



Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

Provisional

9189th meeting

Monday, 14 November 2022, 10 a.m.

New York

President: Mr. Agyeman. (Ghana)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Hoxha
Brazil.	Mr. De Oliveira Freitas
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United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America.	Mr. Wood

Agenda

United Nations peacekeeping operations

Police Commissioners

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22-68901 (E)



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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

United Nations peacekeeping operations

Police Commissioners

The President: In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations; Ms. Christine Fossen, Police Commissioner, United Nations Mission in South Sudan; Mr. Mody Berethe, Police Commissioner, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and Ms. Emma Birikorang of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The intention for this meeting is for it to be as interactive as possible, as it was at the same briefing last November (see S/PV.8901) and as we are in our dialogues with Force Commanders. We look forward to questions from Council members for the Commissioners and from the Commissioners for the Council.

I now give the floor to Mr. Lacroix.

Mr. Lacroix: I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting. I am especially pleased to be joined by the distinguished Police Commissioners from our peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as in South Sudan, where I was very recently. This annual briefing to the Council is an opportunity to reaffirm the vital role that United Nations police play across the conflict-prevention spectrum, from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. It also provides a forum for discussing our achievements of the past year as well as strategic priorities for the coming months.

The greatest challenges to global peace, security and development that we are seeing today, all of which will call for unique and increasingly specific policing responses, include the growing incidence of conflict in dense settings such as urban areas, the protection of civilian sites and camps for the internally displaced, the continued expansion of transnational organized crime

and violent extremism, increased risks of climate and cyber insecurity and greater demand for comprehensive national institutional capacity-building and police reform. We must therefore work collectively to ensure that the United Nations police are properly prepared, equipped and resourced to address them. This briefing is a timely opportunity to discuss some of the key priorities for United Nations policing, through which we aim to support our Member States in fostering representative, responsive and accountable police services that serve and protect the people.

The Action for Peacekeeping initiative, particularly the areas that we have prioritized within the Action for Peacekeeping Plus (A4P+) initiative, continues to provide our strategic direction. I am very grateful to everyone here for their efforts to take forward their respective commitments and for their support to the Secretary-General's efforts to do the same. I am also grateful to the Member States that announced pledges of policing-related support at the 2022 United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit and the 2021 Seoul United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial to help enhance the performance and environmental impact of peacekeeping operations, in line with the A4P+ priorities, which I will discuss in more detail.

The first priority of A4P+, which is about ensuring coherence behind political strategies, acknowledges that entities across the United Nations system bring to bear various resources and leverage that can support and influence a country's political trajectory. In one example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, police from the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been working with United Nations partners, the Congolese National Police and the Ministry of the Interior to advance the United Nations Joint Police Reform Support Programme, strengthen human rights protection and fight impunity — all of which are ingredients for a successful transition.

Strengthening those synergies lies at the heart of the second priority of A4P+, which is to ensure greater strategic and operational integration across mission components. In Mali, United Nations police planning officers are working with their civilian and military counterparts to increase the linkages between longer-term strategic planning and operational decision-making and support integrated planning for strengthened mandate implementation. And in Somalia, police from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia,

together with the multidimensional African Union Transition Mission in Somalia, the Federal Government of Somalia, the African Union, the European Union, the United Nations country team and other partners, are working in tandem with the aim of handing over security responsibilities to Somali counterparts by the end of 2024. We expect the Inter-Agency Task Force on Policing, which was established last year and is co-chaired by the Department of Peace Operations and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to facilitate an even greater coherence between United Nations police and other United Nations entities involved in aspects of policing and law enforcement.

The Department is also working to enhance capabilities and mindsets — the third A4P+ priority — by aligning predeployment training by Member States with the Organization's in-mission training. With the aim of ensuring that the capabilities of deployed formed police units match their mandated tasks, performance metrics are being monitored by the Police Division and the Department of Operational Support and reported on in order to form a basis for engagements with police-contributing countries requesting remediation of identified gaps in deployed contingent-owned equipment.

The fourth priority of A4P+, which is ensuring the highest levels of accountability to peacekeepers, remains critical to improving the safety and security of our personnel. The Action Plan to Improve the Security of United Nations Peacekeepers, now in its fourth iteration, continues to structure our efforts to that end. In support of the implementation of the Action Plan, the United Nations police have conducted in-mission performance assessment and evaluation team visits to our missions in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and South Sudan this year, examining critical areas such as command-and-control structures, contingent-owned equipment and training. Furthermore, the United Nations police is continuing its efforts to create enabling environments and foster gender-responsive working environments and accommodations, including by strengthening women's networks within our missions.

To advance our fifth priority, the accountability of peacekeepers, the United Nations police continues to underline zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse through enhanced predeployment and in-mission training. We are also stepping up efforts to regularly assess performance, recognize good performance and

improve accountability for performance, including through the development of proposed police-related impact indicators within the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System, which will be discussed during this Police Week. Moreover, conduct relates to how we manage the environmental footprints of our missions, and the United Nations police continues to contribute to the environmental adaptation and mitigation measures of our missions and host-State counterparts.

Regarding strategic communications, the sixth priority, in line with initiatives of the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the United Nations police works to amplify the positive impact of our presence through enhanced strategic communications, including new engagement on social media platforms, as well as community-oriented policing and awareness-raising activities. Furthermore, the United Nations Police contributes to DPO's efforts to proactively counter misinformation, disinformation and hate speech. My visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo last July made clear the urgent and critical need to further enhance our capacities to better manage expectations and de-escalate tensions, including with United Nations police officers specialized in strategic communications and crisis response — a capacity with which we expect our Member States to provide us in greater quantity.

Finally, in line with the seventh A4P+ priority, our efforts continue to improve cooperation with host countries during transitions, as we witnessed in Darfur, where experts from our Standing Police Capacity are helping the mission with the establishment of its monitoring support component and operationalizing the ceasefire mechanisms as part of the Juba Peace Agreement.

At the same time, the women and peace and security agenda is infused in all aspects of A4P+ and remains the foundation for improving our overall effectiveness. Gender-responsive policing efforts by the United Nations police ensure that the different security needs of women, men, girls and boys are considered, including through a robust network of gender advisers and police gender focal points. With the support of our Member States, the United Nations police has already achieved its gender parity targets for 2025, with women currently comprising almost one in five United Nations police officers, including 31 per cent of individual police officers and 15 per cent of members of formed police units. I am very pleased that women now

head five out of the nine police components in United Nations peacekeeping operations. We will continue to count on the assistance of Member States in helping us to expand and sustain those numbers.

Interactions between Member States and the Secretariat during the third United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit highlighted the greater demand for United Nations police assistance beyond peacekeeping, including support to United Nations country teams and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes through our Standing Police Capacity in Brindisi. With the continued support of Member States, we will be able to meet the need for United Nations policing assistance today and tomorrow.

A4P+ is our vehicle and part of a renewed collective engagement to strengthen peacekeeping as an invaluable instrument for peace and security and an expression of international solidarity. Through it, we are better placed to address today's challenges to peace and security and to ultimately improve the lives of the people whom we serve.

I will conclude by reiterating my deep gratitude to Member States for their ongoing support to United Nations peacekeeping, including their continued dedication to implementing their respective A4P commitments and A4P+ priorities and their contributions of highly qualified police personnel to serve for peace with the United Nations. Before I end, let me also express to you, Mr. President, our deep satisfaction at the prospect of the next United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial being held in your country, Ghana.

