose a critical threat to humankind. Normative frameworks are challenged or interpreted differently by different parts of the membership. This includes not only human rights norms but also the norm of peaceful settlement of conflict.

Growing geopolitical fragmentation has led to increasing divergences of opinion, especially within the Security Council and among host States concerning how our missions should function, what mandates they should be given and under what circumstances they should be deployed.

Meanwhile, peace operations confront an evolving and more complex conflict landscape. Non-State armed groups continue to proliferate. Many use terrorist tactics or espouse unclear political objectives, challenging traditional peacemaking. New technologies bring opportunities but also risks, in cases in which they are being weaponized, from artificial intelligence to drones. Transnational drivers of conflict, such as organized crime and the impact of climate change, are increasingly prevalent.

However, just as these threats are converging, increased competition at the geostrategic level is making international cooperation to address them more difficult. In the light of the challenges facing peace operations, there is a clear need to reflect on their future.

As part of our reflections for this review, we went back into the history of special political missions since 1948 to distil ideas for the future.

During the cold war, political tensions ran high, and ideological divisions hindered multilateral cooperation. But the Council was able to find common ground through the work of our missions, which provided impetus for parties to settle disputes peacefully and avoid armed confrontation.

Let me mention a few cases. In 1969, the diplomatic engagement by the Secretary-General's Representative to Equatorial Guinea facilitated an agreement on the withdrawal of the Spanish forces stationed in the country, leading to the end of the dispute. In 1970, envoys of the Secretary-General helped advance self-determination, such as in Bahrain. In 1974, they conducted fact finding on the border dispute between Iraq and Iran.

From the decolonization process in Africa, ushering the birth of new nations in the 1960s, to Central America in the 1980s and early 1990s in the dying days of the cold war, United Nations special political missions have helped Member States navigate political transitions at times of heightened tensions and advance peace and security.

Our support to South Africa at the end of apartheid furthered the National Peace Accord amid a charged political atmosphere, as old structures crumbled and new ones emerged. Our political mission helped observe the elections that inaugurated a democratic, non-racial and united society, with the election of Nelson Mandela.

There are important lessons from this rich history of United Nations special political missions.

First, many of our political deployments were time-bound and targeted. The focus was on a political task — as a matter of priority — and without a plethora of additional activities overextending their mandate.

Secondly, the missions were proactive in the use of the Secretary-General's good offices, both through his immediate Office and that of his representatives and the Secretariat.

Thirdly, they came about, sometimes, with Security Council and Member State support and, at other times, as a result of the Secretary-General expanding the diplomatic space in the most discreet fashion, away from the glare of the public spotlight and away from Security Council dynamics.

Fourthly, the majority of these missions were nimble, easy to deploy, relatively economical to maintain and without major overheads and costs. In other words, small was beautiful. This is a valuable lesson to remember.

Fifthly, the political and good-offices work of these missions was based on consent, as must all mediation and dialogue be. In a time of divisions, when external actors are viewed sometimes with suspicion and mistrust, it is essential that the work of United Nations special political missions be based on the consent and willingness of the host Government, of the parties concerned and of the people of that country. The trust deficit we see today did not exist with many of our more successful missions in the past. This rich history must be re-explored and mined.

Based on reflections on the past and, indeed, our present, I see three priorities to make special political missions more effective in the new era we are entering.

First, we must double down on diplomacy and peacemaking. Politics, diplomacy, dialogue and, indeed, peacemaking are the core work of the Organization. They remain our best tools — not only for resolving conflicts, but also for building trust, easing strategic rivalries and bridging global divides.

As the Security Council recognized in resolution 2788 (2025) last week, Member States must make full use of the mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes, as outlined in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations. When they do so, special political missions can play an important role in advancing the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

To make peace, there is no alternative to bringing conflict parties to the table and helping them reach agreement. But it is painstaking work and requires patient — often dogged — and responsive engagement.

Syria is a case in point. Over a decade, the people of Syria endured a terrible war, but changes in the political circumstances on the ground suddenly shifted the prospects for diplomacy. Since December, our Special Envoy has therefore engaged with Syrians across all of society, including the Syrian interim authorities, to support



an inclusive political transition, de-escalate violence, protect civilians and prevent regional spillover.

Secondly, to be successful, our political missions must be responsive to the needs of their host State or States — and, conversely, enjoy the support of their host State or States. The responsibility for achieving political solutions rests with national actors. It is only logical, therefore, that national actors should be not just consulted, but rightfully heard, throughout the entire life cycle of a mission. We must walk away from missions that seem imposed by the Council or the international community.

Well-defined mandates designed to address specific issues help manage expectations and maintain the confidence of the parties, as the work of our United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia demonstrates. The close collaboration between the Government of Colombia and the Mission is a fine example of the possibilities that United Nations political missions can bring to a country implementing a peace agreement.

Just as crucially, given that peace is an all-of-society effort, our missions are most effective when they actively engage women and youth, as well as civil society and marginalized groups, in their work.

Inclusion must be at the heart of all our efforts. That means actively promoting the participation of women in political processes, as we have endeavoured to do in Libya, in Syria and in Yemen, for example, and in electoral processes in West Africa and the Sahel. Here, how we do such work matters, including through the use of digital technologies and artificial intelligence to enhance inclusion, outreach and new ideas for political solutions.

Thirdly, we must maintain adaptability in the design of special political missions while ensuring that their core focus is always political. When the Council finds common ground, we have the capacity to design profoundly innovative missions: from eliminating Syria's chemical weapons through the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Mission, for example, to promoting accountability for crimes committed by Da'esh/the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) through the creation of the United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL in Iraq.

Special political mission run the gamut from envoys' offices to regional offices to investigative missions to in-country field presences to ceasefire monitoring missions and electoral missions. They are diverse and responsive to the context at hand. But irrespective of the form they take, their core work is to pursue political solutions. We must maintain this adaptability and clarity of focus.

Throughout its history, the United Nations has grappled with intractable conflicts and deep divisions, much like those we are witnessing today. We have been there. But one clear lesson is that amid acute geopolitical tensions, peace operations have helped Member States mount tailored responses to challenges to international peace and security. They exemplify collective action for peace. Their work is hard. It requires tenacity. But it is doable.

This review on the future of all forms of United Nations peace operations is a chance for reflection, self-awareness and honesty. We must ask ourselves: how can we rebuild consensus and trust among Member States around these essential instruments? How can we better engage with a laser-like focus on matters of peace and security in which our missions have a comparative advantage — a re-emphasis on the politics? How can we ensure that we have both Security Council and Member State support for such missions, even as we enable the Secretary-General to utilize his diplomatic toolbox?

The answers are not easy. But we look forward to continued engagement with the Council throughout the review process and to working together to making peace operations a more effective instrument in the service of political solutions, and indeed, for peace.

**The President:** I thank Ms. Pobee for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Al Hussein.

**Mr. Al Hussein:** I thank you, Mr. President, for your kind invitation and am deeply grateful to you.

When I last had the honour of speaking to the Council (see S/PV.9719), I noted how deflated the United Nations seemed to be and how it appeared to lack any belief in itself. It had also moved steadily from one initiative to another: the UN75 initiative and *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982), the New Agenda for Peace and the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), and now, of course, the UN80 Initiative. Whatever the contributions of these initiatives to improving the work of the United Nations — and it is still not clear to me what they are — the overall impression given is that of a highly insecure organization. We are currently in the middle of a review of the future of all forms of United Nations peace operations, led by the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. The central question being asked in the concept note for this meeting is about the meaning behind putting politics at the centre of the work of peace operations.

At first glance, the answer is somewhat obvious. To put politics at the centre of peace operations, a united Council driven by a sense of common purpose would always be most desirable. But even when the Council is not united, skilled permanent representatives and very capable senior United Nations officials in peace operations with strong backgrounds in complex political mediation, supported fully by a Secretary-General willing to be with them often and coordinate with them directly — along with the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General present with us today — can still produce miracles. This would be further enabled if another factor were present too, namely, the discharging of a constant stream of ideas flowing in and out of the United Nations to meet a changing and dangerous global environment. With your permission, Mr. President, I would like to explain how this was done in the past.

In the summer of 1958, tensions in the Middle East flared dangerously again, and the fault line remained to some extent ideological, with the Soviet Union and the Western countries on either side of regional divisions that were being inflamed locally. It began with a political assassination in Lebanon in May, which pushed the country to the edge of all-out civil war and led the Council to establish its first military observer force since the creation of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) and the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan in 1948 and 1949 respectively. The force was called the United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL). The Secretary-General travelled to Lebanon in June to personally supervise its establishment. On 14 July, in another violent and unexpected turn, Iraq's pro-Western monarchy was overthrown, sending the region even deeper into crisis. The coup in Baghdad led almost immediately to two Western interventions, at the request of Jordan and Lebanon respectively, with the British sending troops to the former while the Americans sent the Marines to Beirut. Eisenhower had felt that the possibility of a general war with the Soviets would be reduced by such an action, although he was nervous about what could go wrong, and Khrushchev told Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt that he thought that the Americans "had gone off their heads" and he was "not ready for World War III".

