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Letter dated 20 August 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the 8838th meeting of the Security Council, convened on 18 August 2021 under the item entitled "United Nations peacekeeping operations: technology and peacekeeping". The interventions of the briefers and Council members will be published as an official record of the Security Council (S/PV.8838).

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members for the 8838th meeting, the following delegations and entities submitted written statements, copies of which are enclosed: Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, South Africa, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Arab Emirates.

These statements will be issued as a document of the Security Council in accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (S/2020/372), which was agreed in the light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and reference to the document will be made in S/PV.8838.

(*Signed*) T. S. **Tirumurti**
President of the Security Council

Annex I

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations

[Original: Spanish]

United Nations peacekeeping operations are a tool of primary importance to international peace and security. They have played an important role in the promotion of political processes, the implementation of ceasefires, protection of the civilian population, promotion of human rights and the provision of humanitarian assistance, at the same time offering hope to persons affected by conflict the world over.

In reality, it is clear that the growing complexity in which peacekeeping operations carry out their work exposes the troops to increasing threats to their physical and psychological integrity. This makes it more difficult for these missions to increase their effectiveness as a tool for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Threats stemming from ethnic struggles, terrorism and the use of improvised explosive devices, exacerbated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, pose great risks to the Blue Helmets in the 12 peacekeeping operations currently deployed.

We have watched with concern an alarming increase in the number of deaths among peacekeeping personnel last year and during the early months of 2021. Ensuring the security of the men and women in uniform who risk their lives to serve under the United Nations flag is critical and should be a collective priority.

Argentina would like to emphasize six factors that it sees as key to guaranteeing the protection of personnel in peacekeeping operations. The first is the need to increase training in the area of security and protection, both in the pre-deployment phase for personnel and when they are in the field.

The second factor is the immediate need to address the use of improvised explosive devices, which continue to be one of the main sources of danger for the personnel deployed.

As a third factor to consider, the integration of new technologies for individual and camp security is an essential element in addressing the threats to which deployed troops are exposed. Therefore, it is necessary to be especially aware that not all countries have achieved equal conditions of technological and economic development allowing them to purchase adequate equipment, including for purposes of training in the use of such technologies in the field. We would thus like to highlight the importance of developing cooperation in the area of technology in peacekeeping operations even further, for the purpose of standardizing the training of Blue Helmets and the capacities of troop- and police-contributing countries. The need thus arises for the States who possess technological development in this field to be open to offer those advances to those which are not at the same level. That is to say, there must be a true desire to apply the principle of solidarity in that area both pre-deployment and in the field. Without such cooperation, the progress made in the development of technology that could be used to make peacekeeping operations more effective and secure would not have a real impact in the field.

As the fourth factor to highlight, Argentina considers that incorporating a true culture of accountability against impunity for those who attack peacekeeping personnel constitutes an essential element for their protection and safety, not only for reparations to victims but also to make an example of the attackers in order to discourage similar conduct.

The fifth factor that our country would like to highlight in this context is the need to improve medical support in the field, as well as infrastructure and training for personnel, taking into account that a considerable number of the casualties in peacekeeping operations are due to security and occupational health problems.

As the sixth and last factor, Argentina would like to stress the importance of recognizing questions of gender in peacekeeping operations in order to ensure a favourable environment with appropriate medical services available to each of their members in accordance with their needs.

The time has come to intensify our common efforts and assume the shared responsibility to guarantee the security of peacekeeping personnel. Argentina is ready to work with all Member States to contribute to those efforts.

Annex II

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations

Australia pays tribute to all peacekeepers who have been killed or injured in the service of peace and calls for greater accountability for crimes against peacekeepers. The safety and security of our blue helmets, as well as the civilians they are mandated to protect, must remain the highest priority.

Australia commends India for prioritizing the cross-cutting theme of technology in peacekeeping through this important United Nations Security Council open debate on "Protecting the protectors: technology and peacekeeping" and for encouraging the Council to remain engaged on the implications of critical and emerging technologies on peace and security.

Technology can play a central role in addressing the challenges and threats faced by multidimensional peacekeeping missions, accelerating progress under all pillars of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative. A range of tools and capabilities exist that can improve mandate delivery and in-field services, reduce attacks against peacekeepers and address systemic challenges.

We have already seen the significant impact of technologies such as unmanned aerial systems to enhance situational awareness and improve mission planning. Technology also has an important role to play in strengthening early warning and rapid response systems. This can improve a mission's ability to protect civilians, including preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence and in situations of mass atrocity. Australia welcomes the strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping to fully utilize resources and support implementation of broader, system-wide reforms such as the Secretary-General's Data Strategy.

At the same time, we must be mindful that technologies can also be used in ways that cause harm. The international community must work together to both build awareness of emerging opportunities and collaborate transparently in mitigating risks – including by expanding in-mission digital literacy to ensure the responsible use of technology and data. Training and capacity-building partnerships will be increasingly important, and the multilateral system will continue to have a key role in addressing and shaping the impact of technologies.

One lesson of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis has been our ability to work across the digital domain and to continue to collaborate over vast distances. In the past year, Australia has leveraged technology to launch an online peace operations training platform for Indo-Pacific troop-contributing countries. Australia also invests in technology-based solutions, such as the roll-out of a telemedicine system and improved counter-improvised explosive device capabilities within peacekeeping missions. We see technology as a key enabler to evaluate whole-of-mission performance and support a culture of continual improvement.

Australia will continue to advocate for digital transformation to advance the women and peace and security agenda. Women's full, equal and meaningful participation and decision-making in peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes are essential to promoting stability, social cohesion and sustainable peace.

The success of digital transformation in peacekeeping will be contingent on strong partnerships and leadership at all levels. Looking ahead to the upcoming Peacekeeping Ministerial in Seoul, Australia will continue to prioritize multilateral, cross-regional and regional partnerships, innovation and mainstreaming of technology as integral to peace operations and building sustainable peace.

Annex III

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, Rabab Fatima

I congratulate India for assuming the presidency of the Council in the month of its seventy-fifth Independence Day and for the productive conduct of the Council's work. I also thank India for convening today's open debate.

I thank the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for their comprehensive and useful briefings.

The United Nations peacekeeping operations have become more complex in nature, posing new challenges for the peacekeepers deployed on the ground. The armed groups are becoming more and more dangerous with access to new technologies and equipment. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has added further complexities in the implementation of the mandates by the peacekeepers.

At the same time, technology can potentially improve the quality of peacekeeping in many ways. Effective, innovative and responsible use of technology in the field can help mandate implementation and ensure safety and security of the peacekeepers.

In this regard, we consider the new strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping as a welcome development, which will help in the implementation of Action for Peacekeeping commitments. We note with appreciation other important initiatives of the Secretariat, including the Unite Aware platform, which helps the missions to enhance situational awareness.

Bangladesh has always been in the forefront in contributing to world peace. For over three decades, Bangladesh has been participating in the United Nations peacekeeping operations, and we have been consistently placed among the top troop- and police-contributing countries for many years. Our peacekeepers have constantly been adapting to the new realities and contexts by supporting United Nations efforts to make peacekeeping more effective and fit for purpose.

Bangladesh co-leads with Italy the Group of Friends on Leading Environmental Management in the Field, which is dedicated to supporting the implementation of the United Nations environmental strategy for peacekeeping. We are equally committed to supporting the successful implementation of the digital transformation strategy. Bangladesh would also like to share its own journey to a "Digital Bangladesh" in the mission areas.

Let me share some thoughts on technology and peacekeeping.

First, use of technology in peace operations can contribute to more effective implementation of mandates, including by enhancing field support, safety and security, and protection of civilians. Therefore, it is important to integrate technologies, especially digital technology, in the peacekeeping mandates. However, such integration should be done in close consultation with the troop- and police-contributing countries and other stakeholders, particularly to assess and address the capability gaps.

Second, use of technologies can significantly enhance the safety and security of the peacekeepers, particularly by facilitating real-time communications and improving situational awareness within the mission. It can also be used for awareness campaigns, trend analysis and strengthening the early warning mechanism, which are critical for protection of civilians. In this regard, capacity-building of peacekeepers

and availability of the best and most up-to-date technologies are of utmost importance.

Third, the use of technology has enormous potential to stop the spread of disinformation and hatred. Digital technology in particular can be effectively used to disseminate positive information on the contribution of peacekeepers in the local community, as a means to tackle anti-United Nations sentiment, which often results in attacks against the peacekeepers.

Fourth, technology is a key enabler in reducing the environmental impact of peacekeeping operations. We also believe that for technology to be sustainable and user-friendly, it needs to be reliable and cost-effective. Encouraging home-grown and local solutions to environmental hazards as well as engaging community in environmental management is important. In this regard, incentivizing use of renewable energy including solar power in the field could be an important step.

Fifth, while incorporating the digital technologies, the responsible use of data should be one of the topmost priorities. A transparent and trustworthy mechanism can help in building a tech-enabled peacekeeping operation. In this regard, cooperation and coordination among the national authorities, United Nations agencies and other stakeholders is vital.

Sixth, adopting and integrating new technologies require new investment. Cost-efficiency is also crucial for sustainable projects. We, therefore, need to think how the new investments/funds will be managed for the sustainable running of technology-based projects, including through prioritization of resources. Prioritization of resources is essential in this regard.

Finally, digital technologies can play a crucial role in implementing the women and peace and security agenda, especially in ensuring greater participation of women in peacekeeping. It can also help the peacekeepers on the ground in community engagement, especially with the youth, and help promote the youth, peace and security agenda.

The use of digital technologies offers immense benefits in fulfilling peacekeeping mandates. However, technology alone cannot do all that is required for further strengthening the United Nations peacekeeping operations. It merely lays the foundation, but more technologically enabled peacekeeping will require genuine political will and strengthened partnerships among the Member States, particularly among the members of the Security Council.

Annex IV

Statement on behalf of the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, Ronaldo Costa Filho

First and foremost, please allow me to commend the Indian presidency of the United Nations Security Council for the month of August for convening such a critical debate on the use of new technologies to enhance the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers on the ground.

Peacekeeping has been – and remains – an absolute priority for the Brazilian Government. As an incoming Council member, Brazil is committed to maintaining all aspects of peacekeeping front and centre in the Security Council's agenda.

In that context, the safety and security of blue helmets is a priority that requires the Security Council to remain vigilant and actively engaged on the matter.

As one of the Co-Chairs of the newly established Group of Friends on the Safety and Security of United Nations Peacekeepers (alongside my colleagues from China, Indonesia and Rwanda), it fell on me the high honour of addressing the Security Council on 25 May to highlight the Group's concern about the recent increase in the number of blue helmets killed by malicious acts in recent years.

The concern is not unwarranted. As the operational environment peacekeepers encounter in the field grows increasingly more challenging – characterized by regional conflicts, ethnic strife, terrorism, the use of improvised explosive devices, not to mention the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic – it is only fitting that the Security Council steps up to the plate in order to minimize the risks peacekeepers are exposed to in carrying out the mandates handed to them by this very organ.

There is no mistake that innovation and the use of new technologies can be a powerful tool to counter the threats against peacekeepers and also to assist in the implementation of the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping operations, especially the protection of civilians. There are tasks that can be safely delegated to technological instruments while sparing casualties and suffering on the part of military and police officers as well as civilian staff in the context of a peacekeeping mission.

However, as it has been proven time and again, technological advancement is oftentimes a double-edged sword. Therefore, the use of new technologies must be the object of careful regulation, scrutiny and oversight in order to avoid the creation of the kind of situations the deployment of peacekeeping operations seeks to circumvent in the first place, including violations of national sovereignty and disrespect to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. A case in point: the use of unmanned aircraft merits close attention by all involved stakeholders – Secretariat, field missions, host nations and troop- and police-contributing countries – both in the light of its legitimate possibilities and the potential added risks the mishandling of new technologies might bring about.

With that in mind, it is highly important that the Secretariat keeps member States up to date on the use of new technologies in peacekeeping operations. One other aspect that should be taken into consideration by the Council is that the use of new technologies does not entail the undesirable diversion of resources from other critical areas pertaining to the safety and security of peacekeepers.

Annex V

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations, Cristian Espinosa

[Original: Spanish]

Allow me once again to congratulate India for its conduct of the work of the Security Council for the month of August, and for organizing this debate under the agenda item on United Nations peacekeeping operations.

I appreciate the statement by the Secretary-General, in particular the strategy for the digital transformation of peacekeeping missions. I also welcome the presentation by the Chair of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of India, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar.

This meeting addresses issues that are central to Ecuador-- on the one hand, the efforts for protection and security of peacekeeping personnel, and on the other, rapid technological development, with the challenges and opportunities it brings with it.

Because of the importance we attach to the security and efficiency of peacekeeping missions, on 30 March 2020, Ecuador co-sponsored Security Council resolution 2518 (2020), in which we referred to the development by the Secretariat of a strategy to better integrate the use of new technologies in order to improve situational awareness of personnel and their capacity.

With this resolution, we also expressed our serious concern at the threats posed by landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices. At the Arria-formula meeting "Protecting the Peacekeeper: Suppressing the Deployment of Improvised Explosive Devices against Peace Operations" organized by Kenya on 26 March 2021 and co-sponsored by Ecuador, we stressed the need to provide equipment with adequate technology to peacekeeping personnel.

Today's debate also offers us the possibility of formally emphasizing the conclusions expressed during the Arria-formula meeting of 17 May 2021 on the impact of emerging technologies on international peace and security. While in many contexts, health conditions have impacted peace and security, affecting humanitarian access in conflict zones, digital technologies have been beneficial in minimizing the interruption of processes for peacekeeping.

Technological solutions can assist United Nations peacekeeping operations in fulfilling their mandates in complex environments with greater effectiveness, among other things, by allowing them to adapt of the changing dynamic of conflicts.

Technology can improve capacity for early warning and action; security of camps and convoys, with stable Internet connections and integrated communications networks; improve monitoring and analysis of conflicts; promote energy efficiency and reduce environmental contamination. We also support the presidential statement S/PRST/2021/11 of 24 May 2021.

As an organization we must ensure that we are maximizing the benefits of technology, including digital, cyber and materials technologies, for our own operations. We cannot achieve greater efficiency if we are not equipped with the tools that will enable us to overcome new challenges to security. It is our responsibility to promote and make use of technological development to facilitate peace.

For example, we welcome the decision to address technology and medical capacity building, as one of the crosscutting themes to be discussed at the Ministerial Meeting on United Nations peacekeeping operations in Seoul, at the end of 2021.

The work of peacekeeping personnel is vital for the implementation of the three pillars of the United Nations, taking into account the objectives of protection of the civilian population and of lasting peace.

Lastly, Ecuador recognizes that with modern, well-equipped and protected peacekeeping operations, the objective of international security and protection of the civilian population in conflict zones and fragile zones can be achieved. Therefore, it is also vital to build capacity in the areas of justice and responsibility, to ensure that crimes against the personnel of those missions do not enjoy impunity. For that reason, Ecuador co-sponsored the draft resolution adopted as resolution 2589 (2021) by the Security Council today.

Annex VI

Statement of Egypt

[Original: Arabic]

Egypt plays a leading role in the United Nations peacekeeping system, whether by contributing personnel to the military and police components of peacekeeping missions, helping to develop policies and concepts, or participating in peacekeeping training.

Egypt has been one the greatest supporters of United Nations peacekeeping operations, starting with its participation in the United Nations Operation in the Congo in 1960. Egypt is the seventh largest contributor of army and police personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations, with more than 3,000 male and female peacekeepers in service. It is also the third largest contributor of police forces. Egypt currently participates in six United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa (Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, the Sudan, South Sudan and Western Sahara) by providing regular military and police units, non-commissioned officers and observers. Moreover, Egypt is one of the largest troop-contributing countries to two of the most dangerous peacekeeping operations, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

Egypt attaches particular importance to the participation of women in peacekeeping operations, in keeping with its support for the women, peace and security agenda. Accordingly, Egypt has led the way on that front by including, to date, 85 women in its peacekeeping forces. Egypt, in keeping with its role as an effective actor in establishing international peace and security, strives assiduously to grow its contributions to United Nations peacekeeping operations. Those contributions give Egypt the opportunity to solidify the prominent role it plays in resolving conflicts and bringing about stability in Africa.

Egypt is one of the leading supporters of efforts to reform the United Nations peacekeeping system. When Egypt held the presidency of the African Union, it exhorted African countries that contribute troops to peacekeeping operations and those that host such operations to be actively involved in implementing the United Nations Action for Peacekeeping initiative. In that connection, in November 2018, Egypt hosted a high-level regional conference in Cairo that produced the Cairo road map for enhancing the performance of peacekeeping operations, which the Peace and Security Council of the African Union adopted in October 2020 as a common African position on developing and enhancing the performance of peacekeeping operations.

In addition, Egypt is working at the United Nations to ensure coherence between peacekeeping efforts, on the one hand, and peacebuilding, reconstruction and post-conflict development efforts, on the other. Egypt will make that a high-priority issue during its tenure as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission in 2021, in keeping with the great importance that the President of the Republic attaches to post-conflict reconstruction and development in Africa, and in line with the vision that Egypt put forward in the statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2017/27), which was adopted in response to an initiative that Egypt launched during its membership of the Council.

With regard to operational aspects, the Cairo International Centre for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding is one of the leading training centres, in particular at the African level. The Centre runs many training programmes to build the capacity of African personnel in various aspects of peacekeeping, in accordance

with the highest standards and United Nations training programmes. In January 2020, the Centre, in collaboration with the Police Academy and the Integrated Training Service of the United Nations Secretariat, held a training workshop for the commanders of formed police units in United Nations peacekeeping missions that received considerable attention in peacekeeping circles within the Organization.

In January 2021, the Ministry of the Interior inaugurated the Egyptian Training Centre for Peacekeeping Operations at the Police Academy. That Centre represents an important addition to the distinctive capabilities of the various components of the Egyptian peacekeeping training system, including its military, police and civilian components, and enhances the position of Egypt as a key player in assisting and providing training to other African countries that participate in peacekeeping operations.

As part of ongoing efforts to develop United Nations peacekeeping operations, enhance their performance, reduce their cost and enable to respond to developments in the complex theatres in which they operate, the United Nations has increasingly been replacing large, slow-moving units with light forces that can be deployed rapidly and have specialized capabilities (helicopters, commando and rapid deployment units, reconnaissance drones, mobile medical intervention teams and specialized police teams). In addition, modern technology can be used in peacekeeping operations.

Accordingly, and taking into account technical developments, the issue of the security and safety of forces has become increasingly important, given the complex nature of conflicts and the heightened threat levels facing peacekeeping operations, in particular MINUSMA, the situation of which is of great interest to my country owing to the large number of attacks that have been committed against that Mission and the casualties suffered regularly by it troops, which include Egyptian peacekeepers.

In conclusion, Egypt will continue to actively pursue bilateral contacts with Member States and the United Nations Secretariat within the framework of the Group of Friends on the Safety and Security of United Nations Peacekeepers, with a view to pushing for the adoption of effective steps to promote the security and safety of troops, including by enhancing medical capabilities in fields of operations, and improve the capacity of missions to collect and analyse information.

Annex VII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Fiji to the United Nations

Fiji welcomes this Security Council open debate on this important subject of technology and peacekeeping. The rapid development of technology has transformed how societies function and has shaped the nature of conflicts around the world.

Today, the peacekeeping environment has increasingly become more complex, partly due to innovations in technology and its application in wars and conflicts. These have increased the challenges to peacekeepers in carrying out their roles; these also offer new possibilities for better and safer peacekeeping.

The United Nations has recognized that using technology in peacekeeping will enhance all aspects of peacekeeping. By leveraging technology, peacekeepers will improve performance, be more responsive to threats, save lives and fulfil their mandates more efficiently.

Fiji welcomes the initiatives by the Department of Peace Operations to mainstream relevant technology into peace operations. This is a major challenge to the United Nations. Funding costs, capacity-building, protection of data and systems, keeping abreast of developments in technology are challenges that the United Nations will need to overcome. For many and especially small troop- and police-contributing countries, this may be a stretch and they will need technical support as well.

Fiji would like to highlight the following:

The Secretary-General has outlined his 2018 strategy on new technologies for the United Nations system, providing a framework for the United Nations system. The Department of Peace Operations strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping is a step towards achieving this overall strategy. This strategy will need to be supported by all Member States through predictable funding and capacity-building. The Council has an important role in supporting and by including technology in peacekeeping in its regular agenda.

Partnerships are important for funding, acquiring and matching the required technology and providers with the end users. United Nations peacekeeping is not adequately resourced to keep pace with the rapid developments in technology, and large troop- and police-contributing countries still lag in their use of technology in peace operations.

Fiji welcomes the United Nations initiatives on the Partnership for Technology in Peacekeeping and the United Nations C4ISR Academy for Peace Operations, to name some, to mainstream the use of technology in peace operations and provide capacity-building. The Partnership for Technology in Peacekeeping plays an important role in coordinating partnerships. The United Nations Technology in Peacekeeping conferences have provided a multilateral forum for all stakeholders to set objectives, identify gaps and assemble partnerships needed to advance the integration of technology into peacekeeping.

Collection, use and protection of data in peacekeeping is a sensitive issue, due to the multinational nature of United Nations peacekeeping, and it can impinge on host country sovereignty. Guidelines will need to be established and adhered to, by field missions and all peacekeepers, regarding the collection and the protection of data. Data collected in peace operations should only be used for peacekeeping purposes. Its use, protection and disposal should conform to international laws and norms, and host country guidelines.

Technology and its products introduced into field missions will need to be accessible and available to all peacekeepers when required, in line with their roles. Peacekeepers often work in harsh and hostile conditions, isolated and far from major infrastructure. Unequal access and unwarranted restrictions can adversely impact performance, safety and security and mission mandates. Systems should be designed to be effective in isolated and austere environments, user-friendly, responsive and robust.

The increase in use of technology and connectivity also increases the vulnerability of United Nations peace operations to malicious and deliberate acts using information and communications technology. Technological systems that are introduced to peace operations will need to be robust to prevent interference, which will have an impact on peace operations.

Fiji has been contributing to peacekeeping for over 40 years. The safety and security of all peacekeepers are of paramount importance to Fiji. Fiji recognizes that technology can enhance the performance, safety and security and protection of our peacekeepers.

Fiji has continued to improve technological support to its peacekeepers. Fiji is working closely with our bilateral partners in capacity-building to improve proficiency in the use of technology.

Annex VIII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations

On behalf of the Nordic countries – Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland – I wish to thank India for raising this important topic on the Security Council's agenda. The Nordics are strong supporters of the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative, and we welcome the strengthened focus to integrate new technologies in the field, in the context of peacekeeping.

The Nordic countries have been steadfast contributors to United Nations peacekeeping since its very beginning. The safety of our peacekeepers remains a fundamental priority for us, as it is also a prerequisite for fulfilling the core task and mandate of peacekeeping, namely, to maintain international peace and security and to protect the local populations from conflict and violence.

Responsible, effective and sustainable peacekeeping relies on our ability to protect the protectors.

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Integrating new technologies in peacekeeping operations is imperative in order to respond to the emerging threats and challenges of today's operating environments. Technology can significantly increase the mission's safety and security through, for example, better situational awareness, improved readiness and enhanced field support, including medical and logistical support, and countering the threats posed by mines and improvised explosive devises. In this regard, it is essential to focus efforts and funding on new technologies to improve early warning systems.

New technologies yield significant opportunities; they can increase effectiveness and bring savings. At the same time, their introduction must be field-focused, predictable and driven by the practical needs of the end users on the ground. And they must be matched with improved capacity and training, especially as increased use of new technologies may also create new risks for missions, including as vectors for hybrid threats. We, Member States, have a shared responsibility to ensure that the resources and capabilities match the requirements of today's needs.

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New (digital) technologies have proven their value in the protection of civilians and ensuring accountability, including in preventing conflict-related sexual violence and bringing perpetrators to justice. The use of digital technologies must be in compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law. In this context, it is particularly important to follow the "do no harm principle" and to take gender aspects into account. Norms of responsible State behaviour provide important guidance for States in relation to the use of digital technologies.

Climate change and environmental degradation are widely recognized as threat multipliers and, in many cases, drivers of conflict. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that sustainable and responsible solutions are employed throughout all operations and mandate delivery. The Nordic countries encourage utilization of new technology in peacekeeping contexts in order to reduce the missions' environmental footprint and, where possible, to improve the health, safety and security of local communities as well as United Nations personnel. The Nordics encourage the

inclusion of climate-related security risks in the analyses of country- and regional-level conflicts.

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The Secretary-General's Road Map for Digital Cooperation and the United Nations digital toolkit in the peace mediation context have provided a useful framework and recommendations for integrating new technologies even more comprehensively into the agendas of the United Nations. We also welcome the new strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping.

Looking ahead to the United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial in Seoul later this year, the Nordic countries look forward to contributing to this discussion even more in the context of United Nations peacekeeping.

Annex IX

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations

Germany welcomes the Indian initiative to hold an open debate of the Security Council on "Technology and peacekeeping".

The use of modern technologies is becoming increasingly important if we want to seize our resources more efficiently in order to achieve mission objectives, to implement mandates (for example with regard to the protection of civilians) and to protect peacekeepers more effectively.

The safety and security of our peacekeepers remains of utmost importance and is not negotiable. Technologies can make a tangible difference and they contribute to saving the lives of peacekeepers, who operate in increasingly dangerous environments and who are exposed to complex threat scenarios. One concrete example is camp protection: while a basic protection level is required to control the perimeters of the camp and the areas around the camp, additional technologies, such as a detection and warning system against indirect fire, will further contribute to enhancing the protection of camps.

Germany provides the sense and warning system MANTIS for the airspace around Camp Castor and the United Nations super camp in Gao, Mali, thereby improving the safety and security of all peacekeepers deployed therein.

The utilization of technologies must assist the fulfilment of mandated tasks, and it will contribute to the provision of essential situational awareness. Modern unmanned aerial systems like the German Heron 1 capability to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) are means of first choice to monitor large, often remote areas. These systems and other technologies can also contribute to supporting accountability and to minimizing harm to civilians in armed conflict.

The current United Nations pilot project "Radio mining" in MINUSMA (co-financed by Germany and the Netherlands) serves as an additional example for the improvement of the Mission's situational awareness by analysing radio broadcasts. Data-based monitoring of hate speech and calls to violence in social media at the local, regional and national levels, artificial intelligence-based early warning systems and other technological tools all contribute to better anticipating of risks and violence and, hence, increase the security of both United Nations peacekeepers and local civilians in the operational areas.

In order to be able to leverage the opportunities and the potential of technologies, training of peacekeepers in particular on digital technologies remains critical. We need a common understanding of the effective use of the different forms of technologies, and their respective advantages for the mission, but also limitations and potential risks they might carry.

At the same time, it is clear that only enhancing digital capabilities and deploying high-end technologies to missions will not create an advantage all by itself. Structures have to be aligned, processes to be optimized and interoperability to be enhanced in order to set necessary preconditions for the full integration and maximum impact of modern technologies on mandate fulfilment.

In this context, Germany welcomes the launch of the strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping as a cornerstone for the enhanced integration of technology in peacekeeping and is looking forward to the discussions on technology as a cross-cutting theme for the Peacekeeping Ministerial in Seoul this December.

Annex X

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations

Guatemala thanks the delegation of India, in its capacity as President of the Security Council of the United Nations for the month of August 2021, for convening this ministerial open debate on "Protecting the protectors: technology and peacekeeping". At the same time, we also thank the distinguished panellists for their presentations.

Guatemala shares the criteria mentioned in the concept note circulated by the delegation of India, in that often peacekeeping missions are underequipped, with major gaps, facing threats from armed groups, from criminals and terrorists, many of whom have access to sophisticated weapons and technology. No mission can be expected to succeed in today's complex shipments , without the ability to innovate and major effective use of technology.

The majority of United Nations peacekeeping missions are deployed in complex and high-risk environments that have compelled the United Nations to better integrate technology into its field operations. This integration of technology can improve situational awareness and early warning/action, enhance camp and convoy security, provide stable Internet and integrated communication networks, strengthen conflict monitoring and analysis. It is our interpretation that technological solutions can support United Nations peacekeeping operations in implementing their mandates in complex environments, helping them to adapt to changing conflict dynamics and taking advantage of increased efficiencies.

Guatemala believes that the use of new technologies is necessary and useful within the framework of the implementation of the mandates of the peacekeeping missions. However, technology must be implemented according to the principles and aspects included in the frameworks of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and of the full implementation of the three principles of the peacekeeping operations, namely: consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force, except for self-defence and/or defence of the mandate.

Guatemala reiterates its concern that peacekeeping personnel continue to be attacked and that this Organization continues to have casualties on the ground. Improving the protection and safety of the personnel in peacekeeping operations must remain a priority. In this regard, we are pleased that measures are taken to improve the analysis of security initiatives, by making informed and timely decisions about the activities to be carried out and how to manage the risks faced by the personnel. This information must be transferred to the troop/police-contributing countries promptly. The safety of United Nations personnel must continue to be a priority for the Organization.

Peacekeepers have been the target of direct attacks by terrorist groups; therefore Guatemala reiterates its position that peacekeeping missions are not designed to fight terrorism. Guatemala continues to question the scope and implications that the so-called robust peacekeeping operations may have. We believe that this type of operation misrepresents the basic function pursued, since peacekeeping operations are neither designed nor equipped to impose political solutions through the continued use of force.

Guatemala believes that the international community has an important space to strengthen the implementation of the three pillars of work of the United Nations, with concrete actions that would have a direct and positive impact with the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Security Council, namely providing the host

country with full access to the Internet, taking into account the impact on the peace and security mandate. It is our interpretation that technology as a strategic enabler can be used to enhance security in the field. United Nations personnel, who must perform in remote and isolated environments, experience many risks of which they are often unaware and personnel at headquarters do not have such information. In this regard, the use of communication tools and good use of technology can help gather real-time information that allows United Nations personnel to stay updated on the security status in the different mission areas; United Nations personnel must receive timely and up-to-date information on security in the mission areas.