The President: I thank Mr. Lacroix for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Fossen.

Ms. Fossen: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to brief the Security Council today on the contribution of the United Nations Police (UNPOL) to the protection of civilians in South Sudan. The protection of civilians remains at the heart of what we do and is a mutually reinforcing component of other parts of our mandate, which includes support for the implementation of the Revitalized Peace Agreement; building the capacity of the local police of South Sudan; monitoring and reporting on human rights violations; and creating conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

As Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom told the Council in a prior briefing,

the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) has largely transitioned from a Mission anchored in static protection to one that is focused on mobility and meeting protection needs where they are greatest (see S/PV.9134). We are also moving into a more intense phase of political engagement to support the full implementation of the transitional road map. This process envisages the holding of elections in South Sudan in December 2024. For UNPOL, this means we are doubling down on our efforts across all three tiers of protection, in the context of a clear political strategy laid out in the Mission's strategic vision 2021-2024.

First, UNPOL participates in whole-of-Mission efforts to foster protection through dialogue and engagement, and we support political solutions to conflicts. The challenges in this context are vast, as root causes go deep. These root causes include fractures in social cohesion, the proliferation of weapons and gender disparities — all of which continue to fuel cycles of subnational violence, of which sexual and gender-based violence is a harrowing hallmark.

Together with the South Sudan National Police Service (SSNPS), we are conducting outreach activities to help improve the relationship between law-enforcement agencies and the people they serve, especially women and children, youth and community leaders. We have created 185 police-community relations committees to address gender-based violence, child protection and crime prevention in general. Our focus in this regard is on trust-building as a foundation for effective community policing as a first link in the overall justice chain.

Specifically, we have created more police-community relations committees in and outside the internally displaced persons camp in Bentiu, as well as in Koch, Pariang and Leer, to address concerns of sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence. The goal is to identify hotspot areas and bring community members and police together to discuss their security concerns. It also feeds into our early-warning prevention-and-response efforts. But we are painfully aware that our reach is limited when compared to the scale of the problem. And this underscores the need for the Government to further take up its responsibilities for the protection of its own civilians.

More broadly, our specialized police team is working closely with the rule-of-law team to deliver training for

SSNPS officers and military judge-advocates on sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence. The training-of-trainers format for the SSNPS has increased local ownership of these workshops and ensures they are tailored to the South Sudanese context. We have also contributed to gender-responsive policing initiatives through the launch of the SSNPS women's network, together with our gender-affairs unit.

Secondly, UNPOL has extended its physical-protection presence through increased participation in integrated civilian-military-police patrols and deployments to temporary operating bases. This follows the redesignation of all but one protection-of-civilians site, which has freed up our capacity to expand UNPOL's footprint around and beyond the internally displaced persons camps. We are also providing individual mentoring and advisory and assistance services to SSNPS officers. Through 12 recently completed quick-impact projects, we have also accelerated the presence of SSNPS in areas of civilian concentration, including in conflict hotspots and areas of return.

Thirdly, we are contributing to a protective environment through support for rule-of-law institutions that promote accountability and access to justice. This includes providing technical support to the SSNPS on crime-scene management, arrest and detention, and ethics and anti-corruption awareness. Without any semblance of an integrated justice chain in South Sudan, this is a legacy issue whereby we are seeking to build a platform for institutions to take root and hold after this peacekeeping mission leaves. Furthermore, with elections on the horizon, we foresee the need for capacity-building support for South Sudanese law-enforcement agencies, upon the invitation of the host Government, in elections-security policing, public-order management and training, including to ensure a human-rights-based approach that supports an open civic and political space.

The recent graduation of the necessary unified forces underscores the challenges and opportunities in fostering a professionalized national police service. There are low baselines of education and literacy, and women are underrepresented in leadership positions. A lack of logistical support also means that graduating police have limited resources — from pens and paper to vehicles — to carry out their most basic duties. The absence of a judiciary system means that there is a low application of the penal code, which limits the space

for victim-centred responses where survivors can seek redress through the formal justice chain.

While the institutions are as young as the nation itself, we are pleased to report a generally positive working relationship with the host Government. Looking ahead, Action for Peacekeeping Plus provides a useful framework for enhancing our own effectiveness in the protection of civilians and in aligning the support of Member States. The primacy of politics is at the core of our mandate implementation both in our strategic and operational responses to protection challenges in South Sudan, as we continue supporting more accountable, transparent governance, political coherence and broader civic and political space and strengthening partnerships towards more inclusive, sustainable and meaningful peace in South Sudan.

We welcome the deployment of more women peacekeepers to support all aspects of the women and peace and security agenda. UNMISS is proud to be a gender-parity champion, having already surpassed its uniformed gender-parity targets. Women now represent 37.5 per cent of individual police officers and 25 per cent of formed police units, but we can always do more with more. That brings me to the need to create more enabling environment conditions that incentivize women's participation in peacekeeping. In accordance with the Elsie Initiative guidelines, UNMISS has adopted design specifications and guidance on facilities and infrastructure to improve the living conditions in our field offices, but we need continued resource support to implement those objectives in an environment where costs are high, procurement time frames are long and the logistical challenges are many.

In that same regard, we strive for technology-enabled, data-driven peacekeeping, although some basic hurdles include unstable Internet and electricity in austere field conditions. We would welcome additional capacity in support of joint and integrated planning, including to continue implementing the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System, as part of the A4P+ priority area to strengthen strategic and operational integration.

Capabilities and mindsets are vitally important. I am proud of our hard-working UNPOL team in UNMISS. We will continue to need boots on the ground to walk the extra mile, not necessarily niche experts but proactive and resourceful officers with good education and predeployment training who are

ready to roll up their sleeves in the world's newest nation. The deployment of additional formed police units would also greatly enhance the Mission's capacity for key protection tasks as South Sudan moves into a phase of increased political and security competition around elections.

In conclusion, I am proud to be serving in South Sudan, a young and dynamic country that has so much potential. However, that can be unlocked only through a foundation of the rule of law, because a nation cannot be built on force. UNPOL is doing its part to support the people and the Government of South Sudan in that task, and I thank the Council for its continued confidence in us.

The President: I thank Ms. Fossen for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Berethe.

Mr. Berethe (*spoke in French*): It is an honour for me to brief the Security Council today on the topic of the contribution of the United Nations police to the Declaration of Shared Commitments on Peacekeeping Operations and the priorities of the Action for Peacekeeping Plus (A4P+) initiative, in particular the efforts of the police component of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) to further improve the performance of the police officers deployed here in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Like other police components, MONUSCO's police component has made peacekeeping a priority in achieving its key objectives. Despite the difficulties encountered on the ground, efforts therefore continue to be made by the police component to further improve its performance in order to achieve the objectives established by the Mission's mandate.

In that regard, allow me to take stock of some factors that contribute to measuring the component's performance. Those factors illustrate what was described by Under-Secretary-General Lacroix through the various instruments that are in place within countries and within the Mission. Those include human resources management and performance improvement by means of internal training within the Mission and operational engagement on the ground, as well as assistance in national capacity-building, particularly in the areas of investigations, training and the advisory and monitoring activities of our national partners.

In terms of human resources, the MONUSCO police component is currently comprised of 384 individual police officers out of a total of the 591 officers authorized. We also have 1,223 formed police unit personnel. All those personnel are today deployed in five sectors in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the context of that deployment, in accordance with the provisions established by the Department of Peace Operations and through the assessment process set up at the national level, an evaluation of the various skills and the specific needs of the Mission has been carried out.

We aim to identify the expertise that meets the needs of our national partners, in particular in the transition context of our Mission. In order to identify and implement those resources, there is ongoing communication with the 31 police-contributing countries, which is essential. That allows us to not only individually identify resources but also communicate with regard to the quality of the formed police units and undertake discussions to identify the specific skills that we need for our specialized teams.

For example, our Mission currently receives support from Canada, Sweden and Tanzania, through which we have received specialized police teams to combat sexual and gender-based violence. Those teams have quickly gained the trust of the local population through their know-how and commitment to professionalizing specific units to deal with that issue within the Congolese National Police. Those rapid and concrete results and the successful performance of the teams have encouraged us in our discussions with the police-contributing countries to broaden that kind of configuration and recreate that model with a view to providing specialized teams for public order.

During their deployment, training continues on topics to build police officers' competencies. The effectiveness of police officers' performance is measured objectively through the use of various monitoring and measurement systems, such as the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System, which measures the impact of UNPOL's mandate on the ground.

The police component has also put in place a monitoring and assessment mechanism, which consists of systematically collecting information on the implementation of the annual work plan, as established globally and divided into quarters and trimesters. That

allows us to review how the units deployed on the ground are working and review the performance of each officer and each unit. That is an important tool for us to be able to identify where things are going well and where there are shortcomings.

That assessment is not just technical work of ticking boxes, but it is also a way to measure our commitment with our partners at the operational level. Our commitment, alongside our partners, is measured by capacity-building activities in which UNPOL provides major contributions to bring about calm and security through established strategies.

In that regard, I would like to mention two particular areas of commitment.

The first example is the operational strategy to combat insecurity — which we call SOLI — and is a tool for measuring performance in combating crime in urban areas. It is also a model for community policing methods and the use of statistics to measure police performance. Currently, we have seven of the so-called SOLI teams conducting monitoring and capacity-building activities among the Congolese National Police. Notable results have been recorded in terms of crime prevention in 2022.

In the areas in which we maintain a presence, that mechanism has allowed us to respond to no fewer than 223,000 calls from the population, resulting in more than 17,000 police reactions and responses and more than 4,500 arrests. Therefore, with practical support, we have set up instruments that can statistically measure what we have achieved at the national level and also allow us to evaluate the individual and collective commitment of our units.

The second example is the deployment of teams in charge of capacity-building in the area of organized crime. Those teams prioritize thematic training, which can and must contribute to our national efforts to combat impunity. The Congolese National Police has therefore received training in intelligence and investigation techniques on serious organized crime, such as kidnapping for ransom, illicit trafficking in minerals and various other types of crime.

For us, counter-organized crime investigations and techniques are not only an opportunity to transfer skills in terms of managing crime scenes for our Congolese colleagues but also an opportunity to contribute to national efforts to stop the spread of

small arms and light weapons through the various units set up in the framework of the arms embargo in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As we near the end of 2022, we can see that over the course of the year our units have supported no fewer than 212 investigations through various forms of assistance to our Congolese counterparts, including assistance in complicated investigations on improvised explosive device explosions.

Cooperation with the Congolese National Police extends beyond assessment measures and is also a way to contribute to the security of United Nations personnel deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. UNPOL contributes to mobilizing national stakeholders to assume their responsibility in the investigation of serious crimes committed against peacekeepers and participates in joint efforts with the other entities of the Mission in the context of work within the criminal justice system. Our technical and forensic support extends beyond the national police and also includes the military justice system and has facilitated numerous arrests for serious crimes and crimes against humanity.

In a similar vein, MONUSCO has equipped its formed police units with advanced technology, such as drones, to strengthen the safety of the camps. We are working collaboratively with the MONUSCO force and the Department of Safety and Security to contribute to the full range of elements that are included in the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, and as the Council knows, we are in an environment where the threat is evolving and the situation very volatile.

MONUSCO's police component is aware of the magnitude of the current challenges in the specific context of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is also aware of the very changing nature of the peacekeeping environment, and it remains convinced that performance-evaluation measures are essential to the success of the work being done on the ground, not only in the context of building national capacity in accordance with the mandate, but also in the context of the guidance provided by the Secretary-General through the Action for Peacekeeping initiative in the supporting UNPOL's contribution to the security of United Nations personnel.

The President: I thank Mr. Berethe for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Birikorang.

Ms. Birikorang: It is my pleasure and honour to join today's meeting and to share my thoughts with the Security Council.

Decisions, norms, ideas and policies at the multilateral level often filter down to the national level and consequently influence decision-making. Beyond the policy level, direct exposure to institutional norms predisposes actors to behave in ways that demonstrate a certain level of learning and eventual application. Peacekeeping missions are expected to be the embodiment of the application of international norms of human rights, among other things. Peacekeepers are therefore trained and oriented to uphold such principles while in the theatre of ever more complex operations.

To attain those lofty goals, the pre- to post-deployment stages of the United Nations peacekeeping cycle are an important component of the Action for Peacekeeping Plus principles. Many peacekeepers from police-contributing countries (PCCs) have completed several tours of peacekeeping missions in usually difficult and ever more complex and fluid terrains. As a result, their preparations before their duty tours, post-operations debriefing, top-up training and skills enhancements have become even more essential to the overall success of a peacekeeping mission. As previous speakers have emphasized, United Nations police (UNPOL) are critical components in the implementation of the Action for Peacekeeping Plus priorities. I want to highlight three key, interlinked points in that regard.

The first is that peacekeeping has a democratizing effect on the security sector in host communities and troop-contributing countries themselves and must take into account the need for a political process that is inclusive and sensitive to local dynamics. Secondly, peacekeeping strengthens the legitimacy and effectiveness of domestic security relations among the various entities of the security sector in the country. Thirdly, there are mutually reinforcing benefits that police in peacekeeping bring to the women and peace and security agenda in the peacekeeping theatre and at the domestic level in Member States.

Those three points highlight a number of the Action for Peacekeeping Plus priorities. The first is strategic and operational integration — that is, enhancing strategic and operational integration to achieve unity of purpose for greater impact. The second relates to capabilities and mindset. Peacekeeping missions must have the right capabilities and mindset for implementing their

mandates. The third is innovation, and to that I would add adaptive peacekeeping that is flexible, responsive and sensitive to the operational environment. The fourth is the cross-cutting theme of women and peace and security in ensuring a positive multiplying effect on women's full, equal and meaningful participation in peace and political processes. The fifth that I want to highlight is the accountability of peacekeepers, as well as strategic and operational integration.

On the issue of the democratizing effect of peacekeeping on the security sector, there are several police-contributing countries that are relatively young democracies with complex histories. Some of them are on positive paths to democratization. Others are grappling with their own internal security challenges. In their deployment to peacekeeping missions, those countries are therefore on a mission to provide support to other countries in distress, improve their own capacities and support host countries in their quest for peace and security. That results in a mutually beneficial relationship between UNPOL both in the peacekeeping theatre and when its personnel return home.

In striving to achieve the highest standards of the peacekeeping mission, police peacekeepers sometimes engage in tasks that they might not ordinarily perform in their own countries, such as establishing and maintaining strong partnerships with local civil-society and women's networks, and regularly interacting with fragile people and local communities to achieve unity of purpose and greater impact. The performance of those tasks and the high standards that peacekeepers are expected to maintain ensure that they become accountable. The domino effect of that practical learning experience is that norm diffusion occurs and that the international institutional norms and standards that are met during peacekeeping operations are then transposed formally and organically to the police services of the contributing countries. In studies conducted using Ghana's police service as a case study, former peacekeepers have testified that robust peacekeeping standards have positive effects on domestic performance and their discharge of their duties.

With regard to strengthening the legitimacy of domestic security relations through peacekeeping, it has been established that in peacekeeping missions, enhancing strategic and operational integration is essential to achieving unity of purpose for greater impact. UNPOL's contribution to that objective is critical as

the entity that has regular and direct interaction with host communities, whether through individual police officers or as formed police units (FPUs).

In addition, maintaining operational effectiveness requires strong inter-unit cohesion and collaboration with other actors in both the peacekeeping theatre and the host community. That has also led to strong domestic security relations at the troop-contributing country level, as personnel interact with several actors from diverse backgrounds in the peacekeeping mission. Ghana typifies that phenomenon. It has engaged in several peacekeeping missions over several decades, and its police officers have been deployed to several missions.

Through those experiences, Ghana established a formed police unit, the first deployment of which was to South Sudan in 2015. Originally established to deploy to international peacekeeping missions, the FPU has increasingly been used for internal operations. Within Ghana, it has been deployed to guard critical national security installations, as a first responder to local crises across the country and in a preventive deployment capacity during public assemblies. That stand-alone model of the FPU at the local level is an interesting phenomenon that, I would argue, supports the Action for Peacekeeping Plus priorities. As a formalized unit within the Ghana Police Service, it has regular training on firearm safety, human rights, crowd control and the protection of civilians and other vulnerable groups.

Their constant training has improved their professionalism, both internally in Ghana and at the United Nations level, where they are regularly honoured. In December 2018, for example, 165 officers of the formed police unit who had been on deployment to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan were honoured. They had been deployed to Bentiu, South Sudan, for one year and were honoured for the critical role they played in giving special protection to vulnerable groups, especially women and children, affected by the instability in the country. The experiences of the standing arrangement of the police and their regular use in Ghanaian law enforcement has ensured that they are operationally ready for deployment, as they are often in so-called mission mode.

With regard to ensuring the positive multiplier effect of women's full and equal participation in peace and political processes, since the promulgation of resolution 1325 (2000) and other related resolutions on

women and peace and security, the United Nations has encouraged Member States to increase the nomination of women to peacekeeping missions. To reinforce that agenda, troop- and police-contributing countries are often given percentage quotas. That agenda has benefits for both the host community and the troop- or police-contributing country.

To meet United Nations targets, police-contributing countries have enhanced the recruitment of women into their police units, resulting in a larger pool of women police officers for international peacekeeping and for domestic purposes. While the figures may still be low and more needs to be done to increase the number of women in United Nations police, the positive roles played by women police in peacekeeping missions and their influence on host communities is commendable. Women police officers are instrumental in the aftermath of conflict-related sexual violence; during disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes; in the recruitment and training of women in the security services; and in critical cordon-and-search functions. At the domestic level, police responses to gender-based violence have improved significantly.

In conclusion, UNPOL's contributions to the Action for Peacekeeping priorities are critical. To improve that contribution, there is a need for innovation, adaptability, operational readiness, strategic and operational integration and accountability for peacekeepers in missions in which fragile States are often the beneficiaries. Yet it has been established that, beyond fragile host countries, police-contributing countries, through innovative strategies, have maximized their participation in United Nations peacekeeping in order to benefit their own societies and strengthen the legitimacy and effectiveness of domestic security relations.

The President: I thank Ms. Birikorang for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): Let me start by thanking Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and the other briefers for their comprehensive insights on the contribution of United Nations police (UNPOL) to the Action for Peacekeeping Plus priorities.

Albania supports the United Nations police and its vital role as part of the overall efforts to enhance international peace and security in conflict, post-

conflict and other crisis situations by carrying out effective, efficient, responsive and accountable police services that serve and protect populations. A people-centred, agile, flexible, rights-based and norm-driven United Nations police that has at its core a mission to ensure the protection of civilians — a top priority for the Council — helps host countries, as we heard from Commissioners Fossen and Berethe, to maintain public order and safety in accordance with those countries' needs, while always adhering to the rule of law and respect for international human rights law.

In the course of the past decade, we have seen conflicts not only increase but also become more complex, fragmented and protracted. The steady proliferation of new non-State armed groups, including rebels, militias, criminal groups and gangs and violent extremist groups, have added to that complexity. As a result, innocent lives have been destroyed, societies broken, institutions damaged and development set back by decades.

The international community continues to spend time and resources on reacting to and managing conflict — but unfortunately not enough on preventing them. We still live in a time in which, despite renewed efforts, conflict prevention remains largely insufficient and ineffective. Prevention requires the strengthening of local capacities for peace by strengthening national political, security, justice, rule-of-law and socioeconomic institutions and making societies more resilient to violence and conflicts.

The United Nations police is well placed to play a critical role in many of those crucial activities, but in order for it to be successful all stakeholders must fulfil their responsibilities by working together with key partners, regional organizations, Member States and United Nations agencies under a common strategy.

In particular, police in peace operations should become a key component of conflict analysis, early warning and prevention efforts by understanding the drivers of conflict at all levels. United Nations police have a presence on the ground, often in remote locations, meaning that they have first-hand information. They also know how to interact and communicate with people in local communities, which helps them to better understand the local and national drivers of conflict and identify why particular communities are more at risk of tensions, thereby contributing to early-warning mechanisms. That potential must be fully exploited.

Women have proven to be extremely successful in accessing communities and creating relationships of trust with local populations, in particular the most vulnerable categories. Therefore, recruiting and retaining women police components is paramount to achieving gender equality and also contributes to lasting peace, as women and men experience violent conflict differently, which in turn may enrich the understanding of peace.

Albania strongly believes in the benefits generated by the presence of well-integrated women personnel and advocates for a stronger presence of women among peacekeeping ranks. It may also prove to have an additional positive impact, since increasing the number of women police will encourage more women from the countries in which UNPOL operates to participate in public life and help to dismantle stereotypes and assumptions that impede women's ability to play a central role in peacebuilding processes. It is a concrete way to promote and ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peace processes and a concrete materialization of the women and peace and security agenda.

Finally, UNPOL's cooperation with local communities and host countries is crucial in serving its primary purpose — to protect civilians. Albania remains committed to supporting the United Nations police and the work of the United Nations to help countries in conflict and post-conflict situations meet the ever-growing security challenges dictated by our globalizing world.

UNPOL must continue to play a crucial role in promoting respect for human rights and the rule of law and ensuring accountability for crimes committed against civilians and peacekeepers.

It is also important to note that accountability should also involve peacekeepers themselves when it comes to legal violations. Peacekeepers represent the United Nations — all of us — and they are expected to observe, at all times and in all circumstances, the highest standards and values. Therefore, the relationship with the host country needs innovative, inclusive and multidimensional methods, with a holistic approach that encompasses peace and security, political engagement, justice, human rights and development to ensure the best way forward towards sustaining peace.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and the Police

Commissioners of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for their briefings. I also listened closely to the statement made by Ms. Birikorang.

Peacekeeping police are the guardians of international peace and have made great sacrifices for the sake of and important contributions to the maintenance of security in conflict areas. As we speak, almost 10,000 peacekeeping police officers from 129 countries are staffing posts in 18 mission areas to provide a security umbrella for vulnerable groups and people in conflict areas. I would like to take this opportunity to pay the highest tribute to all peacekeeping police officers and their families.

Currently, the international security situation is complex and evolving. Regional hotspot issues are emerging one after the next. United Nations peacekeeping operations are facing a series of new situations, new tasks and new challenges. The Security Council and the international community should think deeply, build consensus, advance peacekeeping policing in the right direction, focus on key mandates and better meet the expectations of people in conflict areas.

I would like to make the following three points.

First, we should use our advantages to the fullest. Peacekeeping police are an important part of the United Nations peace and security architecture. They have unique advantages in terms of maintaining community security, combating violent crime and capacity-building. Peacekeeping operations should make full use of the advantages afforded by peacekeeping police and serve the overall goal of maintaining peace and stability and resolving hotspot issues. UNMISS has done a great deal of work and played an important role in working with local police to combat crime, conduct various kinds of patrols, ensure the safety of civilians and provide training to South Sudanese law enforcement and judicial institutions. Those important and useful practices merit being summarized.

In order to better implement its mandate, peacekeeping police should closely coordinate with United Nations agencies in their work. China welcomes the establishment of the United Nations inter-agency task force on policing and expects the task force to fully tap the comparative advantages of various agencies, effectively implement their core mandates of

peacekeeping operations and respond to the reasonable needs of host countries in a timely manner.

Secondly, we should strengthen capacity-building. The capacity-building of peacekeeping police is an important part of the Action for Peacekeeping Plus initiative of the Secretary-General and a shared task for the Secretariat, host countries, police-contributing countries and capital-contributing countries. We must be guided by the implementation of the Strategic Guidance Framework for International Policing and the United Nations Police Training Architecture Programme.

It is imperative to make constructive use of the communication channels, such as the light coordination mechanism, and strengthen training cooperation on different aspects so that every peacekeeping police officer can apply a full skill set in doing their work. The Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System is being expanded to all peacekeeping missions. It is our hope that the parties concerned will be guided by the results of the evaluation and target their work to address weaknesses.

Gender equality is an important link in capacity-building for peacekeeping police. China welcomes United Nations police's success in realizing the gender parity target targets for 2025 ahead of schedule and hopes that peacekeeping operations will continue to maintain that positive momentum, provide equal opportunities for female police officers in terms of training, recruitment and promotion, and give full play to the unique advantages that women offer in the protection of vulnerable groups and community communication. China will continue to send more talented personnel, including female peacekeeping police, to participate in United Nations peacekeeping operations and will continue to provide professional training for female personnel from police-contributing countries.

Thirdly, we should ensure the safety of personnel. Peacekeepers have faced an increased security risk in recent years. At the end of July, two UNMISS peacekeeping police officers were killed in an attack, which once again sounded the alarm for us. Member States and the Secretariat must adopt practical measures to fully implement resolution 2518 (2020), strengthen early warning and intelligence-sharing, improve risk assessment and emergency response, and provide comprehensive and multi-level security guarantees for peacekeepers.

It is imperative to better equip peacekeeping police in a customized manner and improve the security of hardware as much as possible. In carrying out their mission, peacekeeping police should focus on interacting constructively with the local population, debunk misinformation and disinformation in a timely manner, strive to provide better understanding and support, and work to improve software security. The community interactive patrols conducted by the peacekeeping police of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei and UNMISS have achieved positive results, and their relevant experience should be shared.

China has always been a supporter of and contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations. Since 2000, China has sent more than 2,600 peacekeeping police officers to carry out peacekeeping missions. They have travelled to 11 mission areas on four continents, and eight of them have given their precious lives. For the cause of peace throughout the world, China's peacekeeping police have carried out their missions with a great sense of responsibility in very difficult environments. China will continue to support, promote and participate in United Nations peacekeeping operations and make greater contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Kiboino (Kenya): I thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Ms. Christine Fossen, Mr. Mody Berethe and Ms. Emma Birikorang for their insightful briefings.

Kenya joins other Security Council members in paying tribute to the United Nations police officers—the gallant women and men who have committed themselves to serving humankind in United Nations peacekeeping around the world. They are among the earliest United Nations personnel deployed in peace operations. The nature of their skills, expertise and experience makes them a critical asset as first responders in engaging local communities. They are better positioned to not only understand the drivers of conflicts within their areas of jurisdiction, but also, and more importantly, to innovatively address potential disputes and underlying grievances and support early warning systems.

The increasingly complex and risky operating environment has placed a greater demand on United Nations police to deliver more, while maintaining the expected levels of efficiency, professionalism and accountability. That calls for investment in equipping

the United Nations police with up-to-date specialized expertise and skill sets. In that regard, we commend the Department of Peace Operations for developing specialized police teams with a project-oriented approach to capacity-building. However, specialized skills are only part of the solution. Correct mindsets, the integration of modern technology and appropriate equipment are vital.

Kenya reiterates its support for the efforts of the Secretary-General, including his Action for Peacekeeping Plus (A4P+) initiative, which aims to strengthen partnerships, enhance performance and accountability, boost safety and security, improve conduct and support political agreements through peacekeeping. We also commend the efforts to further develop and implement the Strategic Guidance Framework for International Policing, which reinforces and enriches peacekeeping, rule-of-law, protection-of-civilians and peacebuilding activities.

Kenya remains committed to all efforts aimed at ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of women in United Nations policing. Indeed, we are encouraged by the number of policewomen who take part in peacekeeping and the fact that more of them have leadership roles. Those women, such as Ms. Violet Lusala of Kenya, the Police Commissioner of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, are inspiring millions of people. We will continue to advocate for gender mainstreaming with the aim of successfully addressing any implementation gaps in the women and peace and security agenda. In support of the measures to achieve the A4P+ priorities, Kenya would like to share the following recommendations.

First, the police must be an integral player in all stages of the planning and execution of all peace operations and special political missions. That will assist in guaranteeing that the policing-related activities in mandates are appropriate and realistic. It is also critical for ensuring a system-wide approach to the rule of law, including corrections services. Within missions, there should be close cooperation and integration between the different elements and components of peacekeeping and political missions in order to ensure synergy and unity of effort.

Secondly, there is a need for more cooperation between the United Nations and international, regional and subregional organizations, with a special emphasis on training, sharing experience and exchanging of

information on policing. In that regard, Kenya's International Peace Support Training Centre, a recognized centre of excellence dedicated to capacity-development, is available for such interactions.

Thirdly, the protection of all United Nations police officers remains vital. There is a need for enhanced collaboration and coordination with the host communities and security services, which requires constant communication on the mandates and their tasks.

Fourthly, gaining and maintaining the acceptance and trust of the host communities should be the aim of all United Nations police officers. In order to achieve that, they must display the highest levels of discipline, dedication to duty and respect for the social and cultural settings of the host communities. In that regard, police-contributing countries should always ensure that all police personnel to be deployed are vetted for previous criminal acts, including sexual exploitation and abuse, and should ensure mandatory predeployment training, including on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse.

Finally, we reiterate the need for more action to incentivize the greater participation of women, including through conducting a review of the obstacles preventing women's recruitment and professional advancement.

Mrs. Alhefeiti (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank the briefers for their valuable input and the detailed information they provided, including on the priorities of the United Nations police in the context of peacekeeping operations, as well as the efforts being made in that respect.

I also take this opportunity to commend Mr. Luis Carillho for his leadership at the helm of the United Nations Police Division. The United Arab Emirates stands ready to cooperate closely with his successor and his team.

I would like to highlight two priorities that the United Arab Emirates considers to be fundamental pillars for the implementation of the Action for Peacekeeping Plus (A4P+) agenda.

The first priority is the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. In that context, we appreciate the efforts of police-contributing countries and the United Nations Police Division in nominating female officers to serve in the United Nations police force in order to achieve the objectives set by the

Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy. Experience has demonstrated the importance of the participation of female police officers in peace operations, particularly for promoting community participation, increasing awareness of local circumstances and developing early-warning systems.

However, we believe that increasing the participation of women will also depend on the ability of the United Nations to ensure appropriate living conditions and the necessary infrastructure in all Missions, in addition to adopting the improvements required. We hope that those steps will receive more attention and gain broader scope. Efforts must continue to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all peace operations.

The second priority is the importance of increasing the use of technology and innovation in peace operations. New tools can have a positive impact in enhancing the safety and security of uniformed personnel and protecting local communities, through the use of monitoring and surveillance technology to improve field situational awareness. Technology also plays a key role in improving performance, strategic communications and other critical mission elements. As a concrete example, the United Arab Emirates, in cooperation with the International Security Alliance, organized the first virtual reality-based exercise to address a simulated terrorist attack. That innovation was demonstrated at a side event on the margins of the third United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit, which was held recently in New York. In that context, we look forward to hearing from the briefers about their views on what could perhaps be done differently in the area of technology to make peacekeeping operations more efficient and effective.

Following the interventions of Commissioners Christine Fossen and Mody Berethe, I would like to note the positive impacts of the Integrated Peacekeeping Performance and Accountability Framework and the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System. We are hopeful that such initiatives will contribute to improving the work of the police components of peace operations.

We all know that peace operations are not created to be permanent; on the contrary, they play a key role in building the capacity of the local police who will be responsible for taking control of and maintaining the achievements made during peace operations, particularly

in host countries. In that sense, capacity development must be at the heart of cooperation among peace operations and the relevant authorities in host countries.

Before concluding, I would like to thank Ms. Christine Fossen, Police Commissioner, United Nations Mission in South Sudan, for welcoming the recent Special Policing Advisory Group's visit to South Sudan, in which the United Arab Emirates participated. We also commend the support provided to South Sudan by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, including by protecting civilians, providing support to correctional institutions and establishing capacity-building.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates is keen to promote international efforts to strengthen security and stability across the world. Accordingly, Abu Dhabi hosted the most recent annual conference of the heads of police components of United Nations peace operations last August, which was held for the first time away from United Nations Headquarters. My country will also sponsor the next Chiefs of Police Summit, to be held in New York in 2024.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates reiterates its full support for promoting the United Nations police capabilities, and we stress the need to ensure appropriate support in order to ensure that important component of peacekeeping operations can completely fulfil its mandate.

Mrs. Ngyema Ndong (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for initiating this exchange with United Nations police components. This is the first time that Gabon has been invited to contribute to this annual debate since it began its term on the Security Council.

We listened with great interest to the briefings delivered by Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, the Heads of the police components of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and Ms. Emma Birikorang, representative of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre. Their briefings illustrate the unwavering commitment of the United Nations to the protection of civilians and peacekeeping and peacebuilding. They also serve to inform us about the challenges and obstacles that United Nations police components face on the ground, as well as the sometimes-precarious conditions in which they carry

out their mandates. I would therefore like to pay tribute to the work of those police officers, whose role in supporting national police services, promoting the rule of law and consolidating peace and development significantly contributes to the recovery of States in conflict, post-conflict and crisis situations.

Through their outreach activities, police components are very often the direct link between peacekeeping operations and local communities. They are closest to the actual situation in the country by carrying out community policing activities, as I said. In that regard, they are a major asset, particularly in developing the mandates of peace operations and political missions so that they are better adapted to the needs of host countries.

In that context, the training and capacity-building of police components are crucial. In order to be more effective, the training policy of the Blue Berets must take into account both the different kinds of threats and the specific realities on the ground where those forces are deployed. From one region to the next and from one country to another, the realities, aspirations and needs vary, and we must take that into account in the training of such men and women in the field, in developing mandates and in the choice and provision of equipment in order to better protect civilian populations and improve their perception of the presence and work of peacekeepers, as well as strengthening the security of those soldiers.

The role of women in police components is also a key issue. They are indispensable, particularly in the context of outreach activities and peace and peacebuilding processes, and their presence encourages women to become more involved. In most cases of sexual violence and in the fight against crime, local communities are more open to interacting with female police officers. Increasing the number of women in uniform in the police components of peace operations is therefore a major commitment that our Organization must meet. They bring value added that cannot be overlooked.

In that regard, Gabon's support for the Action for Peacekeeping Plus initiative, which places high priority on the expedited implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, is unwavering.

I would like to conclude by calling for the capacity-building of developing countries to enable them to provide even more police contingents, in particular women's contingents.

Since you wanted this meeting to be interactive, Mr. President, I would like to ask Mr. Berethe some questions. In his briefing, he mentioned the implementation of an evaluation mechanism. I would like to ask him to elaborate a little more on the current status of the capacity-building of the national police. Since, as part of the police component, he is closer to the population, I would also like to know the current mindset of the Congolese people, particularly following the events of last July. My last question is the following. With regard to the renewal of MONUSCO's mandate, what can the Security Council do to improve the effectiveness of the police component in particular?

Ms. Heimerback (Norway): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important discussion. I also thank the briefers for their inputs.

Norway has been a consistent contributor to the United Nations police (UNPOL). We support UNPOL with skilled police officers and leaders, such as Ms. Fossen, financial contributions, policy reforms and tools, such as the Strategic Guidance Framework for International Policing, as well as specialized police teams — a deployment modality pioneered by Norway.

We recognize the need for the United Nations police to modernize its capacity-building to reflect contemporary policing methods and respond to emerging threats. Norway therefore welcomes the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) reform initiative and the Action for Peacekeeping Plus implementation strategy.

We particularly commend the efforts that UNPOL has made to meet the target numbers set out in the Secretary-General's Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy. Nevertheless, we emphasize that gender parity is not only about quantitative measures, but also about maximizing the effectiveness of peace operations. To that end, we must ensure that progress towards parity includes efforts to create a safe work environment for everyone, with a zero-tolerance policy towards gender discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse.

While there has been steady progress since the Declaration of Shared Commitments on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations was signed in 2017, the United Nations police has the potential to deliver even stronger results to contribute to the A4P goals. In that regard, I would like to emphasize four key areas.

First, with regard to partnerships, UNPOL's capacity to make a difference by itself is limited. The involvement of key stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and other international organizations, such as INTERPOL, is therefore critical to modern police work, not least by facilitating a holistic and coherent approach across the entire judicial sector. Norway encourages all the relevant institutions to enhance efforts to lead an inclusive one-United Nations approach to police, justice and corrections in peace operations.

Secondly, regarding Member State involvement, UNPOL depends on police-contributing countries. Changes in the United Nations recruitment policy and training programmes, as well as the organization of important events, such as the United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit, would benefit from broader consultation with Member States.

