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## **Ban calls for enhanced partnership with Southeast Asian bloc to promote peace, development**



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addresses the ASEAN-UN Summit in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam. UN Photo/Paulo Filgueiras

**10 October** - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today called for enhanced partnership between the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as the two bodies work together for peace, human rights and sustainable development across the region.

“You have a tremendous opportunity to position the ASEAN region for the 21st century. The United Nations is proud to be your partner, and we value your openness in furthering this partnership,” Mr. Ban told participants at the Fifth ASEAN-UN Summit, held in Brunei Darussalam.

He noted that the partnership between the two bodies is growing “broader and deeper,” and highlighted four areas where it can produce tangible results: regional connectivity; sustainable development; human rights; and peace and security.

ASEAN connectivity in the fields of transport, trade and cross-border movement, he noted, is critical for closer, more efficient relations and to spread prosperity and close development gaps within and among countries.

Mr. Ban said he was pleased that the UN regional commission known as ESCAP has helped ASEAN develop its Regional Connectivity Master Plan. “UN collaboration will continue as you work towards establishing the ASEAN Community in 2015. We also stand ready to support efforts to improve energy security and the improved management of shared resources such as water.”



On sustainable development, the Secretary-General lauded the “impressive progress” ASEAN countries have made towards most of the anti-poverty targets known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), whose deadline is 2015.

“We will continue to work with you to achieve all the MDGs across the board,” he said. “This is imperative as we work to define a shared vision for the post-2015 period. The United Nations is eager to hear the voices of ASEAN nations and work with you in implementing a bold new sustainable development agenda.

“Poverty eradication must be our priority, and sustainable development our guide and principle.”

Noting that the region is highly vulnerable to weather-related disasters, Mr. Ban pledged continued UN support for disaster management, which he said is one of the most advanced areas of UN-ASEAN collaboration.

“Ultimately, we can only prevent climate disasters by addressing climate change,” he stated, stressing the need to finalize a robust legal agreement on climate change in 2015.

At the same time, the post-2015 development agenda must also be rights-based, with particular emphasis on women, young people and marginalized groups, the Secretary-General said.

“The ASEAN region is one of the most diverse in the world, representing many of the world’s great cultures, faiths and traditions. Peace and sustainable development for all the people of the region depend on harmonious relations among communities and nations.

“We must avoid the divisive effects of rising inequality, which often evolve along ethnic or religious lines. The UN stands ready to work with all of you to promote human rights for stability and development.”

Other areas of collaboration include peacekeeping, as well as the fight against corruption, transnational organised crime, terrorism and other non-traditional security threats, he added.

On broader issues, the Secretary-General applauded the various efforts to resolve tensions and conflicts in the region, noting for example that the border between Cambodia and Thailand has been calm.

In addition, the Thai Government has initiated peace dialogue with one of the southern insurgent groups, facilitated by Malaysia, and the Government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front are now moving towards a comprehensive peace agreement.

Myanmar, Mr. Ban added, has been going through an “unprecedented” reform process. However, he remained concerned about ongoing communal violence, and urged the Government and all communities to address all contributing factors. “The reform process in Myanmar can only succeed fully if all groups in the country feel safe and part of the whole, secure in the realization of their human rights.”

On the margins of the summit, Mr. Ban met separately with several leaders, including those from Indonesia, Thailand and Cambodia, discussing issues such as Syria, sustainable development and peacekeeping.

## UN marks World Mental Health Day by focusing on well-being of ageing populations

**10 October** - Citizens over 60 years of age must have access to social and health services to ensure their physical and mental well-being, the United Nations said today, marking World Mental Health Day.

“We can all benefit from the warmth and wisdom of older generations. But while many people look forward to a fulfilling old age, more than one in five adults aged 60 and over experiences mental or neurological disorders such as dementia and depression,” Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in his message for the Day, which this year focuses on older adults.



A mental health counsellor talks with clients in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Photo: WHO/Marko Kokic

According to UN figures, the proportion of those aged over 60 is expected to increase from just over 605 million in 2000 to 2 billion by 2050.

Mr. Ban said the Day is an opportunity to raise awareness of the problems surrounding mental health in older persons.

