



STATEMENT

by

H. E. Michal Mlynár

**Permanent Representative of Slovakia
to the United Nations**

**Open debate of the Security Council
on
Collective Action to Improve UN Peacekeeping Operations**

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New York**

As delivered

Madam President,

I would like to thank you for organizing this open debate exploring ways to help configure UN peacekeeping to better meet today's and tomorrow's challenges at a time when the demand for the Organization's services is at an all-time high.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the European Union as well as with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Italy on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Responsibility to Protect.

Madam President,

Last year, we witnessed an unprecedented number of peacekeepers' fatalities. I would like use this opportunity to pay tribute to every man and woman for their sacrifice in the service of peace. It is imperative that we minimize the risk of deliberate attacks on UN missions or personnel, including through better early warning, intelligence and detection capabilities, and improved situational awareness and risk mitigation mechanisms. In line with the conclusions of General Dos Santos Cruz report as well as the deliberations of this year's Special Committee (C-34), we need to revisit the ways and means of ensuring safety and security of our peacekeepers, making sure that the missions are sufficiently resourced and the personnel has all the necessary training and equipment to fulfil their mandates. In this regard, we welcome the report on Improving Security of UN Peacekeepers of December 2017 and urge the Secretariat to implement its recommendations in cooperation with TCCs/PCCs and the Security Council.

Slovakia has been an active troop and police contributing country since its admission to the UN 25 years ago having served in a total of 19 UN missions, contributing overall with more than 7 300 men and women. Slovakia has also participated in military and civilian missions of the European Union, which is present together with the UN in many conflict situations to help maintain peace and security. I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our continued strong commitment and active involvement in the UN peacekeeping endeavours in the future.

Currently, the highest number of our military and police personnel is deployed in the UN peacekeeping mission in Cyprus (UNFICYP). I would also like to reiterate my government's full support to the ongoing political process aimed at the reunification of Cyprus. Slovakia is also present in the UN missions on the Golan Heights and in Haiti, albeit in considerably smaller numbers. And we will certainly remain engaged also in the long-run.

As a TCC/PCC country, Slovakia has subscribed to many important initiatives as a practical matter, but mostly as a matter of principle, such as the Kigali principles, Vancouver principles and the voluntary compact to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse in the peacekeeping operations.

Madam. President,

I would like to highlight a few aspects that I believe are especially relevant in the context of today's open debate.

First: In our opinion, the issues associated with the supply side of the peacekeeping operations remain at the center of our concerns. As a matter of priority, we must continue to address the difficulties in getting enough troops, the right equipment and adequate logistical support.

Second: The efforts to improve the effectiveness of the peacekeeping operations should be read in conjunction with the other reform strands as well as the peacebuilding and sustaining peace agenda. The Peace and Security Pillar reform must lead to more substantive delivery and the management reform to better service delivery with much less fragmentation. One of the overarching goals of the reform and restructuring of the UN's Peace and Security pillar should be to prioritize prevention and sustaining peace.

Third: A number of missions struggle to operate amidst broken or challenging peace processes and in asymmetric threat environments. In this respect, we welcome the initiative of the Secretary-General to review the limitations of the traditional PKOs, including his Action for Peacekeeping, which he announced today.

Fourth: As has been said many times before, peacekeeping is a unique tool, but the pursuit of political solutions is key and the mandates of PKOs must evolve consistently with the context and needs of the ground.

Madam President,

Reviews of peacekeeping mandates must take into account the existence of exit strategies that seek to help lay the foundations for long-term and sustainable peace. Member States increasingly view Security Sector Reform, as embedded in UNSC resolution 2151 (2014), as an important priority for peacekeeping, including for timely conclusion of peacekeeping missions. Building more inclusive security and justice institutions also lies at the heart of the 2030 Agenda, in particular SDG 16. I wish to use this opportunity to inform you, that South Africa and Slovakia, as co-chairs of the UN Group of Friends of SSR, will organize a high-level Roundtable on SSR and Sustaining Peace on 23 April 2018 with the aim to better situate

the SSR within the broader agenda of sustaining peace, and in particular, the UN General Assembly High-level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace taking place on 24-25 April 2018.

Madam President,

Peacekeeping remains one of the most critical areas of UN activities, where the Organization is most visible and so may potentially be the disappointment over its action or non-action. My delegation looks forward to working closely with other Member States as we determine how best to strengthen this essential instrument for global peace and stability. In the light of the increasing scale and ever more sophisticated nature of conflicts, the urgency to act is more prominent than ever.

I thank you, Madam President.