

21 February 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34)**

Your Excellencies

Ambassador Joy Ogwu, Chair of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations,
Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations,
Madame Susana Malcorra, Under-Secretary General of the Department of Field Support,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Dear colleagues

It gives me great pleasure to address the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations today at its opening session.

Your Committee symbolizes our organization. It is a symbol of responsibility, of dedication, and of peace.

Allow me to take this opportunity to express my deep respect and gratitude to all troop- and police contributing countries.

Your contributions to the United Nations Peacekeeping stand at the core of our mission: the promotion of peace, security and prosperity worldwide.

I look forward to the submission of your report.

The presence of the United Nations on the ground helps in stopping the escalation of confrontations, saving the lives of countless men, women and children worldwide.

It paves the way for the peaceful settlement of disputes, one of my key priorities during my Presidency.

It helps rebuild communities after conflict, and improves the lives of populations, including the most vulnerable.

All of this could not be achieved without the tireless work of our peacekeepers, military, police and civilians, serving under the UN flag.

Today, UN peacekeeping faces many trials, both at Headquarters and around the world.

And thus, even while we acknowledge the many strengths of our efforts, we are collectively entrusted with ensuring the continual improvement of UN peacekeeping.

As you're aware, mandates for peacekeeping operations are discussed and decided by the Security Council. Decisions on financing, on elaborating policies and guidelines, and reviewing their implementation pertain are taken through the Fourth and the Fifth Committee and through the work of this Special Committee, under the authority of the General Assembly and its 193 Members.

The contribution of both the Council and the Assembly is crucial for the acceptance and strengthening of our actions.

The complexity of mandates for peacekeeping operations has greatly increased over the years. Missions are charged with not only supporting the implementation of comprehensive peace accords, but also with transitional administration.

Today, in addition to traditional and multidimensional peacekeeping operations, missions are also largely focused on the physical protection of civilians. This requires a renewed global partnership among all stakeholders, in particular host countries, troop contributors, regional organizations and UN staff.

This partnership is key for success.

We must maximize the use of national capacities from the beginning. Yet this won't be possible without providing rapid, effective international civilian assistance.

I would also take this opportunity to underscore, once again, that the safety and security of UN personnel – civilian and uniformed – must be a top priority for all involved: the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat.

To this end, we must work closely with host countries, who bear the primary responsibility for safety and security on their respective territories.

We should also spare no effort in ensuring that our missions have the level of resources – human and material – that provide the best possible levels for a successful implementation of their mandates.

I hope that the Special Committee will continue to advance the discussions on these topics, including the improvements of its own working methods.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, I also pay tribute and honor those who have served the UN around the world - far from their countries and loved ones - and who have suffered the ultimate sacrifice.

Through their work and dedication, we all are inspired to work even harder for the collective cause envisaged in the United Nations Charter: to keep peace and to promote better standards of life in larger freedom

Let me conclude by reiterating my and my office's full support to the 2012 session of the Special Committee of Peacekeeping Operations and beyond.

I wish you a fruitful and successful session.

Thank you.