“Health care professionals and older people themselves often do not recognize these mental health problems. Worse, people are frequently reluctant to seek help because of the stigma surrounding mental illness,” he said. “Older adults are also vulnerable to physical neglect and shameful mistreatment – abuse that can itself trigger mental health problems.”

Mr. Ban highlighted the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan for the period 2013-2020, which seeks to strengthen effective leadership and governance for mental health, provide comprehensive and responsive mental health and social care services in community-based settings, implement strategies for promotion and prevention in mental health, and strengthen information systems, evidence and research in this area.

The Plan also calls for taking account of health and social needs at all stages of life, from infancy through childhood, adolescence, adulthood and older age.

“On this World Mental Health Day, I call for greater efforts to carry out the Action Plan for the sake of all people with mental health problems, especially those who are older and require special attention,” Mr. Ban said. “This compassionate response will benefit all of society.”

## Central African Republic: Security Council reinforces UN peacebuilding office, backs deployment of African Union peacekeepers



A partial view of the Security Council at its meeting to discuss the Central African Republic. UN Photo/Sarah Fretwell

**10 October** - Seriously concerned by the deteriorating security situation and widespread human rights abuses in the Central African Republic (CAR), the Security Council today “reinforced and updated” the United Nations peacebuilding office in the country, while also calling for a political resolution to the conflict.

Unanimously adopting a new resolution, the Council adjusted the mandate of the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office (BINUCA) in the five key areas: support for implementation of the transition process; support for conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance; support for stabilisation of the security situation; promotion and protection of human rights; and coordination of international actors.

The 6-page text also welcomed the decision of the African Union to authorize the deployment of an “African-led International Support Mission in the CAR” to be referred to as MISCA, and looked forward to its swift establishment,

“which will represent a major contribution towards creating the conditions for a stable and democratic CAR exercising authority over its national territory and assuming its responsibility for the protection of its civilian population.”

The members urged Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to submit within 30 days, in close cooperation with the AU and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), a written report on the planning of MISCA.

The plan is to include a possible option of transforming the AU Mission into a UN peacekeeping operation “subject to appropriate conditions on the ground.”

The 15-member Council also urged “the holding of free, fair and transparent presidential and legislative elections” to be held within 18 months after the beginning of the transition period which took effect on the 18 August.

The Council tasked BINUCA to work with all parties to facilitate the full implementation of the Libreville Agreement - signed in the Gabonese capital of Libreville on 11 January - as part of its mandate to help consolidate peace in CAR, including support for security reform and reintegration of ex-combatants.

It also expressed readiness to consider “appropriate measures” against those who undermine peace, stability and security, impede the political transition and fuel violence.

Plagued by decades of instability and fighting, the CAR witnessed a resumption of violence last December when the Séléka rebel coalition launched a series of attacks. A peace agreement was reached in January, but the rebels again seized the capital, Bangui, in March, forcing President François Bozizé to flee.

There is now a transitional government, headed by Prime Minister Nicolas Tiangaye, entrusted with restoring law and order and paving the way for democratic elections. But armed clashes in the north-east have increased since the beginning of August, and the country is facing a dire humanitarian situation that affects the entire population of some 4.6 million.

In addition, there are continued reports of gross human rights violations, committed by the Séléka coalition and the Ugandan Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), including the deliberate killing of civilians, acts of sexual violence against women and children, and the destruction and looting of property, including hospitals, schools and churches.

In this latest resolution, the Security Council members stressed that the Séléka and the LRA, as well as other perpetrators of these attacks “shall be brought to justice.”

They demanded “safe and unhindered access and the timely delivery” of humanitarian aid to persons in need, and an end to the recruitment of children.

The Council also called all the groups to issue clear orders against sexual violence, and to investigate and hold the perpetrators accountable.

The resolution also reiterated the Council’s condemnation of the devastation of natural heritage, noting in particular that poaching and trafficking of wildlife are among the factors that fuel the crisis in the country.

## Security in Libya worsening, Ban says following abduction of Prime Minister



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (right) meets with Prime Minister Ali Zeidan of Libya on 25 September 2013. UN Photo/Mark Garten

**10 October** - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon voiced relief at the release of Prime Minister Ali Zeidan of Libya, who was abducted earlier today, and noted that acts of violence are increasing and security is worsening in the North African nation.

The Prime Minister was reportedly abducted from a hotel in the capital, Tripoli, and held for several hours by armed men.