Guatemala recognizes that early warning systems can be applied to all fields where a threat to a certain population is predicted, either from armed groups or criminals whose purpose is to harm civilians in different local communities or villages. To forecast and prevent future threats and avoid the loss of human lives and property, for the system to function in an optimum way, it must be integrated by the population to be protected and the public authorities in charge of mitigating insecurity actions.

Finally, Guatemala highlights that, based on the feedback from the field, the use of communication equipment in different peacekeeping missions is not balanced and equal, taking into account that some missions have a lack of adequate equipment to be able to carry out effective communication. In some cases, coverage is not available as a result of obsolete equipment and lack of Internet, limited tactical communication within the components of the mission and a strategic communication network that is not used to full capacity. We strongly believe that the United Nations has an important space to improve this operative issue.

Annex XI

Statement by the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Indonesia to the United Nations, Mohammad K. Koba

Let me begin by thanking India for convening this open debate.

As the face of conflict changes along with the growth of new challenges such as improvised explosive devices, terrorism and pandemics, the environment where peacekeepers are deployed has been becoming more complex and dangerous.

The recent increase in the number of attacks against peacekeepers shows how dangerous the current environment is. Indonesia commends the continued work and dedication of peacekeepers in these challenging circumstances.

To tackle these ever-growing challenges, peacekeepers need to be fully equipped with adequate resources to ensure that they could exercise their mandates effectively, efficiently and safely.

In this regard, let me share the following points.

First, harnessing technology in peacekeeping operations is essential.

Responding to these ever-growing challenges, peacekeepers need to be able to adapt and innovate rapidly to execute their mandates.

This is especially important in improving peacekeeping intelligence and situational awareness; strategic communication and community engagement; the use of technology; and addressing occupational and safety hazards.

We call for all stakeholders to enhance the application and sharing of emerging technologies in peacekeeping operations, especially in improving the safety and security of peacekeepers.

Moreover, the application of technology could also be beneficial in increasing the participation of female peacekeepers in line with resolution 2538 (2020).

In this regard, my delegation welcomes the launch of the strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping and looks forward to its implementation.

Second, strengthening training and capacity-building: Indonesia firmly believes that harnessing technology also calls for proper training in the effective and efficient application of such technology in missions.

To this end, both predeployment and in-mission training are crucial to prepare peacekeepers in harnessing any technological improvements.

Indonesia emphasizes the indispensable importance of strengthening the partnership between all stakeholders in training and capacity-building, especially in introducing new technological innovations in the field.

Hence, we call for the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat to enhance communication and partnership in dispersing technological innovations in a peacekeeping operation.

Third point, prioritizing the safety and security of peacekeepers:

technological innovation in peacekeeping operations should always be aimed towards enhancing the mission's effectiveness and efficiency in implementing its mandate while ensuring the safety and security of peacekeepers.

As a major troop and police contributor, Indonesia attaches great importance to the safety and security of peacekeepers.

We reiterate the commitment made by the international community in this endeavour through Security Council resolution 2518 (2020), the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Declaration of Shared Commitments of the Action for Peacekeeping. The Action for Peacekeeping Plus also puts a particular focus on improving the safety and security of peacekeepers, which includes promoting accountability.

Indonesia calls for all stakeholders to redouble our efforts to implement these frameworks in the face of rapidly evolving challenges in the field.

We also believe that dialogue remains essential in our joint effort to implement these frameworks. Together with Brazil, Rwanda and China, Indonesia has established and is co-chairing the Group of Friends on the Safety and Security of United Nations Peacekeepers to further enhance the dialogue on this issue.

To conclude, Indonesia would like to reiterate its strong commitment to be a part of the collective commitment to improve the safety and security of peacekeepers, including through harnessing technological advantages.

Peacekeepers have dedicated their lives and made the sacrifice for the cause of peace. Their safety and security must remain our top priority.

Annex XII

Statement by the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations, Zahra Ershadi

The United Nations peacekeeping operations have been a vital tool for the fulfilment of the very first and yet the most important purpose of the Organization, namely "to maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace".

Despite all its challenges, the use of this tool needs to be continued and also further improved to ensure that peacekeeping operations keep pace with the changing complex nature of the peace and security context.

In this context, we emphasize the unique and crucial role of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations as the only United Nations forum mandated by the General Assembly to review comprehensively the whole question of United Nations peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

We also underline that the establishment of any peacekeeping operation or extension of mandate of existing ones or their improvement must be in full conformity with the principles set forth in the United Nations Charter as well as the basic principles that have developed to govern such operations.

To that end, special attention must be paid to the full respect for the principles of sovereign equality, political independence and territorial integrity of all States and non-intervention in matters that are essentially within their domestic jurisdiction, as well as impartiality, the consent of the parties, and the non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate.

Iran continues to support the implementation of the Declaration of Shared Commitments on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, which aims at ensuring collective efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping in order to address urgent challenges facing contemporary peacekeeping operations.

We emphasize that the policy formulation and decision-making process in all stages of peacekeeping operations, including with respect to protecting the peacekeeping forces, must be conducted with the active participation of troop- and police-contributing countries.

The use of modern technologies should aim at increasing the safety and security of United Nations personnel, including peacekeepers. At the same time, their use must be considered on a case-by-case basis and must uphold the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States, and also the fundamental principles of peacekeeping, especially the consent of the host State.

We also stress the importance of defining the legal, operational, technical and financial aspects related to the use of modern technology, in an inclusive and transparent manner, in appropriate intergovernmental processes. At any rate, any and all information gathered through advanced technological means must be used exclusively for the fulfilment of the clearly defined mandates of the operation concerned.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has hosted one peacekeeping operation of the United Nations for more than 10 years after the end of the eight-year war imposed as a result of Saddam Hussein's aggression against Iran. Likewise, to date, Iranian forces

have participated in eight peacekeeping operations of the United Nations and four Iranian citizens have lost their lives in such operations. We stand ready to further contribute to the peacekeeping operations logistically and militarily, by deploying troops, military observers, police and civilians.

Annex XIII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations

Italy would like to thank the Government of India for organizing this open debate. Today's event is particularly timely, as it takes place in conjunction with the adoption of the resolution on protecting the protectors, promoted by India and which Italy co-sponsored, and with the recent publication of the strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping, jointly launched by the Department of Peace Operations, the Department of Operational Support and the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance.

Nowadays, technology is undeniably playing an increasingly prominent role in our society, being an important driving force for inclusive growth, reshaping working methods and redefining the concept of "security".

In increasingly complex areas of operations, where peacekeepers face multiple challenges and serious threats from actors often having access to cutting-edge equipment, technology could make the difference in enhancing the safety and security of blue helmets and in allowing them to carry out their mandates more efficiently and effectively, including when it comes to the protection of civilians.

Italy is the first contributor of blue helmets among Western countries and is among the main contributors to the peacekeeping budget. We have thus a great stake in ensuring the safety and security of peacekeepers. We firmly believe that technologies, especially digital ones, may be crucial enablers leading to increased situational awareness, to a deeper, analysis-driven understanding of the area of operations, to enhanced field support and to a more incisive multilayered risk management. Technology may also allow for a reconfiguration of peacekeeping missions on the ground, making their presence less visible, thus less intrusive and more acceptable to local populations.

The successful use of unmanned aerial vehicles in peacekeeping operations is the tangible example of potential benefits stemming from technology and advanced equipment. In this vein, Italy regularly offers valuable units and assets to the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System, such as manoeuvre units, complemented by a number of niche skill sets and enablers, and utility helicopters.

Technology remains however a double-edged sword to "be handled with care". We are convinced that new technological tools, especially those allowing for mining data, should always be used in an ethical, deontological way, in line with United Nations guidelines and international law, including human rights law and international humanitarian law.

That is why we believe that an adequate training of peacekeepers is pivotal. The familiarization both with advanced equipment and with procedures aimed at using it in an appropriate manner should be a crucial part of the peacekeepers' curricula. In this vein, Italy – through the Center of Excellence for Stability Police Units and through bilateral programmes – is proud to provide specialized training to peacekeepers and to conduct capacity-building activities that respect human rights.

Finally, Italy is co-chairing along with Bangladesh the Group of Friends on Leading Environmental Management in the Field. This is yet another area where it is possible to foster a fruitful cross-pollination between emerging technologies and environmental sustainability. An example of this synergy could be mainstreaming the use of clean technologies and renewable energies in order to minimize the impact of peacekeeping operations on the ecosystems and on the local communities.

Annex XIV

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, Ishikane Kimihiro

I thank the President for convening this important open debate.

United Nations peacekeeping retains a significant role in maintaining international peace and stability. Today, peacekeepers are deployed in many challenging environments, and Japan believes it is paramount for all stakeholders, including troop- and police-contributing countries, Member States, the United Nations Secretariat and host countries, to ensure their safety and help them implement their mandates more effectively and efficiently. Here, modern technology must play a role in enhancing their capabilities.

Simply providing technology to missions or to those in need will not alone be sufficient to make the most of its benefits. Also, all stakeholders are responsible to ensure that the technology will be applied in accordance with relevant rules and policies such as the United Nations rules and regulations, international law, and laws and regulations of the host country. The use of technology should take a human-centric approach and the dignity of individuals should always be respected. Illicit transfer or theft of technology and technology-related information should not be allowed. Therefore, critical is Member States' assistance to capacity-building of peacekeepers to be deployed and of missions in maximizing the enabling potential of technology.

Today, as a firm believer of training and capacity-building's possibilities to enhance peacekeeping's performance as a whole, I would like to showcase two examples of Japan's good practices.

Training and capacity-building of peacekeepers (United Nations C4ISR Academy for Peace Operations)

Japan has been a committed supporter of the United Nations C4ISR Academy for Peace Operations since it was founded in 2015 with the aim of providing standardized, mission-specific training. Japan has contributed approximately $4.3 million of voluntary budget to the Academy in total to date, thus strengthening communications within missions.