The problem for the Secretary-General was tricky: how could the United Nations facilitate the withdrawal of Western forces without making matters worse in those two countries or precipitating their very collapse, especially that of Jordan,



which was contiguous with Iraq and with Israel. From the outset, the Soviets were demanding the immediate removal of all foreign forces, and it was also becoming increasingly clear that the presence of United States and British soldiers in those two Arab countries would, in any case, be untenable politically as the weeks passed. It was highly likely that the internal resistance to them, especially in Jordan, would just build. The Council was also apparently of little use. On 18 July, four days into the crisis, the permanent members cast three reciprocal vetoes on three separate draft resolutions (S/4047, S/4050/Rev.1 and S/4054), which, given the times, perhaps was not unexpected. Fortunately, they had no effect at all on the Secretary-General.

Focusing first on Lebanon, Hammarskjöld was quick to pivot off an early and casual American remark when he realized that he could enable a United States withdrawal by simply expanding the number of observers in UNOGIL, which would then provide the United States with the political cover it needed for a subsequent withdrawal. The Japanese Permanent Representative in the Council, Koto Matsudaira, leapt to Hammarskjöld's assistance, and on 21 July, Japan submitted a draft resolution giving the Secretary-General the authority to do so (S/4055/Rev.1). Surprisingly, this was vetoed by the Soviet Union, on the grounds that the draft amounted to "tacit moral sanction of their continued presence" — that is, the presence of the Western forces. But Hammarskjöld did notice something. He noticed how the Soviet Permanent Representative, Arkady Sobolev, when presenting amendments to the Japanese draft, seemed to endorse the enlargement of UNOGIL itself, and that was enough for Hammarskjöld. The Secretary-General took off and ran with it, and he did not look back. Without any authorization from the Council, Hammarskjöld just expanded the numbers of observers in UNOGIL and found further assets for the mission.

In Brian Urquhart's excellent biography of the Secretary-General, the author describes how Hammarskjöld believed that the Secretary-General should "be expected to act without guidance from the Assembly or the Security Council should this appear to him necessary, toward helping to fill any vacuum that might appear in the systems which the Charter and traditional diplomacy provide for in the safeguarding of peace and security".

Turning to Jordan, the situation confronting Hammarskjöld was more complex, as there was no direct equivalent to UNOGIL. He initially thought of stretching UNTSO by setting up an UNTSO office in Amman, and he even began moving UNTSO personnel there. Both King Hussein of Jordan and Harold Macmillan, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, thought the idea insufficient, but it was enough to get them thinking about the alternatives. Hammarskjöld had already been working with Eisenhower and Macmillan and their officials on the possibility of establishing some form of United Nations commission in Jordan. Yet, before that idea could be properly fleshed out, developments elsewhere were gathering pace. Nikita Khrushchev, having tried in vain to pull together a summit meeting of all the parties concerned in Geneva, instructed his delegation in the Council to submit a draft resolution calling for an emergency special session of the General Assembly, and amazingly, the United States agreed to the Soviet idea with some amendments. The United States had still to withdraw from Lebanon but would do so only when the United Nations had strengthened UNOGIL.

The stage was set for a diplomatic drama in New York, and all the key Ministers for Foreign Affairs took part in the emergency session, among them Lloyd, Dulles, Gromyko, De Murville, Fawzi, Al-Rifai and many others. Eisenhower addressed the Assembly on 13 August (see A/PV.733), presented his ideas on the Middle East and even proposed a standby United Nations peace force.

Hammarskjöld, meanwhile, had been working with the Norwegian Permanent Representative, Hans Engen, along with six other Permanent Representatives from

a cross-regional group, on a draft resolution, which requested that the Secretary-General:

“make such practical arrangements as he, in consultation with the Governments concerned, may find would adequately serve to help in upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter in relation to Lebanon and Jordan in present circumstances” (*A/3878, sect. B*).

It also included the possibility of having a standby United Nations peace force but made no mention of the withdrawals. That omission proved unacceptable to the Soviets and the Soviet Bloc when it was put to a vote on 18 August 1958. The Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs then assumed the lead and, working off the Norwegian initiative, inked their own draft, which reproduced the Norwegian language but dropped any mention of the standby force and added the critical words: “thereby facilitate the early withdrawal of the foreign troops from the two countries” (*General Assembly resolution 1237 (ES-III), sect. II*). The Arab draft was then adopted by the General Assembly unanimously and to much acclaim. In fact, it was deemed by many a miracle.

Hammar skjöld, in preparing for his mission to the Middle East after the adoption of the General Assembly resolution, was himself intrigued by what a United Nations presence could mean and what it could actually represent. Before travelling to Amman, he had already abandoned his idea of a United Nations commission for Jordan in favour of a variation of the United Nations Emergency Force in Sinai — a peacekeeping presence comprised of formed units proposed by General E.L.M. Burns of Canada, because if Burns’ idea was accepted by the Jordanians, it would, in practical terms, bind all the Arab States concerned to the implementation of the General Assembly resolution — a thought that Hammar skjöld found highly seductive and the Western Powers came around to supporting.

The Jordanians, however, had other ideas and reacted negatively to this suggestion and even turned down the idea of hosting a new observer force, which the Soviets had supported — and all that before the adoption of the General Assembly resolution. When Hammar skjöld arrived in Amman on 27 August, the Jordanians told him that they preferred hosting a United Nations political section falling under a senior deputy of the Secretary-General — a position they referred to as “a special distinguished representative of the Secretary-General”. They also proposed “that similar United Nations representatives and arrangements should be established in Cairo, Damascus or any other Arab capital involved in the dispute”. The British thought that second point ingenious, in view of the regional dimensions of the crisis itself, and it was the forerunner of those sorts of special political missions we have today.

Should the Secretary-General not agree to their suggestion, the Jordanians had a reserve position and would propose a roving United Nations Ambassador instead. But Hammar skjöld did accept the first, dispersed model of high United Nations political representation. The other Arab countries, however, did not — it was rejected outright. And yet, led by Egypt, they did accept the back-up idea of a roving United Nations Ambassador, which Hammar skjöld wasted no time in implementing after securing the backing of the General Assembly and appointed Pier Pasquale Spinelli, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, to that position. Within weeks and after some further ups and down, the crisis finally eased.

So, what do we learn from all this? The leadership of the Secretary-General is of course paramount. The problem-solving must be led by the Secretary-General, but it can never be theirs alone. In this story, the Japanese Permanent Representative, the Norwegian Permanent Representative, the cross-regional group of Permanent Representatives, the American and Soviet Heads of State and the British Head of Government all played highly significant roles and so did their Ministers for Foreign

Affairs and Permanent Representatives, the Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs and their leaders — Gamal Abdel Nasser, President Chamoun and King Hussein foremost among them — and a Canadian General, who was a distinguished peacekeeper. They all contributed.

Critically, however, all the ideas, which flowed easily inside and out of the United Nations between them all, passed through the person of the Secretary-General, even when the Council itself was incapable of producing anything and the cold war tensions were at their highest. The fact that the United States and the Soviet Union both voted in favour of an emergency special session of the General Assembly was astounding, given that they were the ones who had gummed up the Council in the first place. It was a sophisticated play by them both and clever. Not for a moment did Hammarskjöld believe that there was no political role for the United Nations or think he could not do anything because of the deep political divisions, only a few steps away from a potential third world war. He made things happen.

Some will say, well, that was then, and now is very different. Maybe, yet so much of what is achievable in the United Nations is accomplished via an inside-outside flow of ideas, even inside the United Nations itself. When Kofi Annan asked me to be his adviser on sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping in 2004, while I also continued to serve as the Jordanian Permanent Representative, I convinced him that I should first have the General Assembly adopt a resolution calling on him to submit a report on the subject and then he could appoint me, which is what we did. When an active Permanent Representative here in New York was developing a draft resolution on Syria 10 years ago and I was the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, we problem-solved some of the issues conceptually first, so that once it was adopted in the General Assembly, we knew how to tackle it as the work unfolded. This is not magic — it is only good diplomacy, and the history of the United Nations is filled with examples like these. They are the basic lessons that must be reincorporated into the peace and security pillar of the United Nations.

Finally, when Hammarskjöld built up the numbers of observers in UNOGIL without the Council's blessing, he did so because — borrowing from Urquhart again — he believed that “it was his duty to prevent a further deterioration”. The Council could of course have stopped him, but it did not, because it needed him too.

**The President:** I thank Mr. Al Hussein for his briefing. In particular, I thank him for providing that historical perspective. It is clear how, with a proactive approach, innovative thinking, initiative and coordination at various levels, we can address impasses and make things work.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Mr. Loverdos** (Greece): At the outset, I would like to welcome this briefing, which is focused on one of the most crucial aspects of United Nations peace operations, namely, the need to adapt them in order to be better positioned to pursue political solutions. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Assistant Secretary-General Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee and Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein for their insightful briefings.

I wish to reiterate Greece's sincere gratitude to the men and women peacekeepers who are committed to serving under the most challenging circumstances. Their service is not unnoticed, as they continue to serve with distinction as our partners for peace, to echo the Secretary-General. At the same time, we honour the memory of those who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

United Nations peace operations constitute one of the most effective, universally accepted and indispensable mechanisms, within the United Nations,

for the maintenance of international peace and security. In the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace, it is stated that peace operations are an essential part of the diplomatic toolbox of the Charter of the United Nations, representing effective multilateralism in action. In his ambitious document, the Secretary-General recommends that the Security Council ensure that the primacy of politics remains a central tenet of peace operations.

