

**Remarks of Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix**  
**Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations**  
**Fifth Committee**  
**11 May 2017**

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

1. I am honoured to be here today to provide you with a short overview of the United Nations peacekeeping priorities for 2017/18 and the Department's efforts at reforming and revitalizing UN peacekeeping. At the outset, I would like to thank the Chairman of the Fifth Committee for agreeing that I could be here today. *[If the Chairman of ACABQ is present]* I would also to thank the Chairman of the ACABQ, Mr Carlos Ruiz Massieu. The Advisory Committee plays a crucial role in the management and oversight of peacekeeping operations, and we greatly value the guidance offered by the Committee's observations and recommendations.

2. Having just taken up my position as Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, this is my first opportunity to address the General Assembly. I felt it was important to be present today to express my gratitude to this body for its strong support of United Nations peacekeeping and to assure you of my commitment to work closely with you in your efforts.

3. This Committee has provided enormous support for the U.N.'s efforts to professionalize and modernize peacekeeping operations. You have recognized that United Nations peacekeeping is an investment in global peace, security, and prosperity; and remains one of the most effective tools available in helping war-torn countries reach political solutions and sustainable peace.

4. While substantial progress in mandate implementation has been made in some missions, many continue to operate in non-permissive environments or face challenging conditions due to the lack of progress in their respective

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political processes. The closing of the missions in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia and the transformation of the mission in Haiti into a smaller tailored operation are a significant reminder of the role that UN peacekeeping can play to address long-standing conflict and build peace.

5. My Department is mindful of the pressures that the current financial environment and the uncertainty of the global security landscape represent. We must rethink our approach and find new ways of planning, sourcing, conducting and transitioning UN peacekeeping operations to make them flexible, more effective and both responsive and accountable to the needs of the people they serve. This reality must, however, be balanced with the need to ensure that missions have the resources – human, financial and material – they need to deliver on their mandates. This is why we stepped up our efforts to improve strategic and operational planning processes, reinforce political and operational partnerships with regional and sub-regional organizations, strategically manage resource requirements, and improve performance and efficiency. Building on the successes of Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Haiti, we are redoubling our efforts to strengthen our operations in Mali, South Sudan, CAR and the DRC, to protect vulnerable civilians and facilitate peace and stability.

6. The Department has endeavoured to take a pragmatic, field-focused and performance-oriented approach to the management and reform of peacekeeping. Making this approach a reality has involved constant and close engagement with Member States, to build cross-regional consensus in support of a progressive vision of peacekeeping.

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7. All these efforts will be for naught, however, if the reputation of the United Nations continues to be stained by the shameful acts of a few. The Secretary-General's new strategy to combat Sexual Exploitation and Abuse as a system-wide malignancy presents an opportunity for all of us -- Secretariat and Member States -- to work in true partnership and turn a corner on this issue once and for all. The Secretary-General has made it abundantly clear that this is a top priority to which he is deeply committed. He has expressed in no uncertain terms his expectation that every single UN leader and UN staff member get personally engaged in our efforts to stamp out sexual exploitation and abuse from our ranks. I, from my part, will use all means at my disposal to support him and help further advance all the initiatives already underway. We need to change that reality and that narrative, and it can only be done through strong and sustained action. We must never forget that the ultimate goal is to safeguard those we are meant to protect, and we cannot tolerate any harm inflicted by individuals associated with the UN flag.

8. Finally, it is my hope that under the leadership of the Secretary-General, and with Member State support, the Organization will continue to push forward efforts to improve the peacekeeping tool -- one that has transformed the lives of countless men, women and children over the past six decades. As UN peacekeeping is a unique global partnership between Member States, the UN Secretariat, host countries and regional organizations, all its partners must play their part in making our operations more efficient and better able to support peace. As always, my Department stands ready to support you in whatever way possible in your consideration of the report.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates