

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**REMARKS AND CHAIR NOTES TO
HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON
PEACEKEEPING**

New York, 25 September 2018, 15:00

I call to order the High-Level Meeting on Action for Peacekeeping.

Distinguished Heads of State and Government, Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to this meeting and to thank you for your presence and participation today. I am very pleased that so many of you have been able to join us for this high-level event, and I look forward to hearing your views on the crucial issue we have gathered to examine together.

Please join me now in watching a brief video entitled “Showcasing achievements and addressing peacekeeping challenges”.

SECRETARY-GENERAL’S REMARKS

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to this high-level meeting on Action for Peacekeeping, marking the 70th anniversary of United Nations peace operations.

I will be brief, and I encourage all speakers to follow my example, so that we can hear from as many people as possible.

Last year, I visited Bangassou in the Central African Republic and laid a wreath in memory of the Moroccan and Cambodian peacekeepers who were killed there. It was a humbling experience.

I feel a personal responsibility for the loss of every peacekeeper.

Many of you here today have taken part in similar ceremonies. You understand the pain of every loss.

Let us now stand and observe a moment of silence for the fallen.

Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs,

Quand j'ai pris mes fonctions l'an dernier, je me suis trouvé face à un nombre tragiquement élevé de morts dans nos opérations de maintien de la paix. J'ai donc immédiatement commandité le Rapport Cruz pour améliorer la sécurité et la sûreté des Casques bleus.

En mars de cette année, j'ai lancé l'initiative « Action pour le maintien de la paix », qui inscrit les recommandations du rapport Cruz dans un cadre plus large.

Les Casques bleus doivent faire face à des conflits plus complexes : adversaires multiples, blocage des processus politiques, terrorisme et criminalité organisée transnationale.

Mais j'ai compris qu'ils faisaient aussi face à un défi plus fondamental : le fossé entre les aspirations et la réalité.

Les attentes envers le maintien de la paix ont largement dépassé ses ressources.

L'Action pour le maintien de la paix vise à combler ce fossé selon trois axes : tout d'abord, en recentrant le maintien de la paix autour d'attentes plus réalistes ; ensuite, en rendant nos missions

plus fortes et plus sûres ; enfin, en mobilisant un plus grand soutien pour des solutions politiques et pour améliorer la formation et l'équipement de nos forces.

Je suis très heureux que 145 gouvernements, y compris ceux de nombreux Etats-hôtes de nos opérations, passés et présents, ainsi que quatre organisations internationales et régionales aient souscrit à la Déclaration d'engagements communs concernant les opérations de maintien de la paix des Nations Unies. J'exhorte tous ceux qui n'ont pas encore adhéré à le faire.

Nous travaillons déjà à faire de l'Action pour le maintien de la paix une réalité.

Nous avons mené des revues indépendantes de nos missions afin de déterminer comment nous pouvons mieux mettre en œuvre nos mandats.

Nos missions projettent une posture plus proactive. Elles améliorent leur sécurité et leur commandement, la responsabilité y est renforcée, et les lacunes de performance sont traitées.

Nous promouvons des approches novatrices sur la formation et l'équipement, y compris à travers les partenariats triangulaires et les déploiements conjoints.

Nous commençons à voir des résultats encourageants, mais nous devons rester vigilants dans un contexte où les risques restent élevés.

Nous sommes également activement engagés pour renforcer le rôle des femmes dans le maintien de la paix. Plus de femmes dans le maintien de la paix, c'est un maintien de la paix plus efficace.

Et nous avons accéléré notre réponse aux allégations d'exploitation et d'abus sexuels. Nous fournissons un soutien accru aux victimes, et nous sommes plus efficaces dans la recherche de la justice.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Peacekeeping's achievements go far beyond keeping the peace. Blue helmets are protecting millions of displaced people and supporting the delivery of life-saving humanitarian aid.

I have seen this for myself, on my visits to Mali, the Central African Republic, and in Uganda where I met refugees from South Sudan. I spoke to people who owed their lives to United Nations peacekeepers.

In my former position as High Commissioner for Refugees, I saw the reassurance UN peacekeepers provide.

Their presence sends a powerful message of international solidarity with the most vulnerable.

Action for Peacekeeping aims to strengthen the two core aspirations of our peace operations.

First, we must all do more to push for political solutions. Peacekeepers are deployed to create the conditions for their own departure; that is why the relationship between a peacekeeping mission and its host country is vital.

Over the past 70 years, UN peacekeepers have successfully completed their missions and left countries including Timor Leste, Cambodia, Angola, Croatia and Sierra Leone.

Our missions in Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia closed recently. I am pleased to see His Excellency President Weah and His Excellency Vice-President Daniel Kablan Duncan here today.

Second, protecting civilians is an essential duty for UN peacekeepers. We can never forget the tragic consequences of our failures.

My predecessor Kofi Annan, a former chief of Peacekeeping Operations, faced up to these failures, especially in Rwanda and Srebrenica, and dedicated himself as Secretary-General to making sure they could never happen again. I intend to take up the torch.

I thank His Excellency President Kagame – together with the Netherlands, and many of you – for championing the effective implementation of protection of civilians mandates.

Partnerships with regional and subregional organizations are instrumental to achieve our political and operational objectives. And when there is a need to engage in counter-terrorism or peace enforcement, African peace operations, including those mandated by the African Union, are playing a critical role.

I call on you to support these operations, including through predictable, adequate and sustainable financing.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Seventy years after the first United Nations peacekeepers were deployed, let us work together to make peacekeeping missions fit for the future.

I thank you all for your support to United Nations peacekeeping: as contributors of troops, police and funding; as managers of peacekeeping mandates; and as governments hosting peacekeeping missions.

All of us in the peacekeeping community have an important part to play.

The Declaration provides a clear agenda for us to achieve that together.

We must now translate our commitments into action.

Thank you.