Thirdly, on emerging challenges, over the past decades, United Nations peacekeeping has changed in response to new threats. Terrorism and violent extremism, including the nexus with transnational organized crime, require a holistic and transparent criminal justice response. The United Nations police, along with other rule-of-law entities and security institutions, has an important role to play in delivering technical assistance and capacity-building to help host State law enforcement and core justice institutions to address threats, while protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Finally, UNPOL can play a critical role in transition contexts. The move from peacekeeping to peacebuilding must be inclusive and nationally owned and must have a strong focus on the protection of civilians, including children, in order to be successful. Resolution 2594 (2021), on United Nations transitions, places a particular focus on the need to enhance the State's capacity to protect its own civilians. That is an area where UNPOL has a pivotal role to play through training and support.

Let me conclude with two questions. I would like to ask Ms. Fossen to elaborate on what her thoughts are as to how to better incorporate the rule-of-law components in peace operations. I would like to ask Under-Secretary-General Lacroix what measures can be taken to enhance the work of United Nations police against terrorism and organized crime.

Ms. Moran (Ireland): I thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Ms. Birikorang and Police Commissioners Fossen and Berethe for their insightful briefings. Huge thanks go to Ghana for arranging this important meeting.

Ireland is a strong supporter of the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) agenda. Action for Peacekeeping Plus (A4P+) should continue to provide the framework to support the United Nations police (UNPOL) to develop policing capabilities, advance the women and peace and security agenda and improve accountability and performance. The A4P+ initiative is especially necessary as missions navigate increasingly complex political and security environments.

We receive regular reports of the important work that the Police Commissioners and their teams carry out. Their strong leadership is key to advancing policing performance and the A4P+ goals. Their work does not go unnoticed, and we thank them for their continued commitment. Their contributions to the advancement of the women and peace and security agenda must truly be acknowledged. They act as role models for policing everywhere.

Ireland has contributed to UNPOL for 30 years, including through its current deployment to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, in which we are the largest police-contributing country. This morning I want to highlight a number of areas where Ireland sees particular relevance for the ongoing implementation of priorities.

First, UNPOL can play a pivotal role in the transitions contexts. It is important that UNPOL components offer support and training to host Governments, civil society, including women's networks, and police and security-sector actors. That enables the development of mechanisms and environments that engage, support and protect local communities, including women, in a bid to build sustainable peace.

Secondly, peacekeeping operations must have the right capabilities in the right place, at the right time and with the right mindsets to deploy more adaptable and capable personnel. As an A4P women and peace and security champion, we believe that this must include breaking down the barriers to the full, equal and meaningful participation of women police officers in every role at every level. Partnerships are also important in developing those skills and capabilities. To assist in

developing capacity, in September Ireland was delighted to host an UNPOL specialized train-the-trainers course for 10 Member States.

Accountability to peacekeepers lies at the heart of A4P+, including in cases of crimes committed against them. Ireland encourages efforts to address serious and organized crime, support the implementation of the peacekeeping intelligence framework and prevent, investigate and prosecute crimes against peacekeepers. The provisions of resolution 2589 (2021) must be fully implemented to support those who put their lives on the line. Ireland welcomes the reported improvements to base defence measures and integrated security initiatives. From an environmental perspective, increased use of renewables and improved adaptation and mitigation measures should continue. Ireland also recognises UNPOL's work to improve their evidence-based assessments of performance and ensure adherence to standards of conduct by reinforcing zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse.

Finally, as Under-Secretary-General Lacroix mentioned this morning, peacekeepers face increasingly dangerous and hostile environments and are themselves targets of misinformation and disinformation, as we have seen in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali. We must ensure that peace operations make strategic communications a whole-of-mission activity, integrating it into planning and mandate implementation. UNPOL can play an important role by supporting and engaging local actors and fostering mutual trust and dialogue.

I would like to finish with a number of questions. I want to ask Commissioner Fossen what additional capabilities and training Member States can provide to help UNPOL better respond to increasingly dangerous environments. I would like to know from Commissioner Berethe how the host nation has assisted in his strategic messaging to improve the local community's attitude to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, bearing in mind the point I made on strategic communication. Finally, Ms. Birikorang mentioned adaptive peacekeeping and it would be great if she could give us some insights into the factors that might help realize that.

Mr. De Oliveira Freitas (Brazil): I thank the Under-Secretary-General Lacroix for his opening remarks. I also thank Commissioners Fossen and Berethe for their briefings and for their valuable work

in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), respectively. I listened attentively to Ms. Birkorang on the activities of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre.

The international security situation is more complex, and conflicts are more diverse, than they were just a few years ago. Not only are the populations in the countries affected at risk, so are the peacekeepers themselves. In that context, the role of police components in United Nations missions is more important and more challenging than ever. Peacekeeping missions are frequently deployed in areas where State institutions, including law-enforcement agencies, are either absent or severely impaired. Blue Berets are therefore called on to re-establish order and protect civilians, not as a permanent substitute for local police forces, but for temporary assistance, and ideally as a partner who can help prepare local forces to resume their responsibilities.

The police contingent in United Nations missions plays an important role in peacebuilding as well as in peacekeeping itself. That role is particularly important during transitions in order to help ensure that local institutions are up to the task of maintaining stability and preventing the reversal of the hard-won gains achieved by the missions and the host countries. We should explore ways to strengthen the contribution of United Nations police to realizing the priorities of the Action for Peacekeeping Plus (A4P+) initiative. I would like to highlight three fundamental elements of effective peacekeeping — the safety and security of peacekeepers, strategic communications and the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

Brazil believes that the United Nations police can play a fundamental role in promoting the women and peace and security agenda. Female police officers are especially well suited for protecting vulnerable groups such as women and children, as well as promoting women's participation and strengthening community engagement. It is necessary not only to have female police personnel, but also to ensure that women fill command and leadership roles.

In order for Blue Berets to implement their mandates, appropriate training is essential. Brazilian police personnel deployed to United Nations missions, besides having to abide by the demanding requirements

of their own individual departments, have to undergo additional training at the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Peace Operations Joint Training Center, run by the Brazilian Armed Forces.

As we have witnessed too many times in recent months, peacekeepers themselves are at risk. I honour and praise the five United Nations police personnel who paid the ultimate price in fulfilling their duty in 2022, including in MONUSCO, represented here by Commissioner Berethe. In that context, strategic communications can play an important role in promoting the safety and security of peacekeepers. Appropriate explanations of the mandate and two-way communication with the local authorities, the local society and other partners can help dispel unrealistic expectations and clarify the actions undertaken by missions. That could help counter misinformation and disinformation campaigns against missions and prevent episodes of violence against peacekeepers and mission facilities, such as those that we have unfortunately witnessed in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Mandates for police components vary from mission to mission, but they usually involve the protection of civilians, peacekeepers and facilities, the strengthening of State institutions, support for security-sector reform and support in the fight against organized crime. Strategic communications can be a facilitator and a multiplier in achieving all of those goals.

In conclusion, the police personnel in United Nations missions help fulfil one of the most fundamental tasks of peacekeeping — re-establishing, either directly or by way of cooperation with local institutions, order and normalcy in societies affected by conflict. In doing so, they contribute to respect for human rights and a resumption of economic activities. They are therefore an essential part of the peace and security architecture, and Brazil is proud to contribute with some of its best law-enforcement professionals in the area.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and our briefers today, and I want to especially thank Ghana for bringing us together to discuss how United Nations police can support the implementation of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative. It is also critical that we continue to support the Action for Peacekeeping Plus initiative, which aims to ensure that United Nations peacekeepers live up to the high expectations that come with wearing the blue helmet or the blue beret. At the same time, it strives to ensure that those who

bravely volunteer to serve in the name of peace have adequate resources and support to keep them safe and empower them in carrying out their important peacekeeping missions.

