



PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Statement

by

H. E. Mr. Michal Mlynár

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

at the

Security Council Open Debate

**United Nations peacekeeping operations: improving
safety and security of peacekeepers**

**24 May 2021
New York**

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Mr. President,

Slovakia welcomes this open debate on improving safety and security of peacekeepers.

For more than 70 years, United Nations peacekeeping operations, as an effective means for maintaining international peace and security, have played an important role in the political settlement of conflicts.

The safety and security of those who pursue their own lives to protect the peace, human rights, and the lives of civilians is our ultimate responsibility, thus more action and concrete and practical steps are required for ensuring their safety.

On April this year during the United Nations Security Council working group session on the occasion of the implementation of resolution 2518 (2020), we have named and specified concrete needs to improve the safety and security of peacekeepers.

Current safety and security risks that members of peacekeeping operations often face include insufficient pre-deployment training, scarce material and technological support and hidden caveats that still pose an unpredictable risk to the military and police components of peacekeeping operations.

Slovakia lauds improvements that have been made, especially in the establishment of assessment of troop's readiness and force generation, yet more than 3 years after the publication of General Santos Cruz's report, we are still struggling with pre-deployment training to conduct peacekeeping operations, caveats, and insufficient capacity for operations led primarily by peacekeeping-intelligence.

Mr. President,

Over the past two decades, the scope and intensity of conflicts have changed dramatically, peacekeeping operations have faced increasing challenges, and traditional and non-traditional security factors have posed serious threats to the safety and security of peacekeepers.

Effective preparation for peacekeeping operations must begin with preparation for defense of one's own state. Furthermore, situational awareness is crucial in the field of peacekeeping operations that are often in environments characterized by volatility, significant security risks and present hostility. Maintaining of situational awareness requires "feeling of the pulse" on local communities that can have significant impact of whole of peacekeeping process.

Implementation of A4P + priorities, such as accountability of peacekeepers, generation of right capabilities and mindsets, operational evaluation with regular involvement of troop contributing countries (TCC) and police contributing countries (PCC) have the potential to further increase operationalization and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations.

The United Nations conducts peacekeeping operations in the 21st century and therefore they need to be supported by 21st century worthy technologies and face conflict with a precautionary approach before offenders of peace threaten their lives.

Mr. President

Slovakia strongly supports an equal and full participation of women in all efforts to create and maintain international peace and security and calls for the full implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions that address this issue. Slovakia has been active troop and police contributing country since its admission to the UN. Currently we have our peacekeepers deployed in UNFICYP and UNTSO missions and have participated in military and civilian missions of the EU, NATO and OSCE. I would like to highlight that members of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic in Cyprus, our biggest presence in UN missions, where we are deployed for 20 years and since 2018 also as the single TCC in Sector 4, has already exceeded the targets set in the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028.

Furthermore, for many years already, Slovakia has identified Security Sector Reform (SSR) to be one of the key elements for effective conflict prevention and successful post-conflict rebuilding and stabilization. The direct experience from many peacekeeping missions clearly shows that a nationally-led and inclusive SSR process can progressively deal with the root causes of insecurity and fragility and create an enabling environment for sustainable development and peace to take place. In addition, SSR is directly linked to the protection of civilians and the rule of law – two critical tasks that have become an integral part of almost every peacekeeping operation.

I thank you.