

**Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of
Pakistan to the United Nations, in the General Debate of the Special
Political and Decolonization (4th) Committee on Comprehensive review
of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects
(Agenda Item 33) (20 October 2006)**

Mr. Chairman,

The Pakistan delegation is grateful to Under-Secretary-General, Jean-Marie Guehenno, for his detailed briefing yesterday and for his excellent stewardship of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

2. Pakistan fully aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

3. The Nobel Committee when awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to the UN in 2001 proclaimed that the only negotiable route to global peace and cooperation goes by way of the United Nations. As Mr. Guehenno has stated, peacekeeping is now a core and flagship activity of the UN. It is an indispensable and powerful tool for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has positively impacted on the lives of the millions of people around the globe. Thus, the continuing surge in demand for UN peacekeeping is a vote of confidence, trust and faith in the UN.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The nature and scope of UN peacekeeping has evolved progressively over the past 5 decades. This transformation has been fundamental in recent years. Along with traditional peacekeeping operations, multidimensional missions are being deployed increasingly, especially in complex crises which have inter-linked security, military, political, economic, social and

humanitarian dimensions. These integrated operations have diverse mandates, robust rules of engagement and large military, police and civilian components.

5. Complex missions pose complex challenges. Foremost among the challenges is the growing requirement for professional and well-equipped peacekeepers. No less formidable are the challenges of better and effective management, organization, planning, deployment and logistics, and design and execution of mandates and exit strategies. As rightly noted by Mr. Guehenno, a strategic vision and approach is required to address these challenges. We look forward to continued discussions on these issues in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations bearing in mind the past recommendations of the Committee and further detailed proposals to be submitted by the Secretary General.

6. I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to offer a few remarks on what we consider to be critical issues.

Mr. Chairman,

7. In Pakistan's view, effectively addressing the challenges and evolution in UN peacekeeping requires action on four fronts:

One, ensuring the political commitment of the member states to UN peacekeeping and specific operations;

Two, provision of adequate and timely resources, both human and material;

Three, continuing reform and modernization, both in the field and at UN headquarters; and

Four, a comprehensive approach to conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peace-building.

Mr. Chairman,

8. The relevance and significance of a UN role in conflict situations, even those which are the most difficult and politically sensitive, is evident. Quite often, the UN is the only credible interlocutor. It is therefore vital to strengthen the UN's capacity to play its role effectively. All member States, developing and developed, must extend sustained political support to this. Such support should be forthcoming in a non-selective and impartial manner. And we would stress that such support by member States should evoke non-discriminatory and equal treatment and cooperation from the Secretariat. In this regard, we fully support the views expressed by NAM.

9. As regards provision of resources, it must be recognized that UN peacekeeping is very cost-effective as compared to other options. This is clear and confirmed. Despite this, it is unfortunate that broad and difficult mandates of UN missions are often not backed by the commensurate resources. The result is growing over-stretch, especially in field deployments. That our peacekeepers continue to perform admirably under these difficult circumstances is a tribute to their professionalism and devotion to duty. However, this over-stretch entails a heavy price. First, it adversely affects the missions' effectiveness, compromising its objectives and complicating exit strategies. Second, it jeopardizes safety and security of peacekeepers. The human cost has been borne mostly by the troop contributing countries whose sons and daughters have laid down their lives while performing duty in dangerous and volatile situations with inadequate means. We appreciate the efforts being made to improve safety and security. However, it should be noted that almost 40% of all casualties in missions resulting from hostile acts during the last 21 months occurred in one mission i.e. MONUC. Accountability should be established in the employment of peacekeepers in hazardous conditions. There is a need for review of specific operations to

guage their effectiveness in achieving objectives and to elicit the reasons for higher casualties. Moreover, lessons should be drawn for operational deployment and utilization of forces in hostile environments.

Mr. Chairman,

10. Evolution and reform go hand in hand. We therefore support reform efforts for better management of the full range of peacekeeping activities both in the field and at headquarters. This exercise should involve all relevant actors and partners, particularly the troop contributing countries, while also utilizing the complementary role of regional arrangements, especially the African Union. We believe that all substantive issues should be accorded equal priority. Separate fast and slow tracks should be avoided. We should evolve specific benchmarks to evaluate progress on reform proposals. It is also high time to address, in the context of reform, the long-standing problem of lack of representation of the leading TCCs at the senior leadership levels in the field and the headquarters.

11. Considerable headway has been made in promoting comprehensive approaches, especially through the integrated missions. The Peace-building Commission is the embodiment of this holistic approach. It is now operational and held its first country specific meetings last week. We hope the Commission will synergize the system-wide efforts for durable peace and development in war torn countries and also provide useful insights into planning and execution of sound, effective and risk free exit strategies for peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Chairman,

12. We believe the primary focus of the efforts of the UN and the international community should continue to be on conflict prevention and pacific settlement of disputes. In complex crises,

this requires addressing underlying causes of conflict, including poverty and underdevelopment; political, social and economic exclusion; ethnic and tribal rivalries; inequitable power sharing, illegal exploitation of natural resources, weapons proliferation and use of mercenaries. We should consider how the UN, including through its peacekeeping capacity, the PBC and other mechanisms, can play a more active role in conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

Mr. Chairman,

13. While addressing the challenges of complex missions in intra-state situations, we must not overlook the challenges facing UN peacekeeping in its traditional role in the inter-state conflicts.

14. The vital importance of enhanced rapidly deployable capacities, with the increased need for readily available reserves for quick deployment, was acutely felt recently when one of the missions i.e. UNIFIL, had to be strengthened on an urgent basis. In the absence of such a reserve, the most reliable means remains rapid force generation by the DPKO from the TCCs.

Mr. Chairman,

15. We are ready to discuss the proposal on a civilian peacekeeping cadre in all its aspects. The central aim should be to equip the UN with adequate capacity for various aspects of peacekeeping operations, rather than the emphasis on whether the personnel are civilian or military. It would also be vital to ensure equitable geographical representation within such a cadre, especially to ensure adequate linkage with the field operations and personnel.

16. With regard to the implementation of zero tolerance policy on SEA, further discussions are scheduled later this year. We shall work with other delegations for agreement on the required

standards, policies and strategies which should be uniformly applicable to all.

Mr. Chairman,

17. The basic principles of peacekeeping are well acknowledged i.e. consent of the parties; impartiality; and non-use of force except in self-defence. In practice, these principles are not always applied. The UN appears to be venturing into a new kind of peacekeeping where deployments are envisaged without the support of national governments. This could be dangerous. It could erode the universal support for UN peacekeepers. In our view, this issue together with the concept of a robust mandate; the use of force; and the use and deployment of peacekeepers are issues that need to be discussed in more detail by the Special Committee. It would also be useful to have this discussion in the context of the triangular cooperation between the Security Council, the TCCs and the Secretariat, as well as the Security Council's Working Group on Peacekeeping.

Mr. Chairman,

18. Pakistan's commitment, role and contributions to UN peacekeeping are too well known to require repetition. During 2003 to 2005, Pakistan was the top troop and police contributor. As of 30 September 2006, Pakistan was again the largest contributor with 9769 personnel deployed in 11 UN operations of which 7 are in Africa, with major participation in the DRC, Liberia, Sudan and Cote d'Ivoire. Ninety-two Pakistani peacekeepers have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of the UN. We remain fully committed to assuring the effectiveness and success of this vital and unique role of the United Nations. Our comments today are designed to support and strengthen this role.

Thank you.