

**Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations at the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, (30 March 2004)**

**Mr. Chairman,**

I would like to begin by congratulating you and the other members of the bureau on their re-election. We assure you of our fullest cooperation. We look forward to working with the members of this Special Committee to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the UN peacekeeping operations.

2. My delegation associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement by the Distinguished Representative of Morocco. I shall, however, like to take this opportunity to make some observations in my national capacity.

3. I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guehenno for his comprehensive statement, yesterday. As Mr. Guehenno mentioned, we are on the verge of a critical period in area of peacekeeping. Currently, the United Nations is fielding 14 peacekeeping missions, worldwide. Over the next few months, at least five new peacekeeping operations will be deployed. This will lead to a substantial increase in the number of peacekeepers – troops as well as police – as well as the demand for additional financial, administrative and logistic resources to back-stop the existing as well as the new missions. This would perhaps be the greatest expansion in the history of UN peacekeeping. The question that needs to be asked is whether the United Nations is ready to meet this challenge and what can be done to better support these operations.

4. Peacekeeping is an expensive task requiring resources as well as manpower. While the requirements of peacekeeping, along with its complexity, are ever-increasing, these are not always matched by the will to provide the necessary resources. Yet, the success of any peacekeeping operation depends as much on the quality and the professionalism of the peacekeeping troops as on the amount of resources available to it. The conduct of peacekeeping operations needs to be driven by the unique requirements of each mission, not by any political or financial considerations. The international community, therefore, needs to ensure that any given peacekeeping mission is provided with adequate financial and other necessary resources along with political support to complete its assigned tasks.

5. More importantly, peacekeeping should not be a stop-gap measure. It should be part of a comprehensive solution which also addresses underlying causes including economic and human exploitation. Peacekeeping must prepare the ground for post conflict reconciliation, reconstruction and development. Getting the entry strategy right is therefore far more critical than identifying any exit strategy. Mandates must, in any case, not be terminated prematurely before a durable solution has been found. Haiti is a case in point. While applauding the great successes of United Nation's peacekeeping, we must not forget the tragedies, like those of Rwanda, Srebrenica, and Somalia, also. As we plan for the future we must take all the care not to repeat the mistakes of the past.

**Mr. Chairman,**

6. Also important in the conduct of peacekeeping operations is the role of the troop contributing countries (TCCs). It is they who put their sons and daughters in harm's way, and it is their sacrifices which often make all the difference between war and peace. The concerns of the troop contributors should, therefore, be taken into account, especially the following:

- i. Training is increasingly becoming a critical element in peacekeeping operations. It is very important to tap the experience of those major troop contributors which have a considerable background in peacekeeping operations – especially the more complex ones. They should be encouraged and supported in providing a wide ranging of training opportunities to other countries, including new and emerging TCCs.
- ii. There should be greater representation from those troop contributing countries which have made major contributions in the field and yet still remain largely under-represented at UN Headquarters.
- iii. While we appreciate the Secretariat's efforts in improving the processing of reimbursement of claims for troop and equipment costs, we hope that efforts will continue to clear some of the backlogs.
- iv. We are concerned that the cost-of-equipment (COE) Working Group, which met last month, was unable to reach any agreement. The heart of the issue is that the upward review of reimbursement of the cost-of-equipment must be in accordance with accepted procedures. We would like the Special Committee to send a clear direction in this regard to the Fifth Committee during its forthcoming session.
- v. We would like the Special Committee to explore ways of improving safety and security of our peacekeepers in the field. Recent incidents in various peacekeeping missions have shown how the lack of timely information and intelligence can lead to tragic consequences. An improvement in the field intelligence capacity of peacekeeping missions is necessary.
- vi. Experience has shown that "robust rules of engagement" are the best deterrent against any spoilers or would-be-attackers and the key to maintaining peace. The lack of universal application is likely to jeopardize the lives of peacekeepers as well as those under their protection.

**Mr. Chairman,**

7. Pakistan has been a leading advocate of triangular cooperation between the troop contributing countries, Security Council and the Secretariat. We have called for mechanisms aimed at enhancing consultations with the Security Council - not only in the drawing up of mandates, but also in their implementation, when considering a change in, or renewal or completion, or when there is a rapid deterioration of the situation on the ground. The briefings provided in the private meetings of the Security Council and the TCCs - held under the resolution 1353 format – are very useful, but they do not fully cover some of the concerns of the contributors. We hope that these will be more realistically addressed by the Security Council's Working Group during its forthcoming meetings on existing and new peacekeeping operations.

**Mr. Chairman,**

8. Pakistan remains committed to peacekeeping operations, not just as a contributor of troops but also as a host of one of the oldest peacekeeping operations in the form of United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP). UNMOGIP continues to serve the vital purpose as means of peacekeeping and potentially of peace-building. As the diplomatic climate in South Asia improves we feel that UNMOGIP can play a vital role in promoting confidence building in the region. As in the case of other missions, the time is ripe to substantially strengthen UNMOGIP in order to enable it to assist in the on-going peace process as well as the protection of human rights in Kashmir. This is an historic opportunity which the United Nations must not miss.

**Mr. Chairman,**

9. Pakistan's commitment to peacekeeping is undiminished and unwavering. At present, Pakistan is the largest contributor of troops to UN peacekeeping operations. Historically, also it has remained one of the oldest, largest, and most consistent participants in UN peacekeeping operations. We have participated in 28 peacekeeping operations and to date 66 of our soldiers have made the ultimate sacrifice. When we speak in this Committee, we speak from the perspective of a major stakeholder with considerable experience, and therefore also a vested interest, in UN peacekeeping operations in all parts of the globe. Indeed, along with others, we have played a significant part in forging UN peacekeeping as an instrument of international peace. We want to see it serve, and serve better, the collective purposes of the United Nations and of the peoples whom we represent here.

**I thank you, Mr. Chairman.**