

**Statement by H. E. Masud Bin Momen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN, New York at the Debate on “United Nations Peacekeeping Operations” on Monday, 09 September 2019 at the Security Council Chamber**

Mr. President,

We congratulate Russia for taking over as the President of the UNSC for the month of September. We would like to thank you for convening this important Debate and inviting us for sharing our perspectives. We also thank Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix for his briefing on the current state of various reforms initiatives of the UN peacekeeping. We also like to join other delegations to condemn the recent terrorist attacks that killed many civilian people in Burkina Faso and express our deep condolence to the bereaved families and solidarity with the people and government of Burkina Faso.

Mr President,

For over seven decades, Peacekeeping has remained the UN’s flagship contribution to international peace, security, and conflict resolution. In our last three decades of association with this noble cause, we are proud of the service and sacrifices of our peacekeepers in the world’s most vulnerable places. We are committed to remain equally responsive to UN’s call for participating in future Peacekeeping missions.

Peacekeeping is a dynamic enterprise which has evolved over time in both policy and operational domains. Since 2017, there have been important changes in UN peacekeeping through structural reforms in the peace and security pillar of the UN as already briefed

by USG Lacroix. Essentially, the actors in the field have been bound to adapt to many resultant drivers of change to cope up with the shifting priorities and challenges. The concerned stakeholders, including the Security Council, troop and police contributing countries, the Secretariat, and the host nations have shown certain degrees of flexibility, adaptability and resilience to build meaningful partnerships across diverging views. In going forward, the concepts of review and reforms must hinge upon this notion of meaningful cooperation and partnership. We must utilize various institutional mechanisms within the UN system for informed dialogues among all stakeholders to steer the reform initiatives forward in a coherent and sustainable manner. We feel these dialogues must be strengthened and should take place at regular intervals.

Mr President,

We support the implementation efforts of the Secretary General's Action for Peacekeeping agenda (A4P). We appreciate Secretariat's efforts to come up with a gap analysis and stress the need for in-depth and focused conversations involving all stakeholders on the proposed way forward for narrowing the gaps. We also appreciate the circulation of a leaflet this morning summarizing the progress and achievements made in UNSG's 'Action for Peacekeeping' initiatives so far. We are happy to note that in some missions this initiative resulted in advancing lasting political solutions and facilitating transition. There have been mentionable achievements in the areas of women, peace and security, performance, safety and security of peacekeepers, and improving peacekeeping partnerships.

Bangladesh also appreciates the initiatives taken to strengthening the conduct of peacekeeping personnel. In this connection, let me reiterate the commitment of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's policy of 'zero tolerance' against any kind

of sexual exploitation, harassment and abuse in peacekeeping operations. In line with this policy, Bangladesh takes any issue of sexual harassment very seriously and has been continuously keeping this in all pre-deployment trainings for peacekeepers.

We have already expressed our interests to champion in some of the areas including Protection of Civilians, WPS, and reducing environmental impacts of peacekeeping operations in the field. We have also contributed our part to build consensus around aligning C-34 report structure with the A4P priority areas.

Mr President,

On the Protection of Civilian front, our peacekeepers have achieved great reputation in some of the most challenging situations. In MINUSMA, for example, the engagement of our peacekeepers with the community are very deep and friendly. They are supporting political processes, protecting human rights, facilitating humanitarian assistance, providing medical care, and raising awareness about health and hygiene. Where hopes and aspirations are on the brink, these noble initiatives, no doubt, have far-fetched impacts on winning hearts and minds of the people. On reducing environmental footprint, we are co-chairing with Italy the Group of Friends for leading on environmental management in the field. We reckon that the good practices in limiting environmental footprints by the peacekeepers would also contribute to enhancing their image as responsible and sensitive actors in the communities they serve.

Mr President,

Despite our sincere efforts, safety and security of peacekeepers in the field remain a great concern. According to DPO's count, since January 2013, total fatalities by violent act were 236. We express our deep condolences to the families of those heroes who lost their lives away from their countries for a noble cause.

While we need to examine the direct causes for such fatalities, we believe, there needs to be improvements on a range of issues from rapid deployment to unimpeded access of troops, from furthering our efforts to ensure physical security to human intelligence gathering, and from pre-deployment training on safety measures to adequate medical support after injuries. We must also be able to combat the emerging medical challenges in peacekeeping Missions including myocardial infarction (MI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

In this regard, we would like to once again request the members of the Council to explore the need for a comprehensive resolution on ensuring safety and security of peacekeepers.

Mr President,

We cannot overemphasize the primacy of politics for the success of peacekeeping operations—from mandate setting to exit. If the political process falters, the vulnerability increases both for civilians and peacekeepers. We must, therefore, have an objective assessment of conditions for sustaining peace on the ground to determine the priorities and sequences of the mandate. In this context, we cannot but reiterate the seminal importance of meaningful triangular cooperation and consultations among Council, T/PCCs and Secretariat.

In this connection, also comes the interlinkages between mandate and performance. Our peacekeepers are generally keen to facilitating effective mandate delivery. But as one of the major T/PCCs, we also expect that the Council and other stakeholders would be sufficiently responsive to the voices and concerns coming from the field. We support the notion of increased accountability of all peacekeeping actors as espoused in comprehensive performance assessment system (CPAS). However, we would like to stress that performance cannot be seen in isolation. Rather, it may be seen in close relations with needs-based, predictable resources and critical enablers specific to each peacekeeping mission.

(Before I conclude, I would also like to emphasise that the budget question would remain crucial for the success of peacekeeping reforms. Doing more with less is an unsustainable prescription in potentially dangerous operational situations. There must be structured consultations among the Council, T/PCCs and Secretariat to rationalize widening gaps between expectations and resources.)

I thank you.