

22 February 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss,
President of the 65th Session of the General Assembly,
at a Meeting with the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations**

Madam Chair,
Undersecretaries-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

It is a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to address the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

Your work relates to the core mission of the United Nations: the promotion of peace, security and prosperity worldwide. I thank you for your dedication and perseverance in reviewing peacekeeping operations and in ensuring that our Organization succeeds in fulfilling such an important responsibility.

Peacekeeping is a flagship activity of the United Nations. The presence of the United Nations on the ground helps in stopping the escalation of confrontations. Peacekeeping paves the way for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Peacekeeping saves the lives of countless men, women and children worldwide.

This could not be achieved without the tireless work of peacekeepers, all the military, police and civilians serving under the UN flag. The Noble Peace Prize which the UN Peacekeeping forces received in 1988 was indeed well deserved.

I would like to acknowledge here the crucial role of the troop and police contributing countries. Without the vision, leadership and commitment of Member States, the UN Peacekeeping missions would not exist.

Let me underline how important it is that all Member States are involved on issues relating to peacekeeping. Whereas mandates for peacekeeping operations are decided by the Security Council, decisions on financing, on elaborating policies and guidelines, and reviewing their implementation pertain – through the Fifth Committee and through the work of this Special Committee - to the authority of the General Assembly and its 192 Members. This is essential to strengthen the legitimacy of our actions.

The complexity of peacekeeping operations has greatly increased over the years. We all have to join forces to ensure that UN peacekeeping adjusts and adapts to meet new and emerging challenges. The Brahimi report launched the reflection a decade ago; building on the progress already achieved, the New Horizon Initiative presented in July 2009 by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is a

major contribution to improving our response to international crises. It highlights the importance of a renewed global partnership among all stakeholders, in particular host countries, troop contributors, regional organizations and UN staff. This is key for success.

Making the best use of existing resources is always a must. Yet, this becomes even more important in the wake of the recent financial and economic crisis that constrains national budgets. The new Global Field Support Strategy adopted by the Department of Field Support is therefore very timely and very relevant.

The human dimension of peacekeeping operations should not be overlooked. All Member States that provide military, police and civilian personnel to peacekeeping missions must be assured that the political and material conditions in the field are adequate for their nationals to perform their tasks.

Madam Chair,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me conclude by reiterating my support and admiration for your contribution and the contribution of your Committee to peacekeeping. A lot has been achieved over the years, but there are still many challenges ahead.

The protection of civilians, in particular, is an extremely complex, but critically important mandate. I hope that the Special Committee will advance the discussion on this topic.

Peacekeeping has to be seen in the broader context of the long term social and economic development of post-conflict countries. Therefore, it is essential to enhance the nexus between peacekeeping and peacebuilding. I encourage you to continue the reflection on how to explore its full potential.

I thank you for your attention.