

22 June 2010

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki,
President of the 64th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Thematic Debate of the General Assembly " UN Peacekeeping:
Looking into the Future"**

Mr. Secretary General
Distinguished Guests, Excellencies
Ladies and gentlemen

I am pleased to welcome you to this first ever thematic debate of the General Assembly on UN peacekeeping.

Let me thank the Secretary General for his presence and for the efforts deployed by the Secretariat to strengthen the UN peacekeeping capacity.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to express special thanks and appreciation to our honourable guests, President John Kufuor and President Martti Ahtisaari, Ministers, and other distinguished panelists and participants, who have kindly accepted to be with us and to share with the entire membership their views and insights stemming from their outstanding experience and contributions in this field. Such high level participation is a strong manifestation of the interest and importance attached to this debate in the General Assembly.

Peacekeeping is a collective undertaking. Its success requires full support and political backing of all Member States, who are also called upon to provide the resources – human, material and financial – which are essential for smooth and effective functioning of peacekeeping operations. It is therefore right that the General Assembly holds this thematic debate, not only to provide its guidance on the policy and strategic direction of peacekeeping, but also to galvanize the full engagement, participation and commitment of Member States behind this common objective.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

From a modest beginning in 1948, peacekeeping has evolved into a major activity of the United Nations, a vital tool for the maintenance of international peace and security. Peacekeeping has played an important part in some of the well known achievements of the United Nations in managing conflicts, maintaining peace and stability, and helping create the conditions for building durable peace and development in countries emerging from conflict. I strongly believe that the international community should fully utilize the unique role and legitimacy of the United Nations to which is also owed the success and credibility of its peacekeeping efforts.

Together we must also be willing and able to cope with the diverse and daunting challenges of planning and effective management of peacekeeping operations - challenges which result from increased expectations, the extraordinary surge in demand and the growing complexity of peacekeeping mandates, especially in multi-dimensional missions. While on the operational side, we have to address the question of resources and the overstretch in capacity, we should also be cognizant that the larger objective of peacefully resolving conflicts and achieving durable settlements can best be achieved only through a more comprehensive approach also comprising political and other tracks including a more serious investment in prevention, political facilitation and mediation.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

Evolution in peacekeeping has also entailed reform. It is important to recall here that some of the major adaptation and reshaping of peacekeeping has resulted from the landmark report of August 2000 by the panel on United Nations Peace Operations, chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi. The report identified serious shortcomings in the UN's ability to tackle conflicts and helped launch an effort for institutional change that continues today. I am very grateful that Mr. Brahimi will join us today from Paris to share his thoughts on the evolving challenges and opportunities for peacekeeping since this report.

Beyond the conceptual discussion on all aspects of peacekeeping that takes place in the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, this interactive debate offers a unique opportunity and political space for a thorough consideration of some of the core issues outlined in today's programme, namely the political dimensions of peacekeeping; and peacebuilding and the nexus between security and development. Recent developments in some operations make this debate even more relevant and timely. It is indeed crucial to address issues such as the mutual impact and inter-linkage between peacekeeping missions and political processes. The military means and political goals of the mission should complement each other, as the Brahimi Report also highlighted the need for the right combination of the two. To avoid failure, the missions must be provided the resources commensurate with their mandates. The UN must pay attention to the underlying issues and root causes of conflict, and challenges to state sovereignty. Also, the United Nations efforts cannot be isolated from the regional dimension, and in this regard I highlight the importance of positive engagement and support of the regional stakeholders, including neighboring countries.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

The bulk of UN peacekeeping presence today is in integrated missions, mostly deployed in complex crises and conflicts often having military, political, humanitarian and other dimensions. To build and sustain peace in such complex and fragile situations, we require a broader, holistic strategy that synergizes the peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts to address the interlinked issues of security and development in a comprehensive manner. Beyond improving coordination and securing necessary resources, it is also important to ensure sustainable national capacities that can assume ownership and responsibility for peacebuilding and national development. In this regard, there is a need to reassess the ways in which the United Nations and other partners engage in assisting countries emerging from conflict. The record of the UN and the international community is mixed and we are all struggling over how to get it right. We must uphold the principle of "do no harm". We must candidly review how we

operate in these situations, to ensure that our actions and support do not undermine the national authorities. One size fits all approaches do not work. We must do better in catering to the specific requirements of individual situations keeping the national priorities and perspectives in the forefront.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

This is also the occasion to pay special tribute to the tens of thousands of blue helmets who over the years have served the cause of peace under the United Nations banner. We laud their professionalism, dedication, courage and sacrifice which have been instrumental in transforming the mandates into tangible results on ground, bringing peace, stability and hope for a better future to millions of people affected by conflict. Troop Contributing Countries have also an important role to play in building a renewed global partnership for UN peacekeeping advocated by the Organization. They shoulder the burden in the field; they also possess relevant experience and expertise that should be harnessed and fully utilized including through participation in decision making and meaningful interaction and cooperation with the Security Council and the Secretariat. You would also agree that contribution of personnel for peacekeeping missions is the responsibility of all Member States especially those possessing the required capacities. Let us therefore all join hands and pool our resources for the success of this endeavour.

I hope that this debate and interaction will advance our common vision of peacekeeping and its noble objectives and principles and will further our efforts to strengthen the credibility and effectiveness of UN peacekeeping. I am confident that in doing so the Member States will renew our collective commitment to the cause of world peace.

Thank you.