

**UN Security Council**  
**Open Debate**  
**on**  
**Strengthening Peacekeeping Operations in Africa**

**Under the agenda item**  
**Peace and Security in Africa**

**Statement by**  
**Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin**  
**Permanent Representative**

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**Mr. President,**

Peacekeeping is a shared responsibility. On an average, new peacekeeping operations are in existence for at least a decade, if not more. Hence, all stakeholders need to learn to cooperate with each other in the spirit of partnership. Since nearly 50 percent of all UN Peacekeeping Operations have been conducted in Africa, we welcome this opportunity provided by you to share our views on this important issue.

**Mr. President,**

2. Africa has been transforming rapidly. The maturing of the African sub-regional and regional groupings, especially the African Union, as reflected in their undertaking peacekeeping initiatives around conflicts in Africa; the institutionalization of the coordination between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Committee; the emergence of

several African countries as major Troop Contributors; are all reflective of the changes underway.

3. Underpinning all these changes is the collective belief that the AU, the regional organisations and national governments in Africa, are best placed to provide solutions to the challenges facing their region. The AU's Agenda 2063, sets out the long-term collective vision of Africa for its future. We feel that it is the responsibility of the international community, and in our collective interest, to assist Africa in meeting their commonly agreed goals.

4. It is with this perspective, we would like to make suggestions for strengthening Peacekeeping Operations in Africa:

- i. **First**, Peacekeeping mandates are multi-dimensional. However, we need to resist the temptation of adding disproportionate mandate components, and aim at prioritization of mandates. This would help in judicious allocation of meagre resources available for implementing the mandates.
- ii. **Second**, Peacekeeping missions in Africa are operating in vast environments. Even as I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the peacekeepers from Tanzania and Malawi, who have paid the ultimate sacrifice last week while serving the peacekeeping in MONUSCO, may I draw your attention to what peacekeepers are facing while deployed in MONUSCO. To give an example, in one of the sensitive areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo - Central sector, which constitutes more than 500,000 sq.km. of a total area of 2.34 million sq.km. and more than 11 million people of a total population of 81.5 million, four battalions of UN peacekeeping operations, totaling 3000 odd troops, are responsible for the area of operations. This amounts to one soldier per 158 sq.km. If in such a scenario, we task the troops deployed to enforce protection of civilians, without even providing enabling air assets for rapid reinforcement operations, it is obvious that the size and scale of UN deployment are insufficient for the tasks

entrusted. The strategy of peacekeepers, needing to do more with less, is setting us all up for a tragedy.

- iii. **Third**, predictable and sustainable financing is a pre-requisite for all peacekeeping operations to succeed. We support the Secretary-General's recommendation that African Peacekeeping operations, authorized by the Security Council, should be considered for assessed contribution.
- iv. **Fourth**, we see that Troop Contributing Countries are working out arrangements of deployment with the most number of caveats when deploying in Africa. This results in unfair work distribution among various troops on the ground and thereby affecting the Missions' performance. It is time we do away with such practices.
- v. **Fifth**, Africa collectively contributes the largest number of personnel to UN peacekeeping operations. If we include non-UN peacekeeping operations, the numbers will be even larger. There is obviously much to share and learn with our African partners. It is time to look at how we, at the UN, can support this through mechanisms of soft coordination.

**Mr. President,**

5. India's partnership with Africa is based on building instruments of empowerment that would enable Africa to find solutions to its problems. We urge that the UN also look at longer-term efforts for expanding African capacities and enhancing collective cooperation. India is ready to walk along this path of political and diplomatic engagement of partnering African states and entities, in line with their own articulation of needs and requirements of a continent in the throes of change.

**Thank you, Mr. President.**

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