Mr. Ban, who condemned the abduction, said Libya is facing “a deteriorating security situation and increasing acts of violence,” according to a statement issued by his spokesperson.

“The Secretary-General calls on all Libyan parties and the Libyan people to form consensus around national priorities and work towards building a strong, stable country, respectful of the rule of law and the protection of human rights.”

Mr. Ban also reiterated the support of the United Nations for the Libyan people as they aspire to establish a democratic State and move forward the political transformation of their country, and called on the international community to support them in this process.

The UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) also denounced the Prime Minister’s abduction and called on all parties to continue the transitional political process and affirm the legitimacy of democratically-elected institutions.

UNSMIL has been supporting the efforts of the Libyan Government and people to ensure the success of the democratic transition process, which has been under way since the toppling of Muammar al-Qadhafi two years ago.

## Ban ‘encouraged’ by wave of diplomatic progress at UN General Assembly session



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe (file photo)

**10 October** - This year’s annual opening session of the General Assembly highlighted the centrality of the United Nations, with a breakthrough Security Council resolution on Syria, and Iran and the United States using the world forum for overtures aimed at reversing decades of tension, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, summing up the week-long meeting.

“The centrality of the United Nations today reflects the global logic of our times: with our fates ever more entwined, our future must be one of ever deeper and wider cooperation,” he wrote in the article published in newspapers and media outlets around the world.

He called the resolution on Syria, in which the 15-member body called for the elimination of the country’s chemical weapons while endorsing a diplomatic plan for Syrian-led negotiations toward peace “the first hopeful news on the crisis after years of deadlock and inertia.”

The UN is now working with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on setting up a joint 100-member-strong mission to oversee the elimination by 30 June, 2014. The Council resolution followed Syria’s accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention in the wake of a sarin gas attack that killed hundreds in a Damascus suburb in August.

Mr. Ban noted that the Security Council also adopted a strong statement on Syria’s humanitarian plight, “and we continue to press for access, an end to arms flows and violations of human rights and, above all, the convening of an international conference to deal with ending this horrendous conflict.



“We cannot be satisfied with destroying chemical weapons while the wider war is destroying Syria,” he added on the conflict, which has already killed over 100,000 people and driven some 6.5 million others from their homes since protesters first sought the ouster of President Bashar al-Assad in March, 2011.

“Military victory is an illusion; the only answer is a negotiated transition to the new Syria that the country’s people need and deserve. We are determined to bring the parties to the table in mid-November.”

He also noted that the General Debate, opening the annual session, during which scores of presidents, monarchs and prime ministers address the Assembly, provided a UN setting for Iran and the United States to make overtures aimed at reversing decades of tension, while high-level meetings brought progress on the democratic transitions in Myanmar and Yemen, the complex crisis in the Sahel, and implementation of the peace framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the wider Great Lakes region.

“Based on the diplomacy that just took place at the United Nations, and fully aware of the steep challenges ahead, I am encouraged about our prospects,” Mr. Ban wrote. “The United Nations is an agile first responder at times of disaster, and often a last resort for problems found too vexing for others.

“At times, the Organization is in the lead, at others it is among a constellation of actors. At times we reach our goals; sometimes we fall short. But the Organization works every single day, around the clock, around the globe, to advance the goals of humankind in the most trying circumstances.”

## Africa must ‘open the door’ to sustainable industrial development – UN official



UNIDO Director General Li Yong. Photo: UNIDO

**10 October** - The head of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has stressed that the agency’s strong focus on inclusive and sustainable industrialization can help bolster the continent’s efforts to achieve long-term growth and development.

“It is so important for Africa to find a tool to open the door of inclusive and sustainable industrial development in order to take off during the next decades,” Li Yong, Director General of UNIDO, said in a statement, summing up his first visit to Africa since taking office.

He stressed that “today, the world needs a development model that ensures prosperity for all, safeguards human dignity and provides jobs for young people.”

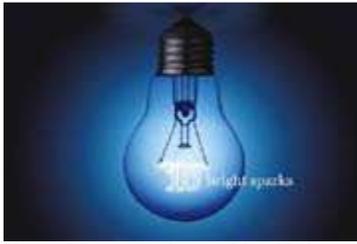
During a meeting with the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Hailemariam Desalegn, who is Chairman of the African Union (AU) Summit of Heads of State and Government, the Director General said that UNIDO attached great importance to the continent’s development in general and to assisting the least developed countries in particular.

In Addis Ababa, Mr. Li also met the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma; the Deputy Chairperson, Erastus Mwencha; and the AU Commissioner for Trade and Industry, Fatima Haram Acyl; as well as the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Carlos Lopes.

During his visit, the Director General shared his vision for the future of UNIDO with African ambassadors and permanent representatives to the AU Commission in the context of the continuing deliberations about the future Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda.

He reaffirmed UNIDO’s commitment to continue its strong support for the countries of Africa through technical cooperation and advisory services based on the concept of inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

## UN agency selects winners of young innovators competition



Young Innovators Competition 2013.  
Credit ITU

**10 October** - Ten young people from around the world will be honoured with a United Nations award recognizing their work as entrepreneurs and use of technology to change the world.

The recipients of the 10 Young Innovators Competition organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Telecom come from a wide range of countries including India, Uganda and Viet Nam and have worked on diverse issues such as marine protection, reduction of food waste and immigration.

“These are bright young minds with creative technological solutions to developmental challenges both in their communities and in the wider world,” said ITU Secretary-General Hamadoun Touré.

Open to young social entrepreneurs between the ages of 18 and 26, the competition seeks innovative digital solutions in the form of start-ups or initial concepts meeting global developmental challenges. The winners will be heading to the ITU Telecom World 2013 a knowledge-sharing event for the global ICT community, which will be held in Bangkok, Thailand, on 19-22 November.

“Bringing the competition winners to the forefront of the global ICT stage at ITU Telecom World connects them with the event’s influential audience, with the entrepreneurial experiences and with the success stories of their expert mentors and their peers from 2012,” said Mr. Touré.

“These are the connections and conversations that matter, with the power to make a real difference in the world.”

One of the winners is Keston Perry from Trinidad and Tobago, who started KUMBA, an interface connecting unemployed Caribbean migrants with technical skills based in the United Kingdom with Caribbean-based companies.

Nguyen Tran Hoang from Viet Nam will be honoured for the Land-Sea Digital Bridge – a digital radio communication system connecting fishing boats and shore stations.

Oscar Ekponimo from Nigeria created SalvageHub, a web and mobile platform to reduce food wastage at individual and retail levels.

Also from the African continent is the M-Tambula platform by Brenda Katwesigye, which provides the elderly with easy access to public services using Interactive Voice Response over mobile phones.

Thomas Kioko from Kenya will be recognized for his Nduru App – a one-stop mobile application to manage all aspects of road safety.

Ahmed Fawzi from Egypt was selected for his Al Dalilah Advanced Operational Global Positioning System (GPS) – an advanced tracking and first response system using meteorological data.

Hannah Judge from the United States will also be recognized for her use of geolocation technology, as she created Broad Street Maps, which produces individualized healthcare maps to support health organizations

In India, Varun Arora created Open Curriculum, an online platform for local educational material for standard, primary and secondary schooling.

Yvone Loremia from the Philippines was selected for her Tudlo Disaster and Emergency Application, a multi-purpose information platform for emergency and disaster situations.

Finally, the Timothy McDermott from Australia and Swaziland created SiSwApp, an English-SiSwati translation app aimed at migrant workers.

The judges received over 600 entries from 88 countries worldwide, and the winners were selected based on their possible social impact and potential for business success.

At ITU Telecom World the winners will take part in a programme to take their projects to the next level via one-on-one mentorship sessions with start-up mentors and business experts, hands-on workshop training, peer mentoring from the winners of the 2012 competition, and the opportunity to showcase their projects to the event's influential audience.

ITU Telecom organizes global events for Governments, industry leaders and regulators that form part of the world's ICT community. The first ITU Telecom event was held in 1971 and ITU Telecom marked its 40th anniversary in 2011.

## UN survey shows needs of persons with disabilities largely ignored during disasters

**10 October** - A high proportion of persons with disabilities die or suffer injuries during disasters because they are rarely consulted about their needs and Governments lack adequate measures to address them, according to a United Nations survey released today ahead of the International Day for Disaster Reduction.

The online survey, produced by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) and partners, consulted nearly 6,000 persons with disabilities in 126 countries on how they cope and prepare for disasters.