Similarly, in Action 21 of the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), we all agreed that peace operations can only succeed when political solutions are actively pursued. As an elected member of the Security Council, Greece remains fully committed to working towards strengthening the political unity, within the Council, on the issue of peacekeeping.

Today, I would like to highlight the following three points on adapting peace operations for the pursuit of political solutions.

First, it is important that a clear political process is a core element of the mandates of all peace operations. The Council should ensure that the primacy of a political solution remains a central element of peace operations and also reflects adaptable and effective mission models, while devising transition and exit strategies, where appropriate. At the same time, we are convinced that the UN80 initiative, launched by the United Nations Secretary-General, offers a unique opportunity to review the mandates of peace operations, with the final aim of making them more operational and results-oriented. In the same spirit, we believe that the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions is well equipped to offer expertise and guidance for both conflict prevention and conflict resolution, in addition to more traditional conflict resolution and peacekeeping.

Secondly, in implementing Action 21 of the Pact for the Future, we propose that the Council authorize peacekeeping operations and peace support operations, including peace enforcement, that are accompanied by an inclusive political strategy and other non-military approaches and address the causes of conflict. In that respect, the Council should ensure the maintenance of the host nation's consent and a greater integration among peacekeeping, peacebuilding and conflict prevention, always in coordination with the troop- and police-contributing countries and the host country. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) offers us a good example in this regard. Last week, a Lebanese Navy ship joined a UNIFIL Maritime Task Force ship in patrolling the territorial waters of Lebanon, which I visited recently. Greece has an active presence in UNIFIL, with one frigate, and, therefore, warmly welcomes this development, as it is indicative of the importance of joint activities.

Thirdly, we could not agree more with the need for all peace operations to be equipped with the necessary resources and capabilities, including technological means, to pursue their mandates, primarily those related to the search for political solutions. Indeed, technology can provide tremendous possibilities for the enhancement of operational efficiency and the reduction of risks to personnel. In April, Greece, together with France and the Republic of Korea, convened a Security Council Arria-formula meeting on harnessing safe, inclusive, trustworthy artificial intelligence (AI) for the maintenance of international peace and security, during which we had the chance to discuss opportunities created by the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence for peacekeeping operations. Let me recall that one of the main outcomes of that discussion was support for the idea that AI-related technologies could be harnessed for peacekeeper training, logistic support, landmine detection, surveillance, or monitoring tasks.

In conclusion, Greece will continue to work together with its fellow Council members towards the review of the future of all forms of United Nations peace operations, including their adaptation for the pursuit of political solutions.

**Ms. Lassen** (Denmark): Let me also thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and International Peace Institute President Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein for their briefings and, most importantly, for their recommendations.

Four months ago, during Denmark's presidency of the Council, we convened a high-level open debate on advancing adaptability in United Nations peace operations (see S/PV.9884). This debate heard from a wide range of speakers, including troop-contributing countries (TCCs), host countries, donors, civil society and the United Nations system. Many recommendations were put forward. However, the need to ensure sustained, unified and coherent political support for peace operations stood out.

Let me, therefore, commend Pakistan for highlighting this key aspect today, as part of our trio collaboration, along with the Republic of Korea. We see this discussion as an important continuation, as we intensify our collective efforts to adapt United Nations peace operations to new challenges, including in the context of the UN80 Initiative.

As the United Nations continues to evolve in the face of complex conflicts, the future of peace operations must be shaped around one central principle: that political solutions are the only path to sustainable peace. Allow me to focus on three recommendations to this end.

First, putting politics at the centre means embedding political strategies into the DNA of every mandate and every mission. Peace operations must be more than crisis responders. They must be active facilitators of dialogue, reconciliation and inclusive governance. Prevention is key to tackling the drivers of conflict and finding political solutions. In practice, this means aligning mandates with achievable political objectives, driven by the realities on the ground, not just by institutional templates. For the Secretariat, it requires investment in mediation, planning and preventive analysis. For missions, it requires a leadership that can execute a good offices role through flexible diplomatic engagement.

Secondly, at the Security Council, it is our responsibility to provide strategic direction and coherence. Too often, missions are stretched across a wide range of tasks without the necessary focus or coordination. The Council must ensure that mandates are political in purpose, prioritized and matched by realistic expectations. Troop- and police-contributing countries also need to be fully engaged as political partners, with a view of the mission's political goals, beyond the security dimension.

Thirdly, mandates are nothing more than words on paper if they are not matched with resources and capabilities. This includes relevant political expertise and mediation capacity; civil and political affairs officers; gender and human rights advisers; and climate, peace and security advisers. Military or police components are also needed, depending on the character of the mission, as are flexible funding mechanisms. But it also requires a certain risk appetite — as we heard this morning — from the Secretariat and from the Council. Some missions have already shown the value of these tools. Take, for example, the support provided by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, in preparing for peaceful, accountable and transparent elections, as was also highlighted by Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, or the local peace dialogues of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. These successes have illustrated how capabilities beyond force can deliver meaningful political impact.

However, we must also acknowledge the constraints. Unpredictable funding, limited civilian staffing, short mission planning cycles and uneven support from the Council have often hampered effectiveness. To succeed, these operations need to retain and strengthen their comparative advantage — their neutrality, legitimacy



and a unique ability to link security, political, humanitarian and development efforts under one roof, and then, of course, a certain risk appetite, as we mentioned earlier.

In closing, to effectively deliver on peace, we must empower peace operations as political tools — backed by the right strategies, support and capabilities. The issue goes far beyond resources and depends on the continued political will and commitment of all involved parties, including the Council, the TCCs, host countries and lastly, but certainly not least, the Secretariat and the Secretary-General, whose ongoing support is vital.

**Mr. Kyung-Chul Lee** (Republic of Korea): Allow me, first of all, to extend my personal and national appreciation to you, Mr. President, for so ably steering the work of the Council in a most professional manner during this month. I also thank all the briefers today — Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and Ambassador Al Hussein — for providing a highly useful basis for our discussions. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank also our colleagues from the Security Council Affairs Division for their superb service.

No doubt, the world today is facing multiple, cross-regional challenges of unprecedented severity in the field of peace and security. The mechanism for sustaining peace that the international community designed and put forward in such an transformative way 80 years ago is currently under stress and in question, to say the least.

It would be worthwhile to remind ourselves of some basics in that regard. One might say that, over the decades, the United Nations collective security system has been slow and tardy, yet quite innovative, at the same time, in adjusting and fitting itself to the evolving needs of the world, within the existing purview of the Charter of the United Nations. Above all, United Nations peacekeeping operations have been playing an indispensable role in many parts of the globe, even without a direct reference to them in the Charter. Peacebuilding, another essential arm of the peace architecture, made a historic stride over the past two decades since the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and was further strengthened by the adoption of resolution 2282 (2016), which introduced the concept of sustaining peace, and resolution 2594 (2021).

Even with the remarkable achievements, thus far, coming from such wherewithal, peacekeeping operations and special political missions are increasingly facing challenges — both in terms of their scale and overall effectiveness. These include lesser acceptance on the receiving end of such international engagement, a weaker willingness by major Powers to play a backstop role and, perhaps more importantly, the increasing difficulties for the Security Council in achieving consensus on a number of pressing issues.

Against that backdrop, let me draw the Council's attention to three significant points to consider on how United Nations peace operations could best serve the world under the current circumstances.

First, political solutions do matter in any combination of tools to achieve a sustaining peace. By definition, peacekeeping cannot work without a peace to keep. We also need a credible political basis to build upon to make any peacebuilding efforts truly rewarding. In that context, the Member States, in particular, the Security Council members, the Secretariat and the broader spectrum of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, have their share of responsibilities in tackling armed conflicts and other security threats through dialogue and negotiations. The Republic of Korea will, of course, do its due part in the Council and beyond.

Secondly, we need to seek pragmatism and efficiency with a renewed sense of seriousness, given the centrifugal trend between the available capacity and the severity of the challenges. One way of doing that could be a more practical application



of new technologies such as artificial intelligence. Another possibly complementary path is to further develop and make more cost-efficient the traditional capability of peace operations, including through enhanced training and better equipment. On both fronts, we stand ready to continue to join the international community's efforts and fully play our part.

Thirdly and lastly, system-wide coordination in the United Nations is a must for improving peace operations. Any vacuum created by mission drawdowns or financial constraints should not be addressed in a fragmented manner, but through a comprehensive and integrated approach that tackles root causes, prevents relapse into conflict and promotes lasting peace. The fact that the Republic of Korea is currently a leg of the Peacekeeping Trio Initiative and the informal coordinator between the Security Council and the PBC will prove to be of great use, I believe.

Notwithstanding the present challenges facing the United Nations security mechanism, the Security Council remains the only organ in international relations empowered to make binding decisions impacting all members for the sake of the common good. As we commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations, the Council must reaffirm its collective resolve and demonstrate the political will to act decisively and in unity, just as envisioned at its very first session in 1946.

We very much hope that our discussions on this matter in the months ahead will lead to tangible remedies and prescriptions to the challenges facing us in peace operations and will ensure that they remain fit for purpose in a rapidly evolving global landscape.

**The President:** I thank the representative of Korea for having travelled from Seoul in order to participate in this meeting.

**Mr. Alfaro de Alba** (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Pakistan for organizing this meeting. We also commend the speakers for their interesting briefings, which, because of their analysis and narratives on the historical and institutional development of peace operations, have reminded us why such operations and multilateralism are fundamental pillars for preserving, consolidating and sustaining international peace and security.

Consolidating peace and sustaining it over time requires a genuine commitment to address the structural causes of conflict. Structural poverty and marginalization, consequences of the colonial legacy, and the struggle for livelihoods, aggravated by climate change, are just some of these causes.

Today we are evolving and adapting. Our success will depend on the political will of national actors, and on ensuring legitimate and representative political processes that reflect the real needs of communities. Sustaining the progress made after the withdrawal of peacekeeping forces also depends on the inclusion of women and youth in decision-making processes and in all stages of peace, including transitions. Every peace operation must be an instrument to open space for constructive dialogue and facilitate political conditions for reconciliation. We must invest in renewal to restore trust among all — as Ms. Pobee reminded us — and promote national processes towards legitimate, participatory and inclusive stability.

When all stakeholders are heard, the effectiveness of missions greatly increases. It is essential to encourage and strengthen ongoing dialogue between all levels of decision-making and implementation. Let us also formulate clearer mandates that allow missions to act with achievable and measurable objectives, always in collaboration with host countries and implementing partners.

We have a responsibility to ensure that peace operations serve a purpose: to save lives, protect the most vulnerable and rebuild trust among all parties to open paths to reconciliation. We can achieve that if we invest in prevention, in building a lasting

peace and in implementing the mechanisms needed to adapt to new challenges. Owing to the liquidity crisis, we must improve our communication with local authorities and the communities that we serve. Let us strengthen our commitment to a people-centred approach that prioritizes restoring mutual trust and respect for human dignity. Let us also strengthen international cooperation, fostering synergies with the private sector, international financial institutions and development banks. They have opened their doors to coordinate with the authorities, civil society and implementing partners, including the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, in order to continue to build trust and have an impact on communities.

Let us not forget to also take into account the new models proposed by studies on the future of peacekeeping operations and to place the primacy of politics at the centre of our actions. Let us coordinate with local authorities, regional organizations and civil society to make that a reality. Panama will continue to build bridges in order to overcome divisions. We will support political solutions that address new challenges, and we will continue to contribute to adaptation so that, together, we are able to implement the necessary reforms on the ground.

**Mr. Sun Lei** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I appreciate the joint initiative of Pakistan, the Republic of Korea and Denmark in convening this meeting, and I thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and Mr. Al Hussein for their briefings.

United Nations peace operations are an effective means of maintaining international peace and security and an important tool for resolving crises and conflicts. The current international situation is generally stable, but localized instability persists, making peace operations an urgent necessity. At the same time, it is important to recognize that the expectations of all parties for peace operations are evolving, with regional ownership of peace operations increasingly becoming a trend. Peace operations are also facing challenges, such as improving quality and efficiency and focusing on core mandates. The Security Council must accelerate the pace of transformation of peace operations, enhance their adaptability and better serve the political settlement of hotspot issues. I would like to make the following points.

First, political solutions should be placed at the centre of peace operations. The practice of United Nations peace operations has repeatedly proved that, in order to successfully fulfil their mandates and achieve success in peace operations, it is essential to support realistic, viable and sustainable political processes. Peace operations should always provide the time and space and create more favourable conditions to advance political solutions. The international community should not flag in its efforts towards a political solution once a mission has been deployed, nor should it use peace operations as a substitute for the political process. Otherwise, conflicts can only be temporarily frozen, and their root causes cannot be effectively addressed, ultimately leading to the failure of peace operations.

Secondly, we must support peace operations in better responding to the expectations of the parties. The Security Council should keenly discern the needs of the concerned countries and local populations, and leverage the opportunities presented by the reform and transformation of peace operations to guide United Nations peace operations in actively defining their roles, optimizing their mandates and responding to the political needs of the concerned countries. The Security Council must support Africa's efforts to maintain peace and security independently and resolve African problems through African solutions. China looks forward to the full implementation of resolution 2719 (2023), which will provide adequate, predictable and sustainable financial support for African Union (AU) peace operations and help the AU and subregional organizations to actively address peace and security challenges in Africa.

Thirdly, we must develop synergy in support of peace operations. The success of peace operations cannot be achieved without the support of all parties. As peace operations are carried out on the basis of Security Council mandates, Council members should take the lead in supporting them. All parties, especially the members of the Security Council, should pay their peacekeeping assessments in full instead of withdrawing their contributions or cutting off supplies. Council members should abide by the resolutions adopted by the Council instead of applying them when it is convenient and discarding them when it is inconvenient. Troop-contributing countries, police-contributing countries, the Peacebuilding Commission and countries hosting peace operations should strengthen their communication and coordination, fulfil their respective responsibilities, leverage their respective advantages and jointly contribute to the political resolution of hotspot issues.

Fourthly, we must continue to give strong support to troop- and police-contributing countries. The achievements of peace operations would not have been possible without the collective efforts of all troop- and police-contributing countries. At present, peacekeepers from 116 countries are actively engaged in 20 missions, bearing the important responsibility of resolving conflicts and crises and maintaining peace and security, while also facing safety risks, misinformation and disinformation, among other complex challenges. The international community should continue to provide strong political, financial and technical support and actively create the conditions for peacekeepers to successfully fulfil their mandated tasks.

As the second largest contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations and the largest troop-contributing country among the five permanent members of the Security Council, China has consistently supported United Nations peace operations through practical actions and assumed the important responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. At present, China has nearly 1,800 officers and soldiers fulfilling their missions in seven mission areas, including South Sudan and Abyei. China also maintains a peacekeeping standby force of 8,000 troops.

In the 35 years since the Chinese army took part in United Nations peacekeeping operations, a total of 17 officers and soldiers have sacrificed their precious lives in the line of duty. We will continue to dynamically optimize the capability configuration of the peacekeeping standby force in order to better adapt to the reform and transformation of United Nations peace operations. China will participate constructively in the discussions on the independent review of peacekeeping operations and expects that the review will fully demonstrate continuity, adaptability and inclusiveness, be grounded in reality and put forward targeted recommendations for the transformation of peace operations and for political solutions.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the delegation of Pakistan for convening the meeting today. We believe that it is a very timely meeting, especially in the light of the fact that the Secretariat is preparing a report on the review of United Nations peace operations. We listened carefully to the statements by Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Assistant Secretary-General Martha Pobeé and Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, Executive Director of the International Peace Institute. We are grateful for the assessments provided.

Russia has consistently supported the peacekeeping activity of the United Nations. We are convinced that its foundations, which were laid down many decades ago, remain fully relevant today. They include unconditional respect for the sovereignty of host States, strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, of course, adherence to the basic principles of peacekeeping, namely, the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate.

It is not a coincidence that we keep returning to those foundations when discussing the future of United Nations peace operations, which, in our view, comprise two instruments with different mandates, different goals and the forces and resources they use, namely, peacekeeping missions and special political missions. The point is that, in our view, the current problems of United Nations peacekeeping have to do with a departure from conventional principles and attempts to reinvent the wheel instead of taking a sober view of things. For example, there is a general consensus that the mandates of peacekeeping missions should be clear, focused and with specific timelines and indicators. That is exactly how they were in the past, when the Blue Helmets had a firm grasp of the task at hand and the conditions under which they were to fulfil it.

However, instead of returning to this healthy approach, we are seeing the opposite trend at the Security Council. When discussing mandates, everyone is constantly trying to put shiny new ornaments on the Christmas tree, while the real need for them or their added value are, to say the least, not that obvious. Peacekeepers are being tasked with quite trendy but essentially secondary issues to do with human rights, gender and climate. Costly missions remain in countries for decades, expand excessively and become deeply embedded in the fabric of the host country's domestic policy, which can sometimes entail risks of interfering in internal affairs or threats of security collapse when the mission is withdrawn. At the same time, the effective implementation of these overloaded mandates, which use up considerable resources, is something that gives rise to many questions on the part of Security Council members, host countries and the international community as a whole.

That seriously undermines the credibility of United Nations peacekeeping. Unfortunately, the Secretariat is not always ready to face the truth and propose realistic solutions based on sober assessments and learning from previous mistakes. Instead, we have largely seen attempts at self-justification and blame-shifting — sometimes host Governments are at fault, sometimes contingents are poorly trained and sometimes all problems are attributed to misinformation or the geopolitical context. But United Nations missions are, by design, meant to work in adverse crisis conditions. The very essence of their presence is to be where problems arise, where the situation is inherently difficult, including politically speaking. Accordingly, these problems must be resolved in close cooperation with the host Government, while building trust with the local population.

We know how difficult that is, and we pay tribute to the courage of all peacekeepers who risk their lives on the ground every day and to the efforts by those special political missions assisting host countries in various aspects of the political process. We fully support the work being done by the United Nations in these fundamental and vital areas, but we cannot agree with an approach whereby attention and resources are being dispersed on pseudo-threats with so-called innovative solutions being devised to combat these very threats or whereby the discussion is shifted fully away from practical and pressing issues to some exotic scenarios, such as adapting peacekeeping to possible conflicts of the future. That is despite the fact that we are still facing quite conventional conflicts and, to tell the truth, the United Nations has not yet learned how to tackle them effectively, and that is precisely what our top priority should be today.

