

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

REMARKS TO THE MINISTERIAL MEETING ON THE FUTURE OF
PEACEKEEPING

Berlin, 13 May 2025

Dear Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence Affairs of the Republic of Germany, our generous hosts

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

My thanks to Germany for bringing us together at this consequential moment.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the United Nations.

Our organization was founded on the conviction that peace is possible if we work as one united human family.

That is what our peace operations are about.

From preventive diplomacy to peacekeeping...

From negotiating ceasefires to helping to implement them...

From electoral support and observer missions to de-mining operations and protection of civilians...

To the focus of today's Ministerial meeting — peacekeeping.

Excellencies,

UN Blue Helmets are the most globally recognized symbol of the world's ability to come together to help countries move from conflict to peace.

Peacekeepers hail from every corner of the world.

But they are united in their commitment to peace.

As we meet today, UN peacekeepers are hard at work helping to ensure that ceasefires are respected...

Protecting civilians caught in the line of fire...

Helping provide the conditions for lifesaving aid to flow to those in need...

And laying the foundations for long-term recovery.

In trouble spots around the world, Blue Helmets can mean the difference between life and death.

And they are also a clear demonstration of the power of multilateral action to maintain, achieve and sustain peace.

There is a long list of countries that have achieved durable peace with the support of UN Peacekeeping — including Cambodia, Cote d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Liberia, Namibia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and Timor Leste.

Many of these countries now themselves contribute troops.

At the same time, we recognize that peace comes at a price.

Through the decades, 4,400 peacekeepers have fallen in the line of duty.

Their service and sacrifice will never be forgotten.

Please join me in a moment of silence to honour all those who lost their lives in the pursuit of peace.

[MOMENT OF SILENCE]

Thank you.

Excellencies,

We owe it to peacekeepers — and the populations they protect — to continue strengthening their ability to answer this call to peace.

And to do so in the face of daunting challenges.

Complex, intertwined and frequently borderless conflicts...

Growing polarization and division around the globe...

Targeting of peacekeepers through deadly misinformation spreading through social media...

Terrorism and transnational crime, which find fertile ground in instability...

The ongoing climate crisis that is exacerbating conflict while leaving more of the planet uninhabitable...

All the continued trampling of international law and international humanitarian law.

As a result, we are now facing the highest number of conflicts since the foundation of the United Nations, and record numbers of people fleeing across borders in search of safety and refuge.

We must recognize that peacekeeping operations are only as effective as the mandates directing them, and can struggle in contexts where political support and clearly defined outcomes and solutions are absent or elusive.

Meanwhile, we see increasing differences of views around how peacekeeping operations should work, under what circumstances, with what mandates they should be deployed, and for how long.

And we face dramatic financial constraints across the board.

We've worked to adapt in the face of these challenges.

But we need to do more.

Today, I want to highlight **three** areas of focus.

First — help us shape peacekeeping operations that are fit for the future.

The Pact for the Future called for a Review of Peace Operations — including peacekeeping.

The review will examine how we can make peacekeeping operations more adaptable, flexible and resilient — while recognizing the limitations in situations where there is little or no peace to keep.

It will also aim to critically examine the tools we have today and propose concrete recommendations to make them fit for the future.

Through this review, we must ensure that the United Nations is prepared to deploy peace operations tailored to each individual conflict, while preparing for the challenges of tomorrow.

We can draw inspiration from our UNIFIL operation, which recently developed an adaptation plan to keep peace along the Blue Line, and ensure lifesaving aid can flow to civilians in southern Lebanon.

In the Central African Republic, we see MINUSCA protecting civilians and assisting the government to extend its reach beyond the capital where people are in desperate need.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, despite ongoing fighting, UN Peacekeepers remain in the field, protecting vulnerable populations.

We're also seeking efficiencies through partnerships — from Member States to regional and sub-regional organizations, to local communities.

Most important among them is our strong partnership with the African Union.

Security Council resolution 2719 has lifted this partnership to a new level as we work to establish peace enforcement missions under the AU's responsibility, supported by the United Nations through assessed contributions.

Today, the Review of Peace Operations will need to be informed — and inspired — by your views.

Member States make peacekeeping possible.

They must lead the way as we strengthen it for the future.

Second — as we make our operations more adaptable and flexible, we need to do the same in the use of our resources.

Peace operations can only succeed when backed by robust mandates and clear, predictable and sustained contributions, both financial and logistical.

But these are tough times for the financing of our work across the board.

Peacekeeping is no exception.

It is crucial that we are able to use the increasingly limited resources we have — and use them well.

That requires more flexible rules and processes.

This means updating our approach to abolishing or establishing positions, and working with troop-contributing countries to ensure we can deliver.

It means working with Member States and the UN Security Council to ensure that any new mandates are prioritized and achievable with the resources available and with a clear exit strategy.

And it means driving efficiencies and improvements across our work in light of the continued funding challenges we face.

Our Review of Peace Operations will work hand-in-hand with our UN80 initiative, to ensure we maximize efficiencies wherever possible, supported at every step by Member States.

We look forward to your governments' support and ideas as we tackle these challenges together.

Third — we need your political support, including through the pledges you will make tomorrow.

Peace operations cannot succeed in the absence of a political solution.

Together we need to mobilize greater support for political solutions across our peacekeeping missions.

Pursuing these political solutions requires adequate means of delivering our operations — including unified political support from Member States, strong leadership, well-trained troops, equipment and technology.

These can strengthen our operations, and make a real difference in people's lives.

And it requires the support of all Member States to ensure the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers in the field, and the full implementation of the relevant privileges and immunities of the Organization and its personnel.

We are deeply grateful for the support and for the concrete pledges so many of you will announce here tomorrow.

Excellencies,

With a budget shared by all 193 Member States and representing a tiny fraction of global military spending — around one half of one per cent — UN Peacekeeping remains one of the most effective and cost-effective tools to build international peace and security.

But it's only as strong as Member States' commitment to it.

Unfortunately, peacekeeping operations have been facing serious liquidity problems.

It is absolutely essential that all Member States respect their financial obligations, paying their contributions in full and on time.

Now more than ever, the world needs the United Nations.

And the United Nations needs peacekeeping that is fully equipped for today's realities and tomorrow's challenges.

Together, let's shape the UN peacekeeping operations that the challenges require, that Member States demand, and that our peacekeepers and the people they support need and deserve.

Thank you.