Peacekeepers have diverse backgrounds, and when the United Nations procures and incorporates a certain technology into peacekeeping, it is critical that all peacekeepers are capable of applying it in the field. Standardized training is therefore fundamental.

Gender considerations must also be reflected in training and capacity-building. As technology is more often deployed to the field, female and male peacekeepers must have equal opportunities to gain necessary skills. Part of Japan's grants directly support the women's outreach course, in which 177 female military and police officers from 57 countries have participated.

Assistance to mission application of technology (telemedicine project)

Besides training and capacity-building for peacekeepers, it is also critical to help the missions adopt new technologies, particularly in relation to preserving the lives and safety of personnel.

Responding rapidly to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, Japan offered grants of $1.5 million for a telemedicine project by the United Nations Secretariat. With this, the United Nations will plan pilot projects of applying

telemedicine in certain missions on the ground, which will provide technological solutions to save the lives of peacekeepers deployed in remote places.

It is expected that through this project, the United Nations will identify the telemedicine capabilities needed in other missions, which will lead to a broader adoption of tele-technology in the future.

To have such contributions and reduce capacity gaps in the use of technology, we would like to urge partnerships among the United Nations, Member States and troop- and police-contributing countries to be further enhanced. For instance, the Triangular Partnership Programme provides a systematized arrangement to make this matching easier, and it has helped Japan to make timely and relevant contributions to missions and personnel.

In closing, Japan believes these and other efforts will help the United Nations incorporate technology into its missions in a way that will allow technological innovation to become a true strategic enabler.

We stand ready to continue our efforts in this regard.

Annex XV

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the United Nations

We thank the Indian presidency for drawing attention to the changing nature of conflicts that have turned more violent, demanding new approaches not only in conflict resolution but also protection of the blue helmets and blue berets. We pay a tribute to all peacekeepers who have sacrificed their live for the noble cause of peace.

The increasingly complex mandates and extremely hazardous operating environments of peacekeeping missions require an overhaul of strategies in all areas: early warning, intelligence-sharing, ground and aerial reconnaissance, weaponry for both offensive and self-defence, communication and night equipment, transport, field hospital units and medical evacuation to mention a few.

Generally, uniformed national contingents are deployed with communications equipment to allow only internal communication. However, we need a modernized infrastructure that facilitates communications through the chain of command with units, sectors and missions headquarters to enable prompt and speedy responses.

In more recent years, a wider range of technology solutions have become available to address challenges faced on the ground. It is noteworthy that the fragmented and diverse requirements from vastly varied missions, such as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, are now consolidated into a more structured and formal arrangement.

Kazakhstan, therefore, welcomes the Partnership for Technology in Peacekeeping initiative (PTP), formally established in 2014, which has now opened new opportunities for effective engagement and capability.

The annual PTP international symposium is the main event of the initiative and provides a valuable ongoing platform for a high-level technology engagement between the United Nations and the Member States. We are pleased to announce that the fifth PTP international symposium was held in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, in May 2019. This platform identified current challenges in peacekeeping, with the corresponding technology solutions and arrangements for establishing partnership arrangements between varied troop-contributing countries.

Several significant developments that followed are noteworthy.

First, the heightened situational awareness, as well as data-driven peacekeeping required for both crisis and longer-term decision-making, which resides in various mission components. Hence, we need an effective management of the information cycle, combined with the use of data for predictive analysis in our missions.

In this regard, Kazakhstan welcomes the situational awareness technology platform Unite Aware, which captures and presents information to decision makers in an intuitive manner, thereby enhancing the safety and security of peacekeepers.

Second, telemedicine, which was a focus area at the PTP symposium in Kazakhstan, currently has a funded follow-up pilot project arising from the deliberations of the symposium. Telemedicine is a valuable tool, capable of augmenting medical support to deployed units. It requires an integrated support package that includes adequate provision for training and equipment sustainment at both ends of the link. This new approach has the potential for substantial cost savings,

as well as cost-effective medical care, and fewer costly evacuations. We thus need to research further into new advances to better protect the lives of peacekeepers.

Third, the Smart Camp initiative, based on the recommendations of the environment and eco-responsibility working group at the PTP symposium in Kazakhstan, can ensure an improved quality of life and protection for our personnel in the field. It means a search for excellence at all levels, and from the ground to headquarters level. It is more than just clarity of political vision and mandate. A high comprehensive performance entails support, equipment, training and utilization of all scientific developments to have a positive impact on the protection of civilians, safety and security of peacekeepers, and implementation of all mandated tasks, as well as a comprehensive framework of high accountability.

Kazakhstan stands ready to engage in all multilateral measures to integrate new technologies in the increasingly threatening and deadly conflicts that peacekeepers are deployed in.

Annex XVI

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations, Amrit Bahadur Rai

Let me begin by extending my sincere appreciation to the Government of India for organizing this high-level open debate, under its presidency of the Security Council, on the important issue of technology and peacekeeping.

I would also like to commend the Secretary-General for his insightful briefing.

We live in a time of spectacular technological evolution. Innovations are being made in the fields of digital technology, artificial intelligence, robotics, biotechnology and unmanned vehicles, among others. And such innovations are widely available for people including miscreants.

Most of today's military employ autonomous weapon systems, cyberwarfare, robotics and artificial intelligence among others. However, United Nations peacekeeping missions are yet to benefit sufficiently from these technological advances. They lack a wide range of technological enablers which help them maintain peace and ensure the safety and security of the populations they serve. Furthermore, the current pandemic revealed the fragilities of peacekeeping missions with regard to the health and safety of peacekeepers themselves.

As one of the largest troop- and police-contributing countries, Nepal is concerned about the increasing complexity of peacekeeping missions as they face asymmetric and unconventional threats. Possible abuse of modern invention is another facet which poses threats to the safety and security of peacekeepers. Conflict areas have become more precarious, risky and challenging with such unconventional threats from criminals and terrorists.

Evolving threats warrant United Nations peacekeepers to be more agile, responsive, efficient and confident being equipped with new technologies. We cannot wait longer to integrate technological innovation into United Nations peacekeeping, as such innovations are essential for situational awareness, mobility, safety and security, command and control as well as eco-friendly adaptation in peacekeeping missions. Modern technologies are also useful in data analysis, gathering of intelligence, real-time monitoring of the situation, countering improvised explosive devices and reduction of the environmental footprint, among others. New technologies must be integrated both at the tactical as well as the strategic level to protect blue helmets and enhance their capacities to deliver results. Only better and technologically equipped missions and personnel can better protect civilians and deliver the mission mandate effectively.

Nepal supports the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping and Action for Peacekeeping Plus initiatives. We also support the soon-to-be-finalized strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping. Nepal believes that the upcoming Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting to be held in Seoul under the cross-cutting theme of technology and medical capacity-building would be an important event for strengthening our partnership in equipping our peacekeepers with new technologies.

Strong and effective partnership among Member States is essential for integrating modern technologies in United Nations peacekeeping missions. While we all are effortful to incorporate modern technologies, there exists a wide gap between "haves" and "have-nots". Large numbers of peacekeeping personnel come from those developing countries which are trying hard to catch the benefits of advanced technologies. Therefore, the need for strengthened partnership among troop- and

police-contributing countries, the United Nations and developed countries is essential for integrating new technologies in peacekeeping as an enabler to our collective efforts. There is a need for enhanced triangular partnership to enable troop- and police-contributing countries through transfer of technologies and adequate training for capacity-building.

To conclude, Nepal emphasizes the sustainable partnership of all stakeholders to enhance the technological capacity of the peacekeeping missions for effective mandate delivery. Our collaboration is needed more than ever to narrow capability gaps, improve peacekeeping performance and leave transforming impacts to those people whom United Nations peacekeeping serves. Nepal is committed to making every possible effort to embrace new technologies for its peacekeepers in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders.

Annex XVII

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, Munir Akram

Innovation and modern technology have immense potential to strengthen United Nations peacekeeping in the face of mounting challenges. From fulfilling the basic needs of peacekeepers such as access to water, energy and health to improving mobility, communications and camp security, technology could make peacekeeping safer, secure and hence more effective. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has further ramped up the reliance on technology with information and communications technologies, such as stable Internet and efficient interoperable radio systems, becoming vital for timely communication in the peace operations.

Designing peacekeeping-specific technologies

Advancing safety and security of peacekeepers and protection of civilians

Both the Security Council and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations have encouraged the use of field-focused, reliable and cost-effective technologies that are driven by practical needs of end users on the ground. This means designing peacekeeping-specific technologies which advance the protection of peacekeepers as well as the security of the local population.

Improving water accessibility

For example, to improve water access to peacekeepers and communities, advanced technologies focused on water recycling, rain capture and water usage efficiency should be embraced.

Upgrading health-care technologies

Similarly, health-care technologies are critical enablers for the success of peacekeepers, especially those deployed in remote areas. High-tech air ambulances, video telemedicine and well-equipped medical personnel could serve a twofold objective: one, reduce casualties and two, boost peacekeepers' morale by displaying United Nations duty of care towards its personnel.

Improving camp security and convoy protection

A greater focus should also be on technological solutions that could strengthen camp security, convoy protection and peacebuilding capabilities of peace operations.

As a troop-contributing country with current deployment in 8 out of the 12 United Nations peacekeeping missions, Pakistan considers improving the field medical system vital for strengthening peacekeeping performance. Agile casualty evacuation/medical evacuation supported by corresponding air assets; optimal level of field hospitals; detailing a medical team with each long-range patrolling convoy; and involving medical personnel in operational planning, especially in high-risk missions, are the key determinants of life-saving interventions in peace operations.

Accelerating the introduction of counter-improvised explosive device technology

In recent years, mines and improvised explosive devices have become one of the leading causes of peacekeeping casualties with the sophistication of such attacks having risen sharply in several peace operations. To address this pressing challenge, peacekeeping should accelerate introduction of counter-improvised explosive device

technologies such as mine-resistant vehicles, improvised explosive device jammers and ground-penetrating radars. Matching the scale of the threat with the right technological solutions could enhance situational awareness and facilitate safer contingent mobility, thus improving performance while mitigating the risk exposure.