We are convinced that to be effective, United Nations peace operations must be guided by the search for practical solutions to concrete problems rather than by some creative and speculative conjectures. Over the 80 years of its work, the United Nations has gleaned sufficient expertise and tools to help States that need it to prevent conflicts, reach peace agreements and create political conditions for their implementation and to provide them with peacebuilding assistance. Each particular situation might require a unique solution, which would hinge on political

goals, objective conditions on the ground and successful experiences of the past. That is what the Secretariat should be guided by when providing Member States with realistic, tailored and resource-efficient solutions, which the United Nations is capable of delivering. That understanding seems to be plausible given the worsening financial crisis facing the United Nations and the Secretary-General's cost-cutting initiatives. We hope that such a pragmatic view will also prevail within the ongoing review of the future of all forms of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

At the same time, we are far from absolving Security Council members of their responsibility to agree on realistic and implementable mandates and timely transformations of those mandates or their right to take decisions on the withdrawal of missions. That is exactly the line that Russia has consistently pursued at the Security Council. Penholders of country files have a special role to play in that regard. They must act in good faith and in the interests of maintaining international peace and security, rather than attempt, in a neocolonial tradition, to push their national interests into resolutions or incorporate in those resolutions instruments to advance their agendas.

On a separate note, we would like to stress that any peacekeeping initiatives should be discussed within the Security Council and the General Assembly Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations rather than at separate conferences held in European capitals. We consider it unacceptable to give the United Nations label to events whose organizers tend to use discriminatory approaches when choosing participants, as Germany did when it hosted a ministerial-level meeting on peacekeeping in Berlin in May. We also emphasize that there is a need for the Secretariat to be genuinely impartial, as per Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations.

In conclusion, I would like to once again reiterate our support for the United Nations peacekeeping and special political missions, whose military, police and civilian personnel continue to carry out their tasks in good faith, often putting their own lives at risk. We stand convinced that such operations will remain relevant in the future, and we hope that through our joint efforts we will be able to determine which formats will be most effective and sustainable.

**Mr. Mohamed Yusuf** (Somalia): Let me begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the Pakistani presidency for organizing this timely and important briefing on peace operations. I also thank our briefers, Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and International Peace Institute President Al Hussein, for their valuable insights.

The growing complexity of global peace and security challenges makes it essential for the Security Council to continually reflect on and adapt the role of United Nations peace operations. These discussions help us to share lessons, reaffirm commitments to multilateralism and identify reforms, ensuring that peace operations remain effective and relevant. Africa's long engagement with United Nations peace operations, both as host and contributor, offers unique perspectives built on decades of direct experience. We have seen both the positive impact and the limitations of these missions. The Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) underscores the urgent need for adaptation, especially in regions where conflicts are complex and rapidly changing. In that vein, I would like to offer the following points.

First, it is essential that all United Nations missions be guided by clear political objectives and well-defined exit strategies from the outset. There must be core elements of planning, not afterthoughts. Establishing reviews and clear benchmarks for success and carefully planned transitions ensures that each mission leaves behind a foundation for long-term peace and resilience. From the beginning, especially in complex political transitions, our engagement should be purposeful and time-bound, empowering local actors to sustain peace themselves.



Secondly, peace cannot be sustained without addressing the root causes of the conflict, particularly development challenges. Peacebuilding must be central to all United Nations operations, supporting inclusive dialogue and genuine national ownership. Moreover, it is essential for the United Nations to increase the nationalization of its posts and prioritize local procurement, which can create more cost saving and the efficiency of its overall mandate. That also strengthens local capacity, stimulates economic growth and reduces dependency on the United Nations after missions end. The economic multiplier effect of local procurement should be fully leveraged to leave behind resilient, self-sustaining societies.

Thirdly, the Silencing the Guns by 2030 initiative exemplifies Africa's commitment to breaking the cycle of conflict and building sustained peace. Such initiatives demand not just endorsement but robust support and sustained investment from the international community. Africa has championed partnership with the United Nations, especially through African Union (AU)-United Nations hybrid operations. We must therefore reinforce the United Nations-AU partnership and implement resolution 2719 (2023) to ensure predictable and sustainable financing for Africa-led peace support operations and improved coordination. It is in the vital interest of the Council to ensure that its regional partners, such as the African Union, are sufficiently supported and enabled to fully discharge their responsibilities, as part of the global peace and security architecture.

Fourthly and lastly, missions should adopt practices that reduce environmental impact and ensure their presence benefits, not harms, host communities.

In conclusion, we remain steadfast in our commitment to working with the Council and all Member States to strengthen and adapt United Nations peace operations to the new realities of our time. Our goal must be to ensure that politics are at the centre and that when United Nations missions depart, they leave not a legacy of dependency, but one of resilience, sustained peace and development.

**Mr. Bendjama** (Algeria): We value Pakistan's organization of this timely meeting, and we convey our appreciation to Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Martha Pobee and Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein for their insightful briefings. We also wish to pay tribute to the Blue Helmets and to express our deep gratitude to the troop-contributing countries for their commitment and their heavy sacrifice.

In the face of the multifaceted security challenges and emerging threats, given particularly their increasingly asymmetric nature, the continued adaptation of United Nations peace operations is no longer a choice; it is a necessity. We therefore look forward to the report of the Secretary-General on the review of all forms of peace operations, and we call for inclusive and broad consultations during this process to ensure that all views and all perspectives are heard and reflected. While discussions on United Nations peace operations often focus on the operational aspects such as logistics and resources, it appears that the strengthening of the role of these operations has decreased in terms of the attention and importance given to it. In the face of the current circumstances, the recommendations formulated in the report by my former boss — the Brahimi report (see S/2000/809) — and the landmark report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see S/2015/446) remain valid, in particular those on the primacy of politics. In this regard, we wish to underline the following points.

First, United Nations peace operations are more effective when they are deployed in support of a well-defined political strategy. As illustrated in the Action for Peace Plus initiative, collective coherence and support behind a political strategy are a priority that needs to be put forward in the mandate of United Nations peace operations, and the current discussions on the future of peace operations must not lose sight of the primacy of politics in undertaking peace efforts. Building the



presence of a United Nations peace operation around a viable political project, in consultation with the host country and relevant actors, will confer better visibility on the duration of a mission's presence on the ground and its projected end. We are noticing that, in the absence of political vision, the United Nations has prioritized other tasks that lead only to endless missions. We therefore call for further efforts by United Nations peace operations to support national political strategies and assist in their inception, in line with national priorities and with national vision.

Secondly, the debate on peacekeeping versus peace enforcement must also leave room for political solutions. In the light of the discussions on partnerships with regional actors, in particular the African Union, to deploy peace enforcement operations, it is essential to ensure that these regional organizations are not perceived only as cheap military actors. They should also be seen as strategic and political partners. Prioritizing political solutions through partnerships with regional actors will only strengthen the spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and put forward national and regional ownership of the political solutions to conflicts and crises.

Thirdly, the difficult financial context that the United Nations is going through should be perceived as an opportunity to improve the performance of United Nations peace operations rather than a financial challenge. Rationalizing resources will have to come through the inevitable streamlining of mandates and the conferring of a bigger role on good offices, mediation, prevention and political missions. We need, in this regard, to make a clear distinction between cost-effectiveness and indiscriminate budget cuts. Cost-effectiveness should not be equated with doing less, rather it should mean doing better and delivering more strategic, focused and results-driven missions with the resources at hand. From a wider perspective, peacebuilding efforts must also be part of the priorities of United Nations peace operations' mandates. In this regard, we look forward to the successful conclusion of the peacebuilding architecture review.

To conclude, crises and difficulties are a good catalyst for reform. We need to learn, and learn quickly, from the difficulties we face to give shape to a better version of United Nations peace operations.

Despite the various achievements, which nobody can ignore, the mandates of United Nations peace operations are still discussed from a security and military perspective, ignoring the importance of political solutions, which are often limited to their simple expression. The primacy of politics is the true force multiplier to reach desired objectives.

Algeria reiterates its full commitment to advancing discussions on the future of peace operations and stands ready to engage constructively in this regard.

**Mr. Kelley** (United States of America): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and Assistant Secretary-General Pobee for their remarks, and Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, for his comprehensive briefing.

Political solutions are the foundation upon which successful peace operations are based. They provide the strategic direction, legitimacy and sustainability needed to transform temporary interventions into lasting peace. Without them, missions risk stagnation and ineffectiveness, ultimately failing to achieve their intended objectives.

The United States recognizes that United Nations peace operations are an option to address threats to international peace and security. However, to effectively confront these threats, missions require robust political support and the operational capacity to adapt to evolving political and security dynamics.

Political solutions must be at the centre of peace operations. For missions, this means integrating political objectives — such as facilitating peace agreements, supporting governance reforms and fostering reconciliation — into all aspects of

planning and execution. For the Security Council, it means ensuring that mandates are designed with clear political objectives and measurable benchmarks for success, while providing sustained diplomatic engagement to secure host State cooperation and regional support.

