

**Statement by Ambassador Dr. Maleeha Lodhi, Permanent
Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, at the
Security Council Open Debate on “Peacekeeping Operations
Facing Asymmetrical Threats”
(7 November 2016)**

Mr. President

Thank you for organizing today's Open Debate on “Asymmetrical threats to peacekeeping operations.” We also thank Foreign Minister Mankeur Ndiaye, and Deputy Secretary General Jan Eliasson and the other briefers for their insights.

Mr. President

The current peacekeeping environment has become increasingly complex and challenging. UN Peacekeepers are now deployed in areas where there is no peace to keep. Targeted and asymmetric hostile acts against UN personnel are amongst the most imposing threats faced by several peacekeeping missions.

UN peacekeepers are expected to play a role for which they have traditionally not been mandated much less equipped. It is then unfair to blame them when they fall short of these expectations. Missions such as MINUSMA have experienced many casualties in the recent years, which expose the risks traditional peacekeeping faces when mixed with peace enforcement.

When we talk about dealing with asymmetric threats to Peacekeeping Operations, we must be clear that we cannot erode the basic character of UN peacekeeping by undertaking counter terrorism activities. We must be guided by the wise recommendation of the HIPPO report that UN missions should not be mandated to conduct military counterterrorism operations, as they are not suited to do so.

On the other hand, the United Nations cannot turn away from conflict areas where peace is so gravely threatened, indeed shattered, by actors that recognize no restraints in their brutal tactics against civilians and peacekeepers. But then the mandate

needs to be clearly distinguished between peace enforcement and peace keeping.

Mr. President

The evolving nature of conflicts has led to redesigning of UN peacekeeping mandates beyond the traditional role of truce supervision. As the bulk of peacekeeping missions are now dealing with complex internal or intra-state crises, modern peacekeeping missions are being designed to address the political, security, humanitarian and development dimensions of complex crises, and often to ensure the implementation of comprehensive peace agreements.

The changing nature of threats is challenging the traditional role of Peacekeeping. The presence of rebel groups, flow of illicit weapons, planned/deliberate attacks against peacekeepers, suicide bombings and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) are some of the contemporary threats faced by peacekeeping.

This has also exposed gaps in technology and capabilities that need to be filled to maintain the level of excellence and confidence that UN peacekeepers have enjoyed for so long.

Mr. President

In view of these evolving challenges and asymmetrical threats facing UN peacekeepers, we would like to emphasize the following points:

- **One**, greater clarity is required on how UN peacekeeping operations should function in asymmetric threat environments.
- **Two**, asymmetric threats put peacekeepers in harms way as they are faced with situations beyond their capabilities and resources. Effective implementation of their mandate is only possible if there are matching resources.
- **Three**, our deployment decisions have to be based on consultation, preparation and knowledge of the ground situation. Triangular cooperation is critical for all three. As

principal stakeholders, TCCs must be fully consulted in a timely manner and their suggestions taken on board, whether it is to design mandates or test new ideas. A thorough review of the modalities of triangular cooperation is necessary to make the process effective.

- **Four**, this Council needs to be more circumspect while mandating enforcement tasks. Peacekeepers should neither become a party to the conflict nor be perceived by the local population and authorities to be a tool of external intervention. Increased militarization of some of the UN's "stabilization" missions could make them riskier rather than safer.
- **Five**, use of modern technology, consistent with the principles of peacekeeping, should enhance situational awareness and help in protection of civilians and safety of peacekeepers.
- **Six**, where mandated, our peacekeepers have and will continue to fulfill their responsibilities to protect civilians. Clearly defined mandates would make this task easier
- **Seven**, peacekeeping works best when there is peace to keep and a political process to sustain it.
- **And last, but not the least**, the basic principles of peacekeeping remain essential for the success of UN peacekeeping. These principles are indispensable for retaining the broad support, legitimacy and credibility that UN peacekeeping has come to enjoy over the years.

Mr. President

As a leading troop and police contributing country, Pakistan has contributed over 150,000 personnel and served in 41 Missions in 23 countries since 1960.

Our peacekeepers have worked in diverse and difficult conflict and post conflict situations, and have served with professionalism and distinction. 144 Pakistani peacekeepers have made the ultimate sacrifice in the cause of world peace.

Pakistan considers UN peacekeeping a flagship enterprise for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Blue Helmets are at the forefront in upholding the UN charter “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.”

They are a source of pride for the UN and indeed for all of us as TCCs. Those caught in the throes of conflict see them as guarantors of peace and the harbingers of stability. Their hands should be strengthened and their successes appreciated.

I thank you