Over the years, Pakistan has made a concerted effort, with significant success, to integrate counter-improvised explosive device technologies and capabilities in its military planning. We have established a counter-improvised explosive device training school and a police school of explosives handling, which offer state-of-the-art courses on detecting and defusing improvised explosive devices; on gathering and analysing forensic evidence; and on conducting post-blast investigations. Equipped with these capabilities, Pakistan is strengthening its already deployed engineering companies with explosive ordnance disposal and vertical platoons. Given their exceptional mobility skills which enable them to respond swiftly to any threat or developing situation, these platoons offer a unique value in protecting lives of peacekeepers as well as the civilian population.

Ensuring a responsible use of technology

The recent Action for Peacekeeping Plus document rightly envisages an innovative and tech-enabled peacekeeping architecture for the future. Its realization would require strengthening trust between various stakeholders, especially the host States, tech-contributing countries and troop-contributing countries. Using technology to collect, store and access data has always invoked certain sensitivities and concerns. A responsible use of technology, which respects national sovereignty and addresses confidentiality concerns, could expedite the integration of cutting-edge solutions in peace operations. We therefore recommend that the United Nations system explore the options for establishing an inclusive framework for the governance of new technologies, including in the peacekeeping domain.

Pakistan supports the application of new methods, new technologies and new ways of thinking to United Nations peacekeeping. However, it should be done with full transparency and in consultation with Member States – an approach advocated in the 2021 report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and other key United Nations documents on peacekeeping operations, such as the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations.

Leveraging technology for dispute and conflict resolution

Based on this approach, "technology" and "innovation" should be committed to improving the dispute and conflict resolution and mandate implementation capabilities of peacekeeping missions. They should not be merely leveraged as tools to advance narrow tactical objectives or promoted as a panacea for overcoming peace and security challenges. Lasting peace is achieved, not just through improving technical capabilities of peace operations, but through political engagement driven by solemn commitment to conflict prevention, peace processes and just political solution to conflicts. A fundamental requirement for sustainable peace is to enable the peacekeepers to fulfil their mandated role in fragile security environments. No amount of technology introduction can bring peace if peacekeepers are denied the ability to operate in accordance with their mandate.

Harnessing technology to strengthen the peacekeepers

Similarly, technology cannot be a substitute for capable and professional peacekeepers. Rather than supplanting the human resource in peace operations, technology should seek to supplement their capabilities. In each mission, the

deployment of an adequate number of professional peacekeepers, equipped with right skills and commensurate resources, should be our collective priority.

Promoting green initiatives

As a country deeply committed to climate action, Pakistan welcomes the commitment to "green solutions" set out in this year's report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. Eco-friendly initiatives combined with resource-efficient practices in field missions can contribute to cost savings, improve self-sufficiency and resilience, leaving a positive legacy for the local communities.

My own country's experience shows that nature-based solutions to environmental challenges can create jobs, promote ecosystem-based adaptation and support economic recovery in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. The catalytic impact of such green initiatives could feed into the wider United Nations peacebuilding agenda centred on sustainable development and addressing the root causes of conflict.

Building partnerships

Moving forward, Pakistan will continue to contribute critical assets, like utility aviation, signals communication units, engineering companies alongside affordable field solutions to ensure rapid deployment, especially of infantry units. We look forward to strengthening this contribution through innovative partnership projects, both with the Secretariat and Member States, to develop cost-effective, tailor-made solutions for United Nations peacekeeping. The upcoming Peacekeeping Ministerial preparatory conference, jointly organized by Pakistan and the Netherlands in October this year, will dedicate a session to digital technology and innovation, paving the way for required pledges at the Ministerial Meeting in Seoul.

Bridging the digital gap

As a troop- and police-contributing country, we would also like to underline that training and capacity-building will play a crucial part in seamless implementation of the United Nations digital strategy. United Nations-supported training frameworks, such as the Triangular Partnership Programme and light coordination mechanism, could focus on building self-sufficient training capacities of host States and troop- and police-contributing countries. Support in the development of a national cadre of trainers, provision and refinement of training materials and building national capacities to use sophisticated, high-tech equipment are areas that would require consistent focus and priority. Enhanced national capabilities would surely optimize the effective and efficient use of modern technologies in the field.

Annex XVIII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations

[Original: Spanish]

We wish to thank the distinguished speakers for their valuable presentations this morning, as well as the document circulated among delegations on a strategy for digital transformation to help strengthen United Nations peacekeeping operations, which invites us to reflect on the fundamental need to incorporate the use of technology in actions to consolidate international peace and security.

The use of technology in peacekeeping operations is more important now than ever before; if technological developments in keeping with current advances are not available, the ability to meet the stated objectives, which are principles of particular interest to the international community, are at serious risk.

From the beginning of the first peacekeeping operations, the forces deployed by the United Nations had considerable technological superiority over the threats they faced; however, in recent years the technology gap with violent groups has been shrinking.

Current peacekeeping forces require better technology for military and police operations to assist in meeting the demands of care for the environment, energy efficiency, observance of the law and social responsibility, inter alia; technology is essential for facing these challenges through a structure that allows such operations to work in harmony with the communities in the zones where multinational forces are deployed.

For the forces we send to these operations, it is essential to strengthen surveillance and analysis of conflicts through the systematic application of technology that enables us to process data on potentially violent scenarios more efficiently, with the objective of providing early warning to political decision-making centres in order to take measures to prevent conflicts from beginning, spreading or intensifying.

The use of advanced technologies by these forces facilitates training and capacity-building, which has been demonstrated in the particular context of the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, when virtual media and technological platforms were a highly useful tool for capacity-building and training of peacekeeping personnel anywhere in the world.

A good example has been the intensive use of medical technology, which has helped to increase the effectiveness of health care services, including in the most remote missions, considerably reducing mortality and morbidity among the personnel of peacekeeping missions.

Another important contribution of the implementation of new technologies in such operations is the improvement in the capacity for criminal investigation and accountability through facial recognition, electronic surveillance, data bases, etc. Current technology offers important tools to detect and identify criminal conduct that can cause harm to the civilian population or United Nations troops. Such technologies increase surveillance capacity and in turn offer solid evidence enabling such cases to be brought to court.

Lastly, I would like to underline that Peru is in agreement with the views of the presenters that the use of innovative technologies will contribute to a tangible improvement in coordination and deployment of United Nations peacekeeping missions; it will also help to improve the security of peacekeeping personnel with regard to surveillance of camps and convoys, disarming of explosives, and unmanned vehicles, which could reduce the exposure of our personnel to risk and protect them from proximity to and/or presence in areas where there is a high probability of violent incidents.

Annex XIX

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Poland to the United Nations

Poland would like to thank India for organizing this timely and important debate. We also express our appreciation to Secretary-General António Guterres for his valuable intervention.

Peacekeeping remains one of the most effective United Nations tools in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security. Today's United Nations peacekeepers often operate in complex security environments, facing asymmetrical threats. While peacekeeping is constantly evolving to meet new challenges and implement multidimensional mandates, we need stronger preventive measures in order to address new security risks and threats.

The 2015 report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations underscored the need to ensure effective uptake of field-appropriate technology in support of peace operations and stated that technology and innovation are critical for the operational impact of current and future United Nations peace operations. In this vein, Poland fully supports the call to better integrate the use of technologies in order to improve the safety and security of peacekeepers.

Keeping in mind the challenges and opportunities arising from the application of technology and innovation in peacekeeping, we need to advance the technologies that are field-focused, reliable and cost-effective. It is particularly important to study how the use of technology can enhance the safety and security of peacekeepers, strengthen their health and well-being, support shelter and camp security and management, as well as enhance capabilities for early warning and protection of civilians.

We fully subscribe to the conviction that operational performance and the safety and security of peacekeepers are strongly interlinked. It is pivotal that peacekeeping missions evolve their capabilities and systems to remain agile and effective. In this spirit, Poland highlights the importance of taking advantage of relevant technology in order to improve situational awareness, enhance field support and facilitate mandate implementation. We also stress the need to bridge the capacity gaps among troop- and police-contributing countries in the use of technology.

We underscore that situational awareness is essential for self-protection, but also for protecting civilian populations. Digital technologies allow more systematic capture and processing of large amounts of data, strengthening conflict monitoring and analysis, and thereby contribute to making faster and more informed decisions.

Problems of peacekeeping missions arising from technological deficits, especially in the fields of situational awareness, safety and security of peacekeepers and protection of civilians, will have a growing effect on efficiency of the United Nations missions and operations across the globe. Therefore, Poland recognizes the need to provide modern equipment and technology to peacekeepers and, at the same time, wishes to highlight that many Member States already possess and are ready to deploy those capabilities.

Unfortunately, in some cases peacekeeping forces are facing resistance from the host States, which happen to be reluctant to the deployment of certain types of equipment and technology. That is why it is crucial that the Secretariat, the Security Council and all the relevant stakeholders work closely with the host States' authorities in order to strengthen understanding and acceptance of usage of relevant capabilities. Ensuring security of the United Nations personnel, peacekeeping forces and civilians

should remain a priority for all Member States. Bearing in mind that this is a joint endeavour, Poland highlights the primary responsibility of the host States in this regard.

Poland believes that application of new technological tools in peacekeeping can contribute to making a real difference in the field. In this vein, Poland fully supports the efforts of the Secretariat to develop the strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping.

Annex XX

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations

Portugal thanks India for organizing for the first time an open debate on technology and peacekeeping, which will certainly be conducive to the sharing of good practices and drawing up guidance on the use of technology in peacekeeping operations.

We hope that this open debate may be the beginning of structured discussions on these matters and a way to attain common understanding and to reach consensus. Setting out a vision for the use of the new technological developments of today and tomorrow and identifying its limits are a fundamental question that will be at the heart of our action in the years to come.