This support is paramount to mission success. Too often, we have witnessed host States obstructing missions' mandates and preventing missions from fully executing their tasks, thereby exacerbating instability in conflict-affected areas. It is imperative that we reassess missions that fail to deliver meaningful political solutions and explore alternative approaches to address these challenges effectively. We must hold those host States accountable, bilaterally and publicly, that deliberately undermine or create conditions that impede the advancement of political solutions.

Achieving these goals requires reform. At the Berlin Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting in May, the United States outlined a path towards peacekeeping reform, emphasizing the need for increased accountability, adaptability and transparency in peacekeeping and peace operations more broadly. These elements ensure missions achieve measurable and effective results, including contributing to political solutions by aligning mandates with broader efforts to foster coherence among stakeholders and maintaining flexibility to adapt to evolving political dynamics.

There are four elements of peace operations I would like to address as we work collectively to improve upon such efforts.

First, the United Nations must increase accountability and transparency across all levels of peace operations — United Nations leadership, Member States and field missions. This includes keeping missions on track, establishing measurable benchmarks to track progress, providing sufficient support systems, encouraging innovation and demanding transparency and efficiency in resource management. By embedding these elements into its culture and operations, the United Nations can more effectively align its efforts with political solutions that are both achievable and sustainable.

Secondly, performance is essential to enhancing the effectiveness of peace operations. Clear lines of responsibility and accountability mechanisms must apply to all components of a mission, including troop- and police-contributing countries, civilian staff and leadership. Capacity-building and training efforts must deliver discernible results in field operations. These efforts should be complemented by accountable United Nations leadership that incentivizes success and imposes immediate consequences for shortcomings or misconduct, especially sexual exploitation and abuse. Misconduct must be addressed swiftly and effectively.

Thirdly, the United Nations must prioritize integrated planning across Headquarters and field missions. This includes establishing clear end states, customizing metrics to evaluate progress and prioritizing resources efficiently. Integrated planning, evidence-based metrics and efficient resource management are essential to achieving sustainable results.

Finally, the United Nations must adjust or, when necessary, terminate missions when political solutions are unsuccessful and conditions render mission mandates unachievable. Let us not be in the business of renewing peace operation mandates just for the sake of renewing them. Rather, let us take a careful look at peace operations to ensure that we are deploying our finite resources in the most efficient and productive way possible, achieving the obtainable results we all seek.

**Ms. Quinn** (United Kingdom): I thank our briefers, Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and Mr. Al Hussein.

United Nations peace operations have made a critical contribution towards international peace and security for more than three quarters of a century. However, the nature of conflict is evolving, and we should continue supporting the adaptation

of this vital United Nations tool so that it can best support durable peace. I will make three points.

First, the effectiveness of United Nations operations depends on their having and implementing clear and robust political strategies. Not only do mission mandates need to have politics at their core, but missions should ensure that all elements of their work are grounded in political strategy. This requires improved coordination across the United Nations system and strong cooperation with key stakeholders, including regional States and organizations, local communities and civil society.

Secondly, peace operations should be equipped with the tools they need to deliver political solutions. This includes enhanced technology, such as early warning systems and improved surveillance, to foresee emerging threats. It also includes strategic communications capabilities, to counter the growing misinformation and disinformation campaigns we have regrettably seen targeting United Nations missions.

Thirdly, to best support political solutions, peace operations need to be tailored and targeted to the contexts in which they operate. This may encompass larger, multidimensional peacekeeping operations, but also special political missions, like the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, supporting the political process, or expert logistical support, such as the United Nations Support Office in Somalia.

United Nations missions also need to be agile and adaptable, with robust contingency plans so that they can quickly adapt when the situation on the ground changes. This is equally true for regionally led peace and security missions, which can have a critical role to play.

The Secretary-General's review of the future of all forms of United Nations peace operations offers a crucial opportunity to ensure that all United Nations peace operations are mandated, designed and equipped to deliver political solutions in their host State context. The United Kingdom stands ready to work with others to make it a success.

**Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett** (Guyana): Today's briefing on adapting peace operations for the pursuit of political solutions is timely and I thank Pakistan for its initiative. I also extend my gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Jean Pierre Lacroix, Assistant Secretary-General Martha Pobee and Mr. Al Hussein for their insightful presentations.

I thank the millions of courageous men and women who served and those who continue to serve with distinction, and pay tribute to those who have lost their lives, all in the pursuit of peace.

United Nations peace operations remain a vital tool for maintaining international peace and security. They have served for over 70 years as a symbol of hope for millions by, inter alia, protecting civilians, supporting countries transitioning from conflict to peace and fostering stability in some of the world's most volatile environments. As a steadfast advocate for multilateralism and the pacific settlement of disputes, Guyana reaffirms its unwavering support for the vital work of United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

As the world confronts increasingly complex challenges arising from widening geopolitical divisions, evolving and intractable conflicts and increasingly dangerous operating environments, we must continue working to adapt peacekeeping operations to suit the new conflict landscape, as underscored by Assistant Secretary-General Pobee. Our peacekeepers today face a myriad of threats, including asymmetric attacks, terrorism, organized crime, the pervasive spread of misinformation and disinformation, and even attacks from national armed forces. Tackling these challenges requires adaptive mandates, robust resources and innovative approaches

that ensure the safety and effectiveness of our personnel, as well as the achievement of their mandates.

The Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) and the independent study commissioned by the Department of Peace Operations on the future of peacekeeping provide us with important recommendations on adapting missions to changing circumstances. The United Nations peacebuilding architecture review also presents a critical opportunity to strengthen the impact of missions on peacebuilding outcomes.

Turning to the question before us today, I would like to offer the following recommendations.

First, our efforts to ensure that peace operations benefit from stronger and more sustainable political support must start with greater engagement and consultations across the board, as well as greater reliance on data-driven approaches. These are critical first steps in shaping mandates, fostering legitimacy and enhancing effectiveness. It also means putting the host country at the centre of the discussions and ensuring that the troop- and police-contributing countries are consulted appropriately. In that vein, we emphasize the critical importance of sustained collaboration between the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries, host Governments, the Peacebuilding Commission and regional and subregional organizations.

Building stronger partnerships between and among relevant stakeholders fosters greater coherence and coordination, ensuring that mandates are clear, achievable and aligned with the realities on the ground. Capacity-building for host countries, particularly in the reform of the security sector and justice institutions, is also vital for long-term stability and the eventual successful transition of missions.

Secondly, the protection of civilians must remain at the core of the peacekeeping mandate, underpinned by human rights. The protection of civilians is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic necessity. Visible patrols, community engagement and dialogue, the promotion of human rights and the rule of law, providing necessities through quick-impact projects and establishing early warning systems all serve to build legitimacy and enhance operational effectiveness, ultimately contributing to sustainable peace and stability.

Finally, we must recognize that peacekeeping is not an end in itself; neither is it perpetual. It is a means to an end — sustainable peace. Peacekeeping must therefore be accompanied and supported by a robust political process in which progress is measurable. Furthermore, peace operations must be integrated into broader strategies that address the root causes and drivers of conflict. These include poverty, inequality, climate change and governance deficits. The nexus between peace, security, development and human rights is undeniable, and our efforts must reflect this holistic understanding.

Ultimately, United Nations peacekeeping missions and special political missions must create an environment for political dialogue and reconciliation and accompany host countries along the path from conflict to sustainable peace.

In conclusion, Guyana reiterates its firm commitment to strengthening United Nations peace operations. We must continue to adapt, innovate and invest in this vital instrument of peace. Let us work collectively to ensure that United Nations peacekeepers can continue to fulfil their noble mission, bringing hope and stability to those who need it most.

**Mr. Kanu** (Sierra Leone): We thank the Pakistani presidency for convening this briefing and thank Pakistan, together with the Republic of Korea and Denmark, for their leadership as the Security Council trio on peace operations. We also thank the briefers, Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Assistant Secretary-General

Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee, and the President and Chief Executive Officer of the International Peace Institute, Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, for their valuable insights.

Since the authorization of the first United Nations peacekeeping mission in 1948, peace operations have evolved significantly, as expected — from unarmed observer missions, such as the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, to complex, multidimensional operations mandated to stabilize countries torn by conflict and support comprehensive peace processes. Over seven decades, these missions have saved countless lives, facilitated political transitions and helped countries recover from war. Their legacy demonstrates that, when underpinned by political will, peacekeeping remains one of the most effective tools available to the Council.

Peacekeeping is distinct from other peace operations in its principles, including consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence or defence of the mandate. These principles have guided successful missions from Cambodia to Namibia, Sierra Leone to Timor-Leste. Over time, the scope has expanded to include special political missions, peace enforcement operations and hybrid arrangements with regional organizations. Each is suited to different contexts, yet all share the ultimate goal of supporting political solutions that end conflict and build lasting peace.

The global context has shifted. Conflicts today are increasingly fragmented, involving multiple armed groups and external actors. They are compounded by terrorism, organized crime, cyberthreats and climate-related instability. Global political divisions often paralyse coherent action, while missions face resource constraints and, at times, lack the consent of host Governments. Nearly all current missions are deployed where there is no comprehensive peace to keep, and where political processes are stalled or absent. These conditions undermine effectiveness and expose missions to heightened risks.

