

Statement by H.E. Mr. Khurshid M. Kasuri, Foreign Minister of Pakistan for the Security Council meeting on UN Peacekeeping Operations - 17th May, 2004

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen!

First, I would like to thank the distinguished Secretary-General for his introductory statement which has set the tone for this important debate. The Charter of the United Nations describes its central purpose: *“to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.”* Although the concept of collective security, as originally envisioned, did not prove to be feasible, especially in the midst of the Cold War, UN peacekeeping has emerged, over time, as the most visible and effective instrument for preventing and containing conflicts and building the foundations of peace.

2. Since 1948, the United Nations has deployed 57 peacekeeping missions – many in difficult war zones. While UN peacekeeping has had some well-advertised failures, its many successes deserve greater public acclaim.

3. In 1988, the Nobel Peace Prize was presented to United Nations Peacekeeping Forces for their unique role in *“making the ideas which were the very reason for the establishment of the United Nations a reality.”* Accepting the Nobel Prize, Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar stated: *“The essence of peacekeeping is the use of soldiers as a catalyst for peace rather than as the instruments of war.... Their strength is that, representing the will of the international community, they provide an honorable alternative to war and a useful pretext for peace.”*

4. Peacekeeping, traditionally, consisted of the insertion of a military force to separate warring parties and to create the necessary political space for peace to take root. Peacekeeping was most often restricted to monitoring ceasefires. Even today, seven of the fourteen current UN peacekeeping missions involve these “traditional” tasks. However, more recently, UN peacekeepers are being deployed in complex conflict situations which require a multi-dimensional approach encompassing military, political, humanitarian, social and economic actions.

5. The current United Nations peacekeeping expenditure on its fourteen missions, involving 51,000 troops and over 3,000 police personnel, stands at \$2.82 billion. This may rise further once the three or four new peacekeeping missions are deployed. Although peacekeeping is an expensive undertaking, it is far cheaper than its alternative – war. Hostile military operations can entail immensely larger costs – including economic, social and human costs – as we are witnessing today. The cost of civil wars alone has been estimated at \$128 billion a year. Peacekeeping remains the most cost-effective way of maintaining peace, preventing conflict, and facilitating the transition from war to peace.

6. Pakistan is proud to be one of the oldest, largest and most consistent contributors of United Nations peacekeeping. Since 1960, Pakistani peacekeepers have served in 28 out of 57 UN missions. Presently, over 7,500 Pakistani troops are serving in eight peacekeeping missions. Sixty-six Pakistani peacekeepers have paid the ultimate price while serving under the flag of the United Nations.

7. Pakistani soldiers have served in some of the most difficult and dangerous United Nations peacekeeping operations. They have acquitted themselves commendably, with honour and professionalism.

- Our participation in the United Nations Security Force (UNSF) in West Irian, from 1960 to 1964, was instrumental in preventing war between Indonesia and Portugal.
- The decisive action of our peacekeepers with the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) helped the consolidation of peace in that country.
- In Bosnia, Pakistani troops defended the “UN safe area” of Tuzla and its ethnically mixed civilian population against repeated onslaughts of ethnic-cleansing militias.
- In Sierra Leone, an unsteady UN presence was transformed into a major UN success story, in large measure as a result of the participation of the Pakistani peacekeepers whose actions apart from stabilizing the situation, included the

construction of roads, playgrounds and the renovation of schools, hospitals and places of worship.

- In neighbouring Liberia, Pakistani troops, deployed in Lofa County, are also providing humanitarian and medical assistance to 20,000 people. Their approach was explained simply by one of our foot soldiers: *“We cannot be eating while the vast majority of the population are hungry.”*
- In the Ituri district of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Pakistani troops are providing security to thousands of civilians exposed to brutal ethnic violence.

8. Three years ago, speaking in Islamabad of our peacekeepers, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said: *“your soldiers have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of world peace, and the United Nations. I salute this record of global idealism because I believe it reflects a determination among the Pakistani people to serve the world.”*

9. Pakistan has a vital stake in the success of UN peacekeeping operations. The UN’s success will be our success. The following are essential for success:

One, UN peacekeeping operations should be well conceived and well executed. Their mandates should be clear, realistic and achievable, and conducted with the full support of the international community;

Two, they should have well-trained, well-equipped and disciplined peacekeepers. Pakistan’s considerable experience as peacekeepers in different parts of the world has given us a certain expertise in peacekeeping which we are willing to share with others;

Three, UN peacekeepers must be provided with full financial, administrative and logistical support;

Four, they must have accurate and timely field intelligence and, where necessary, robust rules of engagement;

Five, they should address the root causes of conflict so as to ensure durable peace and stability, and prepare the ground for post-conflict reconciliation, reconstruction and development;

Six, once deployed, UN peacekeepers must complete their tasks.

10. This debate has crystallized the challenges the UN is facing due to the unprecedented surge in demand for peacekeeping – four new complex missions – in Cote d'Ivoire, Burundi, Haiti and possibly the Sudan – will have to be deployed over the next few weeks and months. These will need the commitment of additional human financial, administrative and logistic resources by the international community. Several new suggestions have been advanced in this debate including by the Secretary-General. I am confident that the Presidential Statement, which the Council will adopt shall reflect these ideas and suggestions.

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11. Pakistan is not only one of the major contributors to UN peacekeeping; we also host one of the oldest UN peacekeeping missions. The United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan is responsible for monitoring the ceasefire along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir. It continues to make a substantive contribution to the preservation of peace in Kashmir. In the Islamabad Declaration of 6th January 2004, Pakistan and India agreed to resolve all disputes between them, including Jammu & Kashmir, through a peace process to the satisfaction of both the sides. It is obvious that in order for there to be durable peace, the solution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute should be in consonance with the aspirations of the people of Kashmir. UNMOGIP can help in promoting a just and peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

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Ladies and Gentlemen

12. Apart from reviewing the status of UN peacekeeping to improve its performance, this special event is designed to pay high tribute to all the men and women who have served or continue to serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations. This debate honours their professionalism, dedication and courage and the

memory of those who lost their lives in the service of the United Nations and the noble cause of peace.