Emerging technologies can represent both opportunities and risks to peace and security. On the one hand, they can instil weaknesses in the security, economic, political, cultural and social aspects of peacekeeping operations. On the other hand, they can be real game changers in enhancing peacekeeping performance and the efficient implementation of the mandates in complex conflict contexts. The use of modern technology and innovations can also help preserve and sustain life in the field and reduce missions' environmental footprint.

Technology can also increase the effectiveness of the peacekeeping operations, allowing for: better-informed and timelier decision-making; improved monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes; better security and safety of peacekeeping personnel; improved training and capacity-building of both troops and civilians; as well as identifying trends in technology use by parties to conflict.

In counter-terrorism operations, big data and advanced analytics and machine learning can also improve the capabilities of intelligence and reconnaissance, as well as the analysis and prediction of terrorist behaviour.

To ensure that technology fosters improved performance in peacekeeping operations, we need to further develop accountability systems that measure impact rather than tracking intermediate factors. Many peacekeeping operations have also begun implementing the Comprehensive Performance Assessment System that aims to better assess mission impact and feed information on impact into planning processes.

The added value of the multidimensional character of peacekeeping operations, with civilian, military and police personnel deployed under one mandate and structure, requires more integrated planning and cooperation to allow for the full use of the personnel and technological capabilities that missions have.

Situational awareness is crucial to achieving the mandated tasks, in particular keeping pace with perpetrators of violence when tactics are directed to committing violence against civilians. Maintaining situational awareness can be better achieved through an information and intelligence cycle that includes collecting information about a threat environment, analysing that information, disseminating analysis to key personnel and using analysis as the basis for planning and decision-making. Missions need to improve and streamline their information-sharing and data management systems to solve operational gaps.

The use of big data and advanced analytics as well as artificial intelligence can provide peacekeeping missions with better and more robust command, control and communications systems, as well as advanced planning processes based on situational

awareness with early warning on risks and opportunities and relevant updated information about threats.

The United Nations peacekeeping missions must be capable of deploying and redeploying rapidly within a mission area with minimum delay. To execute their mandates effectively and efficiently, peacekeeping missions must be able to move fast to acquire, validate and fuse information from a wide range of openly available sources to enhance situational awareness, increase security and support decision-making to an early response according to United Nations protocol. New technologies can also play a role here, with unmanned aerial vehicles and signal detection helping to strengthen the situational awareness and early warning processes of peacekeeping missions.

It bears, nonetheless, underlining the need to regulate these new technologies and ensure the respect of human rights. Besides the moral and ethical considerations that emerge from certain technological developments, the use of emerging technologies should take into account compliance with obligations under existing international law, in particular international humanitarian law. In that context, we underscore the importance of the implementation of guiding principles, such as the ones recommended by the Group of Governmental Experts related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems.

Annex XXI

Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, Cho Hyun

I thank the President for convening today's meeting on such an important and relevant topic. Indeed, improving the technological capabilities of United Nations peacekeeping operations has become a pressing priority for all of us. The release of the strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping is yet another telling example. Peacekeepers are operating in an increasingly hostile environment, and it is our shared responsibility to equip them with better technology.

In this regard, we commend the role of the Security Council for drawing greater attention to this vital issue. Particularly, we welcome the adoption of the resolution on accountability for crimes against peacekeepers, which the Republic of Korea proudly co-sponsored. As the host country of the 2021 Seoul United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial, the Republic of Korea has been emphasizing the importance of this issue and believes that this resolution will contribute to enhancing peacekeeping by reaffirming our collective commitment to promote accountability for crimes against peacekeepers.

Against this backdrop, I would now like to highlight the following three points.

First of all, digital transformation of the peacekeeping operations is not an option, but a necessity. Hostile actors are employing advanced technologies in complex ways. We are also witnessing a concerning trend of misinformation and disinformation campaigns against peacekeeping operations over social media. At the same time, technologies have enabled armed groups to launch more lethal, physical threats that target blue helmets and peacekeeping missions. We have to face this reality and adapt as quickly as possible. Accordingly, we need better equipment and facility systems, such as the smart camp, to protect peacekeepers and ensure the successful delivery of mandates. Therefore, I call upon this Council to consider incorporating technology deployment when designing peacekeeping missions.

Secondly, implementation is the key. The best strategy is the one that is implemented. Regarding the digital transformation strategy, we should also start focusing on political support, funding and resources to carry out the strategy. With this in mind, the Republic of Korea would like to reassure our steadfast political support for the implementation stage and remind everyone that the upcoming United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial in Seoul this December can provide an invaluable platform to show political will and galvanize substantial support.

Thirdly, peacekeeping is essentially a collective effort, and even more so is incorporating technology into peacekeeping, as it requires shared responsibility and stronger partnership of Member States and the Secretariat. Technological transformation in peacekeeping operations requires a multipronged approach, including changing mindsets and providing necessary equipment. No one can do this alone – whether it is a troop-contributing country, capacity contributor or the Secretariat. As such, we need to scale up enduring and strong partnership for all peacekeeping stakeholders. For our part, Korea is highlighting technology, along with medical capacity-building, as one of the cross-cutting themes of the upcoming Peacekeeping Ministerial in Seoul with a view towards encouraging concrete pledges and synergizing partnerships.

I would like to conclude my remarks by re-emphasizing the importance of the Ministerial, where the Member States will have an invaluable opportunity to explore ways to collaborate and contribute to advancing the application of technology in United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Republic of Korea cordially invites Member States to take part in the process with tangible pledges this year. We will individually reach out to each of you to follow up and discuss your pledges moving forward.

Annex XXII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the United Nations

We thank India for organizing today's ministerial open debate on "Protecting the protectors: technology and peacekeeping". We also thank the briefers for their insightful presentations. Rwanda attaches great importance to the protection of peacekeepers, which is a crucial component of peacekeeping mandates.

Over the last few decades, the peacekeeping environment has increasingly become hostile as reflected in increased peacekeeper fatalities. Threats range from hostile attacks to pandemics, accidents and natural disasters, among others.

As we engage in the fight against all these various threats, we need to leverage the full potential of digital technology for the protection of peacekeepers and the civilians they are mandated to protect.

The evolving nature of hostile attacks against peacekeepers and civilians calls for the use of technologies such as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities for expanded situation awareness capabilities to detect and pre-empt attacks by peace spoilers as well as the ability to analyse warning signs, collect real-time intelligence to make better-informed decisions and take timely preventive actions to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers, civilians and their mandate.

In several theatres where United Nations peacekeepers are deployed, technological tools and platforms are increasingly being used by negative forces to disinform local communities and propagate hate messages including messages targeting peacekeepers. In a stark contrast, as stakeholders of United Nations peacekeeping, we have been lagging behind in the use of technological tools and platforms to counter misinformation and provide local communities with verified facts. Appropriate use of digital technologies and platforms could contribute significantly to the promotion of peace, culture and dialogue as means of solving conflict and countering hate messages. Enabling this will call for investment in providing Internet connectivity, to close the digital divide and provide digital skills both to the peacekeepers and key communities where they are deployed, in particular communities of young people. The Internet, digital skills and platforms are important enablers in the new peacekeeping operating environment.

All this should aim at paving the way for a smart peacekeeping mission environment that deals effectively and efficiently with health challenges, natural and man-made disasters and hostile actions against peacekeepers and civilians.

Lastly, while we all believe that the technology should help the mission to deliver on its mandate, measure performance and foster accountability for peacekeeping, Rwanda strongly believes that this should be in full respect of the host nation's sovereignty. The use of the technology in United Nations peacekeeping missions should be well guided by a sense of respect for privacy, ethical boundaries and the host nation laws.

Annex XXIII

Statement by the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations

Foremost my delegation expresses its appreciation to the Permanent Mission of India for convening this meeting to highlight the critical role of technology in United Nations peacekeeping operations. As the world's technological revolution proceeds, so too must United Nations peacekeeping operations, specifically as war and conflict evolves into new realities and new challenges emerge with the use of modern technology.

We also wish to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his informative remarks.

As a troop- and police-contributing country, South Africa acknowledges the need to advance the use of technology which remains germane to the evolving security threats and dangerous operational environment for our peacekeepers, compounded by the ramifications of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. South Africa would like to raise the following:

1. The imperative need for early warning, peacekeeping intelligence/ information gathering and analysis.

2. The need for enhanced support to peacekeepers to mitigate attacks through appropriate training and capacity-building, including from improvised explosive devices, as well as from threats from new technologies, including smart technologies.

3. Advancing technologies in health care.

4. The necessity of partnerships.

We wish to reiterate that South Africa fully supports the Action for Peacekeeping Plus initiative in addressing the systemic challenges that peacekeeping operations face, and we are also fully supportive of the important strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping that seeks to advance the use of technology across the Action for Peacekeeping themes, including performance, safety and security, politics, protection and peacebuilding. The strategy's action and goal-oriented approach, with a defined timeline, is an excellent road map to advance our shared goal of better integrating technologies across peacekeeping, while mitigating potential risks.

And indeed we must acknowledge, as various speakers have done here today, that an increase in technological capacity brings with it new risks for misuse of this technology. This necessitates the development of clear principles, guidelines and policies that ensure that new technologies are used in strict compliance with applicable international law, including human rights law.

We acknowledge the benefit of technology in early warning, peacekeeping intelligence and information gathering and analysis in order to protect the protectors. South Africa also recognizes the efficacy of peacekeeping intelligence utility in the protection of civilians and enjoins the United Nations to seek the collaboration and consent of host States when undertaking such sensitive activities.

We condemn in the strongest terms the continued killing and all acts of violence against United Nations peacekeeping personnel and we call upon host States to hold perpetrators of these heinous crimes to account. We also condemn the increased use of improvised explosive devices in attacks against peacekeepers and call for a united approach in finding and implementing a technological approach that can be rapidly deployed, in mitigating against this growing and deadly threat to our peacekeepers.

The improvement of situational and early warning capabilities has a direct impact on safety and security in the field. For example, on 25 April 2021, incoming rockets and mortars were detected in advance of impact on the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali camp in Kidal. This enabled staff to take refuge in bunkers and contributed to lives saved. There are, however, instances whereby missions are underequipped, with major gaps in both equipment and training and thus face serious threats from armed groups, criminals and terrorists, many of whom have access to sophisticated weapons and technology. It is therefore important that deployed uniformed personnel are well equipped with appropriate and properly fitting equipment for the threat environment. In this context, it is imperative that the United Nations forms part of the predeployment training of contingents, in order to enhance the level of training of troops.