The role of special political missions in sustaining peace cannot be overstated. Over the years, these missions have been promoting dialogue through the use of diplomatic tools, such as mediation, negotiation and good offices, with a view to resolving disputes peacefully and strengthening the capacities of regional organizations, such as the African Union, to mediate during conflict.

However, like peacekeeping operations, special political missions should also evolve to address issues of growing mistrust between parties to a conflict in various areas. It is therefore essential that the work of special political missions be based on the consent and willingness of the host government, of the parties concerned and of the people of that country. We therefore agree with Assistant Secretary-General Pobee that the trust deficit that we see today did not exist with many of the most successful missions in the past. The rich history must therefore be re-explored and re-examined.

Against this backdrop, adaptation is urgently needed. The success of peace operations has always depended on their ability to support political settlements. The primacy of politics remains a core principle. Peacekeepers can create space for dialogue and protect civilians, but they cannot be a substitute for genuine political solutions. Mandates must therefore be explicitly linked to viable political strategies, underpinned by unified international support and empowered by mission leadership. This also requires broad consultations with host States, troop- and police-contributing countries and regional partners. Partnerships with regional arrangements, such as the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, including their standby forces, are critical. They have demonstrated the capacity to respond quickly to crises and to work alongside United Nations missions to achieve shared objectives.

The Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), in particular action 21 thereof, reinforces the need for mandates that are clear, sequenced and guided by political strategies. Pursuing these political solutions requires not only strong



leadership and mediation expertise, but also well-trained troops, modern equipment and technology. Peace operations must be equipped with enhanced analytical capacities, flexible financing for political and peacebuilding activities and the agility to adapt rapidly to evolving contexts.

Resolution 2719 (2023), which provides for adequate, predictable and sustainable financing for African-led peace support operations, is, without a doubt, a landmark achievement. It acknowledges the comparative advantage of regional organizations and empowers African-led responses to play a fuller role. Yet, it is regrettable that the first opportunity to apply resolution 2719 (2023) has faced significant challenges. In addition to concerns being expressed about the lack of clarity on financing, the prevailing circumstances threaten missions' effectiveness and confidence in the Council's commitments. The resolution must be fully operationalized and applied consistently to all relevant situations, backed by strong support mechanisms.

Innovation is shaping recent approaches. The Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti reflects a willingness to explore new models, combining multinational contributions under Security Council authorization to address urgent crises. However, its implementation has encountered challenges, funding gaps, logistical hurdles and political fragility on the ground. The current uncertainty over the mandate, in particular for Kenya, which has bravely taken the lead role, underscores the need for clear frameworks, sustained financial and political backing, and stronger coordination with the United Nations system. Without these, even innovative arrangements risk faltering.

Drawing lessons from recent contexts is essential. The recent drawdowns, in particular in Africa, and challenges in Haiti illustrate the consequences of insufficient political support, unclear mandates and inadequate resources. Peacekeeping is most effective when integrated into a coherent political strategy supported by all stakeholders. Further, sustainable transitions from peacekeeping to peacebuilding are critical. Resolution 2594 (2021) provides a framework for integrated planning and coordination, but it requires more consistent application. Transitions must not be treated as administrative handovers, but as part of a broader strategy for sustaining peace and preventing relapse into conflict. This demands collaboration between peace operations, the Peacebuilding Commission, United Nations country teams, host governments and civil society.

Financing remains a critical challenge. Predictable, adequate and sustainable funding is vital, particularly for African-led operations, which too often rely on unpredictable voluntary contributions. Needs-driven financing, shielded from political volatility and aligned with civilian protection priorities, is imperative.

Operationally, missions must evolve. There is a need for investments in standby forces, enhanced training and preparation, including on the women and peace and security agenda, the youth, peace and security agenda and the climate-security nexus. Modern peacekeepers must be equipped with the right tools and technologies to address today's complex threats. The accountability, health, safety and mental well-being of personnel must also remain priorities. Strengthened triangular cooperation among the United Nations, contributing countries and host States is essential to improve effectiveness and legitimacy.

Finally, the Council must look ahead to the finalization of the Secretary-General's comprehensive review of all forms of United Nations peace operations in 2026. This review must be strategic and action-oriented, building on lessons from the 2015 report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see S/2015/446) and the Action for Peacekeeping Plus agenda, while offering fresh thinking on how the United Nations toolbox can meet present and future needs. It should examine how missions remain politically relevant, regionally informed and adaptable to new realities.

The history of United Nations peace operations is one of remarkable achievements and hard lessons. From the first mission in 1948 to today's complex operations,



peacekeeping has repeatedly proven its value when guided by political vision, robust support and effective partnerships. As the Council looks ahead, it must ensure that peace operations remain agile, well-resourced and anchored in political solutions. Resolution 2719 (2023), innovative approaches such as the Multinational Security Support Mission and strengthened cooperation with regional arrangements are steps in the right direction, but they must be matched by decisive action.

The populations affected by conflict look to the Council for leadership. They count on peace operations not only to keep them safe, but to help create the conditions for a durable peace. The responsibility is great, but so is the opportunity. By reaffirming our commitment to political solutions, aligning mandates with resources and working closely with regional actors, we can ensure that peace operations remain an indispensable tool for international peace and security. We therefore thank all the personnel of United Nations and regional peace operation missions for their invaluable work, and we indeed pay tribute to those who have paid the ultimate price.

**Mr. Dharmadhikari** (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Assistant Secretary-General Martha Pobee for their briefings and Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein for his remarks. I also pay tribute to the vital contribution made by the women and men working in peacekeeping operations and special political missions, both uniformed and civilian.

I would like to make four key points.

First, the adaptation of peace missions and operations to contemporary realities must continue. There is a consensus regarding the main areas of work required to improve peace missions and operations. They must serve realistic political objectives, which should be reflected in clear and concise mandates. The United Nations must develop its partnerships with regional organizations and local actors. In that regard, France is committed to the partnership with the African Union and to the implementation of resolution 2719 (2023) to support the deployment of certain African peace operations. Peace operations must also be able to address new threats, such as the rise of non-State armed groups, transnational organized crime networks, misinformation and disinformation.

The need to take budgetary constraints into account must not allow us to let up in our efforts in these various areas. We commend the efforts undertaken by the Secretariat over the years to strengthen the impact of United Nations peace operations, in particular through Action for Peacekeeping and its implementing programme, Action for Peacekeeping Plus.

Secondly, the success of peace missions and operations hinges on the political commitment of Security Council members. We must demonstrate agility in adapting the operations whose deployment we authorize. The current dynamic in the Great Lakes region is an example of that. The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) is expected to play a role in verifying a ceasefire and implementing peace agreements, whether it be the agreement concluded in Washington, D.C., between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, or the declaration of principles signed in Doha 10 days ago between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Alliance Fleuve Congo/Mouvement du 23 mars. It is essential that the Security Council be able to act so that MONUSCO can best support these peace efforts.

Thirdly, missions and operations must be provided with the necessary resources to fulfil their objectives, in terms of financial resources and equipment and access to relevant technologies. That is a prerequisite for their effectiveness, so that they can carry out the mandates that we assign to them. This must be accompanied by efforts to achieve efficiency, which must remain a constant objective. Again, that is particularly necessary in the current budgetary context. We welcome the efforts made in that regard. We also recall that payment arrears are detrimental to the proper functioning of peace missions

and operations. In that context, strengthening the safety and security of peacekeepers and combating impunity for crimes committed against peace operations personnel must remain priorities, in line with resolution 2589 (2021). We owe it to those personnel, whether civilian, military or police. France commends their courage and sense of duty and salutes the commitment of the countries that contribute military and police personnel to these operations. France pays tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice as part of these missions.

Fourthly, we must draw on the diversity of United Nations peacekeeping missions and operations to tailor our responses to the expectations of those countries and populations that benefit from these missions and operations and to better contribute to conflict resolution. Peacekeeping operations and special political missions, whether past or present, are highly diverse in terms of their mandates, composition and structures. Over more than 75 years of existence, they have achieved successes that have helped many countries to return to the path of peace. Those successes are undeniable. However, these operations have also experienced difficulties or failures, which must be analysed and not repeated. This experience is a valuable asset that we must make best use of today in order to innovate and find the necessary responses to new forms of conflict. Peace operations offer a range of solutions that we must be able to adapt to needs based on sound analysis and planning. We know that the Secretariat is capable of doing so. This should therefore guide the adaptation of current missions and the design of possible new missions and operations. France supports the Secretariat in the many areas related to the issue of innovation in peace operations, whether it be initiatives to combat disinformation, the role of new technologies, strategic communication or capacity-building for troop- and police-contributing countries.

In conclusion, United Nations peace operations are our primary instrument for taking concrete action in favour of international peace and security. The multiplicity of crises only confirms the need for the Council to remain active and ambitious. The study on the future of peace operations mandated by the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1) must help to strengthen our action, taking into account the current context.

**Mrs. Blokar Drobič** (Slovenia): Slovenia thanks the presidency for convening this timely meeting and Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and Mr. Al Hussein for their valuable insights and in particular their recommendations.

The topic before us goes to the core of what United Nations peace operations are meant to achieve. In an era of increasingly fragmented, regionalized and protracted armed conflicts, peace operations must go beyond maintaining a presence. They must be adequately equipped to support lasting political solutions, firmly backed by the Security Council, and not merely manage crises. With that in mind, allow me to highlight three areas that Slovenia considers essential for making peace operations more effective and impactful.