The results show that people living with disabilities across the world are rarely consulted about their needs in times of disasters. In cases where they need to evacuate such as during floods or earthquakes, only 20 per cent of respondents said they could evacuate immediately without difficulty, 6 per cent said they would not be able to evacuate at all and the remainder said they would be able to evacuate with a degree of difficulty.

"The results of this survey are shocking. It clearly reveals that the key reason why a disproportionate number of disabled persons suffer and die in disasters is because their needs are ignored and neglected by the official planning process in the majority of situations," said the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström.

Released ahead of the International Day for Disaster Reduction, commemorated annually on 13 October and which this year recognizes the critical role of persons with disabilities in fostering disaster resilience, the survey shows that inclusion of disability must be a central concern in all emergency communications.

It notes that the challenges of evacuation ranged from having a degree of difficulty of hearing, seeing, walking or climbing steps and having difficulty communicating.

If given sufficient time, the percentage of those who could evacuate with no difficulty almost double, rising from 20 per cent to 38 per cent, which underlined the importance of early warning systems and ensuring that warnings reach all members of the community.

In addition, many respondents said that if they had an early warning they would take measures that would better prepare them for disasters. For example, one respondent said that if he had prior knowledge of bad weather overnight, he would sleep in his wheelchair to be able to take cover quickly. Another respondent said an early warning on bad weather would allow him to stock up on medicines, and another one expressed concern of being unable to receive alerts because he cannot hear sirens.

The 22-question survey also shows that 71 per cent of respondents have no personal preparedness plan for disasters and only 31 per cent always have someone to help them evacuate while 13 per cent never have anyone to help them.

Persons with disabilities also face difficulties after disasters have struck, as emergency and care systems are poorly designed for people depending on help or having disabilities, said Ms. Wahlström, briefing the press in New York as part of the



UN global survey explains why so many people living with disabilities die in disasters. Photo: UNISDR

activities under way at Headquarters to mark the 2013 International Day.

“Lack of inclusion of persons with disabilities in the planning system leads to systems being inadequate,” she said. “The survey shows that people largely depend on friends and family for safety and it shows that even when they are early warning systems they are not necessarily adjusted to people who don’t hear, or people who are colour blind for example.

She added that countries run the risk of “bundling” what disabilities entail and said this highlights the importance of incorporating multiple perspectives from persons with disabilities.

The top five hazards or disaster risks faced by survey respondents were floods, extreme weather, tornados, drought, and earthquakes. UNISDR said it has decided to continue the survey until the end of the year to expand the sample.

“UNISDR will ensure that [respondents’] knowledge and experiences are taken fully into consideration at the 2015 World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction when UN Member States meeting in Japan will adopt a new global framework for disaster risk reduction to replace the current Hyogo Framework for Action,” Ms. Wahlström said.

## Ahead of 2014 draw down, Security Council extends assistance force in Afghanistan

**10 October** - The United Nations Security Council today extended the authorization of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) until the end of 2014, when it is expected that the force will draw down and the Government of Afghanistan will assume full responsibility for security throughout the country.

A transition of responsibility for security in the country’s 34 provinces from ISAF, which is led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), to Afghan forces is already underway. Afghan authorities are also working towards taking greater ownership of development in a country that faces numerous challenges.

In a unanimously adopted resolution, the Council welcomed the agreement between the Afghan Government and countries contributing to ISAF to transfer full security responsibility to the authorities by the end of 2014, and the ongoing implementation of the transition process since July 2011.

The 15-member body also called on UN Member States to contribute personnel, equipment and other resources to ISAF and to continue to pursue their efforts to support security, stability and transition in Afghanistan.

In addition, the Council welcomed the strong commitment of the Government to further develop, with the support of ISAF nations, Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) which are “governed by the Afghan Constitution and capable of providing peace, security and stability to all Afghans operating under effective civilian leadership and in accordance with the rule of law, and respecting and promoting human rights, including the rights of women, and capable of contributing to the region’s security through the stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan.”

It welcomed the increasing leadership role played by the Afghan authorities in security responsibilities throughout the country, as well as the “substantial progress” made in the expansion and capability of the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police. It stressed the importance of further boosting the professionalism of these institutions.