It pleases me to inform the Council that the United Nations sixth Partnership for Technology in Peacekeeping symposium will be hosted by South Africa in the first half of 2022. Preparations are under way to hold this event in Pretoria. Details regarding the logistics and dates will be communicated in due course.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is a sobering reminder that adequate health care is vital in protecting the protectors and in increasing their operational effectiveness. Technologies in health care are important to ensure that peacekeepers are able to access clean and high-quality medical care when they are deployed in remote areas. One of the main problems that troops face is the vast distances between medical facilities in the regions where peacekeeping operations are being conducted. Providing every peacekeeping unit with high-quality medical trauma packs that include the latest in emergency care technologies is important in mitigating for these vast distances between medical facilities. It is important to provide highly trained medical personnel in every region that peacekeepers are operating in, as well as provide training to as many unit personnel as possible so that they can provide their own care when in a remote location in an emergency.

Our final point is to reinforce the significance of partnerships, particularly between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. We see merit in the sharing of best practices, the pursuit of training and capacity-building between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, as well as among the regional groups and training centres.

To conclude, we pay tribute to the men and women who have served in the United Nations peacekeeping operations. Their commitment and dedication have saved scores of lives and continue to do so during these most unprecedented times, and we owe them a great deal of gratitude for their efforts.

Annex XXIV

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations

[Original: French]

I thank India for this debate and the speakers for their contributions.

One peacekeeper lost continues to be one too many. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, reminded us of this during the debate at the end of May. Peacekeepers carry out invaluable work, while being exposed to the risks inherent in peace missions. The number of casualties remains unacceptable high. All our efforts to protect those who protect others are necessary.

Switzerland welcomes the launch of the Strategy for the Digital Transformation of Peacekeeping. We are confident that it will contribute to a more efficient and effective use of technology and a better implementation of peace mission mandates. It is therefore important that the Security Council recognizes the contribution of technology to enhance peacekeeping and considers the following:

1.   The use of technology can improve the safety and security of peacekeepers. It can help predict and detect threats, improve intelligence coordination and analysis, help deal with misinformation and make operations more efficient. However, new technologies can also be used for harmful purposes and pose a risk to peace missions. For example, if a mini-drone can be a vector for improvised explosive devices against United Nations forces, it can also be used for rescue. In this regard, a Swiss company developed the world's first collision-tolerant search-and-rescue drone able to look for victims in places difficult to access. The Council should fully consider the benefits of new technologies while mitigating their risks.

2.   The principle "do no harm" is crucial: technologies must be developed and used in full compliance with international law. New technologies often rely on extensive collection of data to function properly. However, this same data can be misused. In this regard, Switzerland, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs are working through the Humanitarian Data and Trust Initiative to ensure the responsible use of technologies, particularly data in the humanitarian field. The development of clear principles for the responsible use of technologies, as envisaged in the new Strategy, is therefore essential and should take into account experiences in other areas.

3.   Capacity-building of peacekeepers can greatly benefit from the adequate use of modern technologies. It is important to raise awareness of troops regarding the utility and use of new technologies in order to allow their quick and efficient uptake in the field. To this end, Switzerland contributes to the Secretariat's work on the digitization of the core pre-deployment training modules. The Council should recognize the role of training that meets the requirements of the digital age as well as the expertise of Member States in this area.

The use of new technologies is essential for the safety and security of peacekeepers. However, these technologies can only have the desired effect when the framework conditions for peace missions, such as the normative framework, infrastructure, logistics and training are ensured. Modern technologies can make a real difference when used properly. As a candidate for the Security Council, Switzerland will continue to be committed to the responsible use of new technologies and to further promote peace through innovation.

Annex XXV

Statement by the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations

I would like to express my gratitude to the Indian Security Council presidency for the initiative to take up the issue of challenges and opportunities arising from the application of technology and innovation in peacekeeping.

Ukraine is an active troop contributor and was one of the initiators of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel of 1994 and one of the first States that ratified it in July 1995. Hence, for Ukraine the topic of our discussion has very practical meaning.

That is why we fully support the presidential statement on the topic of the debate as well as the Council's resolution on protecting the protectors adopted earlier today.

With armed conflict situations getting more and more volatile, violent and complex, the use of modern technologies to help peacekeeping missions carry out their mandates and protect themselves becomes as relevant as ever.

No mission can succeed in today's complex environments without the ability to innovate and make effective use of technology, including unmanned, unarmed aerial systems, radars, sensors, night vision and night flying capabilities, among many others.

Of course, technology may not supplant the need for human presence but it can enhance peacekeepers' abilities to do their job more effectively.

It is vital to ensure effective cooperation between all relevant actors, including troop-contributing countries, host countries and the Secretariat, to reduce the capacity gaps and to promote the responsible use of technology in peacekeeping operations.

We would also like to encourage the Council members to engage more actively and give every support to the Secretariat in securing the use of appropriate modern technologies in peacekeeping operations while considering the mandates' establishment or renewal. We believe that all key mandate areas – including protection of civilians, policing and upholding the rule of law, as well as border/boundary demarcation and monitoring – would benefit from the deployment of technologies.

Strengthening the intelligence capacities of operations should also be envisaged. In this regard Ukraine welcomes the peacekeeping intelligence policy presented by the Secretariat in 2019 and considers it important to continue practical work on improving peacekeeping operations' intelligence, in order to provide them with advanced information about possible terrorist threats against the mission or civilians.

Ukraine welcomes the decision to make the issue of technology a cross-cutting theme for the 2021 United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial, scheduled to take place in Seoul in December. It is important to conduct frank and constructive discussion on the issue with a view to elaborating specific recommendations on how to ensure more effective use of technologies in peacekeeping operations.

We also welcome the strategy for the digital transformation of United Nations peacekeeping. Ukraine fully shares the goals of the strategy and looks forward to further efforts to maximize the potential of the use of current technologies in peacekeeping operations.

Ukraine's involvement in United Nations peacekeeping did not halt even at the height of the ongoing armed aggression against my country. Furthermore, Ukrainian

blue helmets are deployed in some of the most challenging and perilous environments and continue playing an instrumental role in reaching peace in conflict zones around the world.

Ukraine has always been a strong and reliable partner of the Organization in peacekeeping activities and will remain its steadfast supporter and contributor. We believe that our collective success in peacekeeping depends on all stakeholders playing their respective roles with unwavering commitment.

In this context we support the United Nations Partnership for Technology in Peacekeeping initiative, which offers a unique opportunity to strengthen support to United Nations peacekeeping, using innovative technological capacities that meet the needs of United Nations peace operations to ensure that we have well-structured, equipped and trained forces ready to effectively deliver on their challenging mandates.

It is important to explore all available cutting-edge technologies and best practices that can contribute towards the protection of civilians and United Nations personnel and allow for safer and more successful peacekeeping missions.

Annex XXVI

Statement of the United Arab Emirates

[Original: Arabic]

Although the world has made tremendous technological progress, we must, nonetheless, determine how to make the best use possible of technological innovations in order to address the conflicts and challenges of our time. The United Arab Emirates firmly believes that new and emerging technologies can revolutionize United Nations peacekeeping operations and consolidate international peace and security. Accordingly, it is imperative to make it easier for peacekeeping operations in the field to have access to the technology that they need in order to carry out their duties successfully.

The ability of peacekeeping forces to have easy access to new and emerging technologies will improve their situational awareness and provide early warning of looming challenges and provide data that are useful for protecting women and children. New and innovative synthetic materials can be used to protect peacekeeping forces from threats or menaces, and the use of new energy technologies and batteries will improve the effectiveness and reduce the carbon footprint of such forces.

The United Arab Emirates has been among the first countries in the world to adopt new technologies, because we understand their power and the frameworks that must be put in place in order to realize fully their potential. Innovation will be one of our priorities during our membership of the Security Council next year, with a particular focus on the role of technology in mediation, conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping.

With that in mind, the United Arab Emirates offers the following recommendations:

• First, peacekeepers should have the ability use unmanned aircraft systems and unmanned aircraft for intelligence-gathering and surveillance purposes. In addition, such aircraft can be used to provide early warning about conflicts and natural disasters, without posing a risk to any individuals or carrying out a direct intervention that may endanger lives. In order to do so, the United Nations must address stakeholders' legitimate concerns regarding the deployment and use of unmanned aircraft systems and drones to increase the effectiveness of peace operations, as the Secretary-General stresses in his strategy on new technologies.

• Second, the use of renewable energy offers an opportunity to mitigate the security risks associated with peacekeeping operations. Currently, peacekeeping missions rely on diesel fuel convoys, which often cross front lines and pass through unsafe areas. Integrating renewable energy sources into the energy matrix of peacekeeping operations would reduce that risk. In addition, renewable energy sources offer important benefits, most notably lower operating costs and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, as well as enhanced access to energy. The continued support of the Security Council for that process is critical to achieving the target established by the United Nations of 80 per cent renewable energy usage by 2030. My Permanent Mission, in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of Norway and the Powering Peace organization, hosted a discussion on how renewable energy can be used in future peacekeeping operations. We look forward to continuing this important conversation, particularly in the context of the Security Council, over the coming year.

- Finally, technology must be used and developed in a gender-sensitive manner in order to better protect women and girls against sexual and gender-based violence, because they are a group that is particularly vulnerable in times of conflict and in post-conflict situations. Technology and data can be used to enhance the capacity of peacekeeping forces in that regard. Geospatial technology can be used to identify risks to vulnerable populations, particularly in instances of sexual and gender-based violence. In addition, communications technology can be used for information-sharing, reporting, documenting abuses and coordinating responses to crises.

The UAE firmly believes that technology, when used properly, will open many new doors for peace operations. We are committed to working with Member States and the United Nations system to develop new methods and tools that can help us to maximize the benefits of using modern technologies in the quest to maintain international peace and security.

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