First, peace operations should serve as effective instruments of political engagement, not its substitute. Their relevance depends on how well they support national and regional efforts to forge a path towards lasting peace. Without a credible political process, their impact is inevitably limited. Mandates should therefore be flexible, allowing operations to adapt to the realities on the ground. Transitions and exit strategies should be planned from the outset and in close cooperation with host Governments, regional actors and United Nations country teams. The goal is not indefinite deployment but rather to foster the conditions for sustainable peace.

Secondly, sustained political backing is essential. The Council's unity affects the credibility and effectiveness of peace operations. When divided, the missions and the people they serve bear the consequences. The Council must remain engaged and coherent and work in close partnership with other key actors, including troop- and police-contributing countries and regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union and the Peacebuilding Commission. Host Governments also share

responsibility for successful peace operations, which can only operate safely and effectively with the full cooperation of the host authorities and when status-of-forces agreements are fully respected. Obstructions and undue restrictions undermine mandate implementation, erode local trust and compromise the safety of mission personnel.

The third essential pillar is capacity. Peace operations must be equipped with the tools necessary to fulfil their mandates, although missions are often expected to do more with less. Slovenia supports the development of flexible and scalable operational models tailored to specific contexts. We also emphasize the importance of innovation, training and the responsible use of existing and emerging technologies to strengthen early warning, situational awareness and the protection of civilians. However, no number of tools can replace a people-centred approach. Building lasting peace requires inclusive peace processes, with the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women and the active participation of youth and civil society.

The ongoing review of United Nations peace operations is a key opportunity to rethink how we engage and adapt. It should reflect the voices of those on the ground and design approaches that are both rooted in principles and operationally effective.

In conclusion, Slovenia expresses deep appreciation to all peacekeepers, serving in challenging and often dangerous environments. Their dedication embodies the spirit of the United Nations, and it is our collective duty to ensure that they are equipped with clear mandates, political backing and the resources needed to carry out the tasks entrusted to them safely and effectively.

**The President:** I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Pakistan.

Pakistan is pleased to convene this meeting in partnership with Denmark and the Republic of Korea — the Security Council trio on peacekeeping. Together we also circulated a concept note for this meeting. I would like to join colleagues in thanking Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Assistant Secretary-General Pobee and President of International Peace Institute, Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, for their thoughtful briefings and pertinent recommendations. I would say that, in sharing them, our three briefers have in fact challenged us as Council members to rise to the occasion and to be dynamic and responsive to the evolving scenarios and regarding the Council's responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

United Nations peace operations are at an inflection point. This year is of particular significance, as serious efforts are under way to review and reform the engagement of the United Nations, including the Secretary-General's review of the future of all forms of United Nations peace operations, as mandated by the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), the 20-year review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and the UN80 Initiative. Peace operations remain central to the United Nations and to the Council's *raison d'être* — the maintenance of international peace and security. They are the most visible embodiment of multilateralism in action and represent our collective commitment to peace. For the past eight decades, United Nations peace operations have contained conflicts and crises, monitored ceasefires, shepherded decolonization, protected civilians, strengthened State sovereignty and forged institutions that support peace and good governance. Overall, peace operations are a success story.

Yet over the past decade, we have also witnessed a crisis of confidence. No new peacekeeping mission has been deployed in 10 years. It has also been 10 years since the landmark High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations issued its recommendations for improving peace operations (see S/2015/446), centred around the three P's — politics, partnerships and people. The central message of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations report remains pertinent: peace operations must be centred around political solutions. The ongoing reviews must therefore uphold this message, while working to restore confidence in United Nations peace operations and to adapt and

enhance their relevance in today's complex international environment. Pakistan offers the following recommendations.

First, the primacy of politics must guide every peace operation. Missions cannot substitute political processes but must serve to enable them. Peacekeeping missions provide essential space, protection and credibility for the pursuit of political solutions. In cases in which political processes are lacking or absent, peacekeeping missions help to maintain stability, protect civilians, monitor violations and preserve hope of eventual dialogue. Peacekeeping missions cannot, however, be held accountable for a lack of political progress, as we know that political outcomes depend on the parties and on sustained international engagement. The Council, which gives missions their mandates, must ensure that missions are deployed with an accompanying credible political process that addresses the root causes of conflicts and also that mission mandates are demand-driven, clear, sequenced and context-specific. There has been much debate about Christmas-tree mandates. These mandates result from the tendency of Member States to retain hard-won gains on negotiated language in some mandate resolutions, which often overburden missions. These mandates sometimes divert the focus from the most essential needs on the ground. This tendency must be checked, to make missions more results-oriented and focused.

Secondly, as has also been noted by other colleagues, the success of peace operations depends on strong political undertakings by Member States, in particular members of the Security Council. As the primary organ entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council must provide unified and consistent support to peace operations. The Secretary-General and his Special Representatives and Special Envoys are central to this effort, serving as the political lead in missions and ensuring strategic coherence across the mission as a whole. United Nations missions contain a wealth of unmatched expertise across civilian and uniformed components. Special Representatives and Special Envoys of the Secretary-General are responsible for channelling that expertise, interpreting and implementing Security Council mandates and aligning operational activities with political objectives. Their leadership must be reinforced by full backing from the Council, which should treat the Secretary-General's reports and recommendations as vital instruments for sustaining peace. It has also been seen that when the United Nations and the Council retreat or hesitate, political vacuums emerge. These vacuums are being increasingly filled by negative actors and soldiers of fortune, thus proliferating the threats to international peace and security. That space must be reclaimed through credible political processes anchored in the Council's authority and implemented through empowered United Nations missions.

Thirdly, peacekeeping must maintain a people-centred approach. Peacekeeping missions should put greater emphasis on promoting local peace arrangements at the community level, wherever possible, to reduce violence and build trust. The successful efforts of Pakistani peacekeepers in the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei in engaging local communities are a good example of peacekeeping missions promoting local political solutions.

Fourthly, we must address the financial crisis facing peace operations. Missions are being downgraded owing to a lack of resources. The UN80 Initiative might further affect budgets. We should remember that peace operations remain one of the most cost-effective tools available to the international community for maintaining international peace and security and for pursuing political objectives. With a budget of \$5.5 billion, United Nations peacekeeping worldwide constitutes less than 0.3 per cent of global military spending. And that is an important fact: multiple studies have confirmed that United Nations peacekeeping reduces violence, protects civilians and helps to sustain peace arrangements. The UN80 Initiative must not become a euphemism for retrenchment. Reform efforts must preserve the operational credibility, institutional memory and readiness of peace operations. Expecting peacekeepers to deliver on ambitious mandates

without adequate resources is a recipe for underperformance and disillusionment. We should not set the missions up for failure.

Fifthly, premature mission closures and transitions without a clear political end-state have often created dangerous vacuums and reversed hard-won gains. Transitions must be responsibly managed through conditions-based, not calendar-driven, exit strategies. To this end, a peace continuum approach is needed — one that allows for flexible, tailored and context-specific responses. Peacebuilding must be embedded in missions from the outset to enable a smooth progression from peacekeeping to long-term development and sustainable peace.

Sixthly, the United Nations must deepen strategic partnerships with regional organizations. Resolution 2719 (2023) is a landmark achievement in the domain of the United Nations cooperation with regional organizations. We wish to see its effective implementation. Partnerships with other regional organizations such as the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and many others should also be strengthened and institutionalized.

Lastly, reform of peace operations must be inclusive and anchored in realities on the ground. The Secretary-General's review must ensure meaningful consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries, Member States and host countries. Ownership by Member States is essential for the success of this review. Furthermore, troop- and police-contributing countries must also be fully involved in the design and review of mandates. Their experience on the ground should inform political deliberations here in New York.

Pakistan brings to this discussion nearly eight decades of experience of engagement with United Nations peace operations. We have remained among the top troop contributors and have hosted one of the United Nations oldest missions — the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan, deployed in Jammu and Kashmir. We are also a founding member of the Peacebuilding Commission. More than 235,000 Pakistani peacekeepers have served with distinction in 48 missions across four continents. One hundred and eighty-two of our bravest have laid down their lives in the service of peace. We greatly value the importance of United Nations peace operations. We pay the highest tribute to all the Blue Helmets, from around the world, past and present.

The imperative of political solutions is obvious. Nowhere is this more urgently needed than in Jammu and Kashmir — a long-standing dispute on the Council's agenda. The Council should fulfil its obligations and make concerted efforts to secure a just and lasting solution to the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

Peacekeeping is not a silver bullet, but neither is it obsolete. It remains the most legitimate, collaborative and cost-effective tool the international community and the Council possess to stabilize conflicts and support political solutions. The Council's renewed commitment to mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes, expressed in resolution 2788 (2025), also complements the objectives of pursuing political solutions as part of, and through, United Nations peace operations.

As we chart the future of peace operations, we must remember that politics offers the path, and peacekeeping builds and protects that path, until the destination of sustainable peace is within reach. The Council must protect and support both the path and the destination.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I wish to thank all Council members for their contributions to this important debate. I also thank our three briefers.

*The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.*