

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



IN 4th COMMITTEE DEBATE: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS

Delivered by Military Advisor, Col. Deo Mutabazi

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Mr Chair,

Thank you for giving me the floor, and let me also take this opportunity to congratulate you on the leadership of the 4th committee. I also thank the delegations who spoke before me. Rwanda firmly aligns itself with the NAM's statement delivered by Morocco; thus, this statement is issued in a national capacity.

We are holding this debate when, in addition to multiple challenges posed by internal and external political and security dynamics, peacekeeping missions are facing a substantial liquidity crisis that has led to major downsizing, with the risk of losing the hard-earned gains on the ground.

On downsizing or implementing the liquidity crisis contingency plan, we had in mind that possibly, the major political events, such as elections, would be prioritized, and downsize forces when they are completed, and when security has again normalised. But this wasn't the case, we just witnessed a mathematical action of percentage cuts, some missions even enjoying unfair, non-transparent plans- A serious damage to the professional principles that have, over time, characterized multilateral peacekeeping. We wonder which model is, other than achieving less with less, slogan.

Mr Chair,

I will make 4 points:

- **First, addressing root causes.** The multilateral model has, from time to time, dwelled on capabilities to achieve the protection of civilians, but we believe there is no amount of capabilities, technologies, and even training to effectively protect civilians than investing in creating conducive conditions for peace through political dialogue for conflict resolution, an area that UN peacekeeping has invested less in. Engaging in dialogue by **attacking the root causes** of conflict (such as governance, corruption, social injustices, discrimination and poverty) and the drivers of conflict is the best way forward to avoid the escalation of violent conflicts, which cause mass displacement and deteriorating humanitarian situation of the already affected populations.
- **Second, is Mandate.** Peacekeeping missions have suffered from unrealistic mandates, resulting in a lack of trust among host nations and parties to the conflict, which affects their effectiveness, efficiency, and the safety and security of peacekeepers, especially in the quest for a military solution to a political problem, when peaceful solutions are possible. It is also high time to rethink the **penholdership**, which has led us to the Christmas tree type of mandates serving other interests than the host nation's. **How do we hold a mission accountable for an unrealistic mandate?**

The New Action for Peace articulates the idea of peace enforcement, should the situation dictate so. We have seen that regional and subregional forces are well organized to better perform this task, hence creating **the peace to keep** and setting conducive conditions for multilateral peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The implementation of resolution 2719 is paramount to achieving this goal. **Can the UN set conducive conditions for partnerships to be forged?**

- **Third, is Mandate Legality.** Peacekeeping mandates must be framed with careful attention to legal considerations. This includes ensuring that operations do not, even indirectly, create associations with groups that are, or should be, subject to sanctions. Maintaining this legal clarity is essential to uphold both the legitimacy and effectiveness of UN peacekeeping efforts. **Why can't the mandate be subjected to legal scrutiny before approval?**

Mr Chair,

- **Fourth is Community engagement.** The future peacekeeping operations with reduced resources may compromise the proactiveness and versatility of the force required for the protection of civilians. To mitigate this, Rwanda suggests meaningful outreach programs aimed at tangible works that

contribute to changing the livelihood of the local community, which is an approach to civilian protection against non-physical threats while creating platforms for communication between local leaders, the local community and the peacekeepers. Experience has proved that engaging together with the local community and leadership in activities like health, hygiene and sanitation, environmental protection, and renovating schools creates good rapport, a bond between community, local leaders and peacekeepers, which significantly contributes to combating misinformation, disinformation and hate speech either against some targeted groups within the community, or even peacekeeping mission. The benefits of the concept are numerous. Scaling it up nationally would yield tangible results for the UN missions.

Mr Chair

I can't end my statement without reiterating Rwanda's commitment to peacekeeping and paying tribute to fellow peacekeepers who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the quest for global peace and stability.

Thank you for your attention.