Republic of Rwanda
Permanent Mission of Rwanda
to The United Nations

Statement by the Republic of Rwanda

Fourth Committee –

Comprehensive Review of Peacekeeping Operations

Delivered by Colonel Edouard Ndahiro

Defence and Military Advisor

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Mr. Chair,

Rwanda aligns itself with the statement delivered by Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

As a longstanding troop- and police-contributing country, Rwanda wishes to share three practical lessons drawn from our experience in some of the most challenging peacekeeping environments.

Our experience has taught us that the effectiveness of peacekeeping is determined not only by the capabilities deployed, but also by the political decisions, leadership and operational judgment that guide their use.

First, political leadership is indispensable to successful peacekeeping.

However strong, well-trained or well-equipped a military force may be, it cannot substitute for political solutions. Peacekeepers can stabilize situations, protect civilians and create space for dialogue, but they cannot resolve political disputes on behalf of the parties.

We have seen missions remain deployed for years while the political processes they were established to support make little progress. In some situations, the absence of political progress has gradually transformed peacekeeping into a mechanism for managing conflict rather than supporting its resolution.

This should concern us.

Are we deploying peacekeepers to support credible political processes, or increasingly asking them to manage conflicts that political actors have failed to resolve?

The responsibility for political leadership rests primarily with the parties and national authorities, supported by sustained engagement from the Security Council and relevant regional organizations.

Mission leadership is equally important. Strong leadership is not simply about managing personnel and resources. It requires understanding the political environment, anticipating risks, maintaining dialogue with national authorities and communities, and exercising sound judgment when circumstances change.

Even the most capable military force can become ineffective without clear political direction and competent leadership.

Second, peacekeeping requires accountability, performance and value for money, not one-size-fits-all solutions.

The current liquidity crisis presents serious challenges. We recognize the need for financial discipline and difficult decisions. But financial constraints must not replace operational judgment.

No two missions operate under identical conditions. Their political environments, security threats, mandates and levels of national capacity differ significantly.

Applying uniform percentage reductions across missions, without sufficiently considering these differences, risks undermining operational effectiveness and reversing hard-won gains.

Our experience has shown that the timing of reductions is particularly important. Withdrawing essential capabilities ahead of elections, during fragile political transitions or before national institutions are ready to assume security responsibilities can create dangerous gaps.

We therefore advocate for mission-specific assessments that examine performance, security conditions, political milestones and national capacities before decisions on restructuring or drawdowns are taken.

Equally, we must be prepared to examine results.

Are missions delivering against their mandates? Are resources being deployed where they make the greatest difference? Are operational shortcomings being addressed?

Value for money must be measured by results, not simply by reduced expenditure.

We should neither reward persistent underperformance with additional resources nor penalize effective missions through indiscriminate cuts.

Accountability must also extend beyond mission leadership to the Secretariat and the Security Council, whose decisions determine what missions are expected to achieve and the resources available to them.

Third, peacekeeping must adapt to evolving realities on the ground.

One of the most important lessons from our experience is that peacekeeping cannot operate indefinitely on assumptions that no longer reflect prevailing circumstances.

Political and security situations evolve. Relationships between parties change, new threats emerge and public perceptions of a mission can shift.

Mission leadership must therefore continuously assess the environment, anticipate developments and adjust operational approaches accordingly.

Rigid approaches, particularly when circumstances have fundamentally changed, can lead to unnecessary confrontations, undermine confidence in a mission and expose peacekeepers and civilians to avoidable risks.

Adaptability is not weakness. It is a measure of professionalism and effective leadership.

This does not mean departing from the mandate or compromising the principles of peacekeeping. It means applying them with sound judgment and sensitivity to the realities on the ground.

It also requires mandates that are realistic, legally sound and sufficiently flexible to respond to changing circumstances.

Where missions cooperate with national security forces, particular attention must be paid to applicable sanctions regimes and the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy. Peacekeeping operations should never be

placed in situations that compromise their impartiality, credibility or legal obligations.

Our experience also demonstrates that effective peacekeeping depends on the confidence of local communities.

Practical initiatives, including medical outreach, rehabilitation of community facilities and regular dialogue with local leaders, can strengthen trust, improve communication and help missions identify emerging threats.

These activities are not merely goodwill gestures. They contribute to operational effectiveness, early warning and civilian protection, particularly where misinformation and hate speech threaten relations between communities and peacekeepers.

As resources become more constrained, such engagement should be preserved as part of mission planning.

Mr. Chair,

Rwanda's experience points to three essential requirements: sustained political leadership, accountability for performance and the ability to adapt to changing realities.

As we review the future of peacekeeping, we must move beyond institutional adjustments and focus on the quality of decisions that shape missions.

We need mandates that are achievable, resources that are responsibly allocated and leadership capable of translating political objectives into practical results.

We must also recognize that peacekeeping is not an end in itself. Its purpose is to create conditions in which national institutions can progressively assume responsibility for security and sustainable peace.

Rwanda remains firmly committed to UN peacekeeping and to contributing the lessons of our experience to making operations more effective, accountable and responsive to the people they serve.

Finally, we pay tribute to all peacekeepers who have made the ultimate sacrifice. We owe it to them, and to the communities they served, to ensure that our decisions strengthen the effectiveness, credibility and integrity of UN peacekeeping.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.