Seoul Initiative on Technology and Medical Capacity Building in Peacekeeping

Seoul, 7 December 2021

United Nations peacekeeping is an essential tool for maintaining international peace and security, and the safety and security of peacekeepers is a core element of their capacity to effectively implement the Security Council mandates.

The operating environments in which UN peacekeeping missions are deployed are increasingly complex, constantly shifting, and sometimes high-risk, requiring a commitment to leveraging the necessary technological tools to strengthen performance and improve safety and security of the peacekeepers, and to providing timely and quality medical care and casualty evacuations (CASEVAC) to peacekeeping missions. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of technology and medical capacity to UN peacekeeping.

The Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative and its follow-up Action for Peacekeeping plus (A4P+) have recognized the importance of continuing efforts on technology and medical capacity building of peacekeeping operations to improve the safety and security of peacekeepers and support their effective performance, including the implementation of their protection mandates.

The UN secretariat's recent Strategy for the Digital Transformation of UN Peacekeeping sets out specific recommendations and actions to integrate digital technology to better deliver the peacekeeping mandates and address new threats posed by evolving technology.

The Partnership for Technology in Peacekeeping initiative has made meaningful contributions in aligning the technological and innovative capacities with the specific needs of the field missions. A series of on-going initiatives under the partnerships between the Member States and the Secretariat, including the United Nations Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) Academy, Open Geospatial Information System (GIS) Initiative, and the projects such as UNITE Aware platform and Situational Awareness and Geospatial Enterprise (SAGE) database are useful examples of applying technology to enhance the capacity of peacekeeping operations.

The Republic of Korea (ROK), in close cooperation with the UN, intends to take an active leading role in supporting the advancement towards an "agile, data driven and, technology-enabled" peacekeeping. The ROK funded the development of the Strategy for the Digital Transformation of UN Peacekeeping and will continue to work closely with the UN to support its implementation. During the Seoul Ministerial, the ROK will hold a Smart Camp Model exhibition for the UN PKO, and is planning to launch a pilot project to apply some Smart Camp technologies on PKO missions.

On medical capacity building, the UN Department of Operational Support (DOS) and its Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety and Health (DHMOSH) have been strengthening peacekeeping medical capabilities by ensuring better medical planning of peacekeeping missions, enhancing medical training of peacekeepers, and better equipping peacekeeping missions with the appropriate medical supplies.

The ROK is committed to working with the UN to improve the medical capacity of peacekeeping missions and to provide better medical care and casualty evacuation system. The ROK is partnering with the UN DOS/DHMOSH to contribute more substantial medical support for peacekeeping. It is also working with the African Union in scaling up medical training for peace operations in Africa.

In partnership with the UN, the ROK has identified several priority areas to maximize the potential of current and new technologies, including those in the Strategy for the Digital Transformation, and enhance the medical capacity of peacekeeping missions. We invite and encourage the UN Member States to provide contributions in the following areas:

<u>Technology</u>

1. Support innovation of UN camps to make them smarter, including in the areas of safety, infrastructure management, information and communications, healthcare, transportation management, and resource monitoring, and more environmentally friendly, including by providing expertise and financial support for necessary technologies and equipment and supporting a pilot project to test-drive UN Smart Camp technologies in the field.

2. Provide training to understand and use new technologies and to maximize the use of available and affordable technologies in the field, in the areas of improving situational awareness and early warning; responding to misinformation and disinformation in

conflict settings; enhancing specific cyber threat intelligence and cybersecurity preparedness; ensuring the responsible use of technologies and data including data privacy and ethics; and advancing analytics capabilities.

3. Deploy expertise in the areas of cybersecurity; situational awareness, GIS, and ISR; data analysis; counter-IED technologies; addressing misinformation and disinformation; and camp protection and security.

4. Commit to partnerships with other Member States to improve pre-deployment and in-mission training in technology and data and overcome existing capability gaps in expertise and equipment.

Medical Capacity Building

5. Support the UN's efforts to improve medical support planning of peacekeeping missions.

6. Improve the medical capacity of UN peacekeeping missions by providing financing, training, technology, and specialist care.

7. Support ongoing efforts to provide timely CASEVAC and to enhance capabilities of the rescue chain for all peacekeeping operations, such as conducting trainings, exercises and stress-tests in the high-risk missions and providing necessary resources, including smart technologies and a casualty tracking system.

8. Strengthen medical support and ensure the well-being of peacekeepers, including by supporting the development and implementation of a system-wide mental health and well-being strategies for both uniformed and civilian personnel.

9. Actively explore possibilities to support the UN using technology, such as telehealth, electronic medical record systems, and public health surveillance systems, as a means of enabling the early detection of health risks and providing rapid and quality medical care for peacekeepers, with due consideration for data protection and privacy rights.   /End/