The United Nations has pledged to continue its strong support to the Afghan Government up to and beyond the 2014 deadline for the Government’s assumption of responsibility, with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon calling for efforts to ensure the transition leads to a stable, prosperous and safe future for the country’s people.

In March, the Council extended the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) until 19 March 2014, and called on the world body, with the support of the international community, to back the Government’s so-called National Priority Programmes as it goes through the process of taking full control of security, governance and development.



International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kandahar City, Afghanistan in June 2010. Photo: ISAF/PAO/Matthew Chlosta

## UN atomic agency reviews Czech Republic's largest national electricity company



Inspectors from the IAEA and Euratom look into the spent fuel pond at the Dukovany Nuclear Power Plant, Czech Republic, in November 2012. Photo: IAEA Petr Pavlicek

**10 October** - An international team led by United Nations nuclear safety experts today completed a review of corporate safety performance at CEZ, the largest national electricity company in the Czech Republic, to address safety operations at the Dukovany and Temelin nuclear power plants.

The Corporate Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) – composed of the UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as well as experts from Finland, France, Romania and the United States – reviewed the operations at the nuclear facility using IAEA's safety standards, and proposed recommendations for improvement.

“The OSART team identified good corporate practices,” the UN agency said, which will be shared with the rest of the nuclear industry for consideration of their possible application

elsewhere.

The team also identified proposals for improvements of corporate processes and performance important to the operational safety of the plants.

The review also covered aspects related to corporate management, independent oversight, human resources, communication, maintenance, technical support and procurement, according to a news release by the IAEA.

According to the Vienna-based agency, CEZ management committed to addressing all the areas identified for improvement and requested the IAEA to schedule a follow-up mission in approximately 18 months' time.

“OSART missions are one of the most important tools of the Agency to ensure better and wider implementation of the IAEA Safety Standards,” said Denis Flory, Deputy Director General in the IAEA's Department of Nuclear Safety and Security.

“Since 1982, we have conducted close to 200 safety review missions around the globe; however, this mission is the first of its kind because we focused on the corporate performance that is a necessity for a safe operation of [nuclear power plants],” Mr. Flory added. “We wanted to focus on the organizational and human side rather than the technology.”

## Security Council extends UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti for another year

**10 October** - The Security Council today voted unanimously to extend the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Haiti until mid-October 2014 so it can continue contributing to stability and development in the small Caribbean nation.

In his recent report on the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that while challenges remain, the progress made in the stabilization of Haiti since the initial deployment of the mission in 2004 has been “considerable.”

“Given recent achievements and the evolution of the challenges facing Haiti, the ongoing reconfiguration of MINUSTAH should continue. Nine years after its initial deployment, it is worth examining whether a large multidimensional peacekeeping operation is still the most appropriate form of international support to Haiti,” he added.

Today's resolution decided that MINUSTAH's overall force levels will consist of up to 5,021 troops and of a police component composed of up to 2,601 personnel. Currently, the mission consists of 6,233 troops and 2,457 police.



Brazilian peacekeepers with MINUSTAH patrolling the Bel Air neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Photo: UN/MINUSTAH/Jesús Serrano Redondo

Mr. Ban said he intends to engage with the Haitian Government and Member States to explore the best way for the UN to continue contributing to the country's stability and development. As part of that exercise, the option of replacing MINUSTAH with a "smaller, more focused assistance mission" by 2016 will be explored and proposals on the way forward will be included in his next report to the Council March 2014.

The 15-member Council, in its resolution, affirmed that adjustments to the force configuration should be based on the security situation on the ground, "taking into account the importance of maintaining a secure and stable environment and the impact of social and political realities on Haiti's stability and security."

It also reiterated that building the capacity of the Haitian National Police remains "a most critical task" for MINUSTAH, and requested the mission to continue efforts to strengthen the institutional and operational capacities of the police.

In addition, the Council urged Haiti's political actors to "work cooperatively" to complete all steps, including an electoral law, required to prepare for and hold long overdue free, fair and transparent senatorial, municipal and local elections in accordance with the Constitution to ensure the continued functioning of the National Assembly and other elected bodies.

Briefing the Council in August, the Secretary-General's Special Representative and head of MINUSTAH, Sandra Honoré, warned that the ongoing electoral stalemate, linked to socio-economic grievances, poses "a series of risks to the stabilization process."