

**His Excellency Mr. John W. Ashe**

**President of the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly**

**Remarks during the Opening Session  
Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations**

**New York, 24 February 2014**

Ambassador U. Joy Ogwu, Chairperson of the Special Committee on  
Peacekeeping Operations,  
Under Secretary-General of Peacekeeping Operations,  
Under Secretary-General of Field Support,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to join you for the opening session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and deliver this statement on behalf of the President of the General Assembly who unfortunately can not be present today.

At the outset, please allow me to congratulate you, Madame Chair, as well as the other members of the Bureau on your election at the helm of the Special Committee for this session. I have no doubt that under your able leadership the C34 will successfully conduct its business and achieve its objectives.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to USG Herve Ladsous and USG Ameerah Haq, for their untiring dedication to ensuring that United Nations Peacekeeping operations serve with increasing effectiveness the purposes for which they were put in place.

And of course, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of you, troop- and police contributing countries – most of who are traditionally in uniform for this opening day – for your commitment and contribution in service of our Organization. UN peacekeeping operations and missions need your dedicated support for their success.

Excellencies,

The United Nations was founded to free future generations from the scourge of war and on this path, peacekeeping has become one of its most prominent activities. UN peacekeeping has supported numerous peace processes, providing protection and hope to millions of people caught in the grips of violence and war.

We are all sadly aware that in recent years, the demand for UN peacekeeping has significantly increased, even as the nature of these operations has become ever more complex. As the focal body mandated to review UN peacekeeping in all aspects, as well as to provide policy oversight, the Special Committee has a key role to play in ensuring that these activities respond effectively to the many challenges confronting them. Its work remains central to the success of the United Nations in the area of peacekeeping, and requires sustained collective commitment and contributions.

In this regard, I am pleased to note the widespread interest among the Membership in contributing to the work of the Special Committee. This is evidence of a robust determination that the Organization should continue improving its peacekeeping capabilities and enhancing the effective and efficient deployment of its operations.

Distinguished Delegates,

In last session's resolution 67/301, the General Assembly decided that the Special Committee, in accordance with its mandate, shall continue its efforts to conduct a comprehensive review of the question of peacekeeping operations in all its aspects, review the implementation of its previous proposals and consider any new proposals so as to enhance the capacity of the United Nations to fulfill its responsibility in the field.

I have noted that during your last session, the Special Committee was not in a position to agree on recommendations. This was certainly unfortunate, and I am sure you share my feeling that such a situation could be unhelpful to the credibility of this body. As you begin your work, I would like to encourage you to spare no effort in ensuring that this session comes to conclusions whose quality are fully consistent with the nature and size of the challenges ahead. I am confident that through your frank and constructive discussions, you will make progress in this direction.

In this regard, I am very encouraged by the progress the Special Committee has made recently, including on strengthening its working methods and on the adoption of its annual report. This underscores the Committee's recognition of the importance of continuously reviewing and improving its working methods.

As President of the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly, I am, of course committed to rendering every possible support to the work of the Special Committee, and you may safely rely on me and my team to work with you along this line. However, let me underscore something we all know well, which is that however valuable and effective our peacekeeping activities may be to reduce tensions and prevent the escalation of instability, they can never be a substitute for peace efforts and genuine dialogue, which must also be supported and encouraged.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before concluding, I would like to pay tribute to those who, through their dedication and unwavering commitment to UN peacekeeping around the world, have enabled the Organization to make a real difference in the lives of millions of people. In this regard I pay a special tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

As you commence your deliberations, I will be relying on your dedication, wisdom and unique expertise to contribute to a productive and results oriented session and to ensure that peacekeeping remains the pride of the UN.

Thank you