We were honoured that Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield spoke as a panellist with Under-Secretary-General Lacroix at the United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit in September, and I am glad that we are here today to continue that conversation. We are meeting in the midst of a global pandemic, a food crisis exacerbated by the continued Russian aggression against Ukraine, and a battle against the climate change that is so deeply affecting the security of African nations and our peacekeeping and policing missions in those nations. But despite all that, the mission and the dedication of United Nations police have remained the same — to help restore, establish or strengthen the rule of law in places where it has broken down owing to conflict or complex emergencies.

The United States is a strong supporter of United Nations police peacekeeping. Since 2012, we have provided more than \$80 million to help prepare thousands of police from a dozen countries for service in peacekeeping missions. We are dedicated to making peacekeeping, including police peacekeeping, stronger, safer and more effective. Moreover, we believe, and studies have shown, that those goals are mutually supportive. Peacekeepers who perform better are better at keeping themselves and others safe. Performance promotes safety and security.

The United States strongly supports the efforts of the United Nations Police Division, the Integrated Training Service, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and others that are working to strengthen the doctrinal and curricular framework of United Nations policing, which provides the foundation for strong peacekeeper performance. We are pleased to see, for example, that the predeployment training for formed police units is being updated and revised to be more practical and tailored to the threats that peacekeepers face on the ground. We also note that training for individual police officers is now more robust and focused on preparing these officers to carry out their critical advisory roles.

Those are positive trends, and we look forward to seeing them continue. At the same time, challenges remain. For the United Nations Police to be effective in dangerous and complex environments, there must

be regular, meaningful assessments of performance in mission, along with recommendations to address any deficiencies. The best way to keep peacekeepers safe is to promote their effectiveness. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that the tools we have, including the Integrated Peacekeeping Performance and Accountability Framework, are implemented fairly and thoroughly, and that the performance data from in-mission assessments is appropriately shared and analysed to address common challenges. Let me be clear: there must be continued implementation of a zero-tolerance police for sexual abuse and misconduct.

It is necessary to talk about the critical role that women play in all of this work, because we know that police peacekeeping units with greater gender representation are more effective. Studies have shown that the presence of women peacekeepers promotes community trust and increases the mission's ability to engage with women and girls, groups that we know are disproportionately affected by conflict. Women's integration into police peacekeeping has come far but not far enough.

Lastly, peacekeepers remain at risk, facing growing threats from both direct attacks and indirect threats, such as misinformation and disinformation that can create more hostile operating environments. In order to better address these concerns, the United States hopes that the Secretary-General will issue a new report on United Nations policing in the near future, so that we can all track the important progress we have made, while taking stock of where we need to improve.

We look forward to working with the briefers in the Chamber today, the United Nations and Member States moving forward to address today's challenges to police peacekeepers and empower them to carry out their missions as fully, safely and effectively as possible.

In support of making today's meeting more interactive, I have a couple of questions for the Police Commissioners from the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. First, how are they seeing the effects of climate change during their daily mission activities, and how is climate insecurity affecting their work? Secondly, can they discuss their experiences with misinformation and disinformation? How they are combating them, and what the Security Council can do to help?

Mr. Ochoa Martínez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, we would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix, as well as Commissioners Fossen and Berethe and Ms. Birikorang for their briefings.

Mexico recognizes the valuable work of the members of the police components of United Nations peacekeeping missions. Their work, as has been noted this morning, is key to the prevention and investigation of crime and the maintenance of public order and security. All of this is essential to the protection of civilians through the promotion of the rule of law.

As has been discussed in our exchanges, police officers face increasingly complex challenges. To ensure good police-personnel performance, it is necessary, we believe, to adapt their training programmes to the security challenges they face in the field, in contexts significantly marked by conflicts of an asymmetric nature. We stress, once again, the importance of ensuring that these trainings incorporate tools that address the mental health of personnel before, during and after their deployment.

The police components of peacekeeping missions are key to the development of the capabilities of national civilian institutions. Strengthening them is therefore in line with the need to respond to threats to international peace and security using strategies that go beyond the military. By supporting law-enforcement tasks, peace missions help to create a framework of democratic governance that is indispensable for achieving lasting peace. Police components are better able to interact at the local level with communities most affected by conflict. From there, they can contribute to defusing tensions and fostering dialogue, with the aim of preventing escalations that compromise the prospects of peace processes. Accordingly, the case of Haiti reminds us that in order to achieve sustainable peace, it is essential that the strengthening of police capacities be taken into consideration in a peace mission's transition processes.

In addition, Mexico believes that strategic communication is indispensable for the success of peacekeeping tasks. As we have witnessed in several cases, most recently in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the perception of the local population can be decisive for the performance of missions. For this reason, greater attention must be paid to strategic communication as a central element in publicizing the mandates of peace missions, particularly their police

components, and in raising public awareness not just of their scope but also of their limits.

As we indicated at the third Police Chiefs summit in September, my country fully supports the objectives of the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiatives. In particular, we underscore the importance of making progress in the area of accountability, including personnel-performance evaluation and the implementation of the zero-tolerance policy in cases of sexual exploitation.

Mexico calls for the strengthening of coordination with countries that contribute police personnel so that peacekeeping missions have teams with the appropriate mindset for responding to challenges in the field. In this regard, we also call for closer cooperation with such institutions as INTERPOL.

Finally, we reiterate that the full, equal and meaningful participation of policewomen in missions is an element that contributes to mission success. We insist that a gender approach must be incorporated in a cross-cutting manner in all aspects of their design and operation. While we recognize the progress made in complying with the gender-parity strategy, we must do more to increase the number of women in peace missions, including in missions' police components.

Mrs. Kamboj (India): Allow me to thank Under-Secretary-General Lacroix for his briefing today. I also thank the other briefers for their valuable insights and briefings.

I would take this opportunity to pay tribute to all peacekeepers for their supreme sacrifice and for their contribution to the restoration of peace and stability in their respective areas of deployment. Sadly, 16 police officers from India have lost their lives, including two police peacekeepers, Shishupal Singh Bagadia and Sanwal Ram Bishnoi, who died during crowd violence against bases of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) on 26 July 2022. We pay homage to their sacrifice and convey our sincere condolences to their families and friends.

India fully supports the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative and its Declaration of Shared Commitments on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations aimed at making the United Nations peacekeeping an efficient and effective tool of the

Security Council for maintaining international peace and security.

India has deployed close to 3,000 police officers in approximately 24 United Nations peacekeeping operations. In fact, India was the first country to deploy an all-female formed police unit in Liberia in 2007. Around 170 Indian police personnel are currently serving in the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, and MONUSCO, playing a significant role in strengthening the law-enforcement efforts of the host Governments.

United Nations policing plays an important role in situations of armed conflict. United Nations police also help in the capacity-building of the host States, especially in areas such as the rule of law and civilian policing. It is therefore important that we acknowledge the important role of our police peacekeepers and make the effort to make them more effective and efficient. To that end, I submit the following points.

First, the primary role of police in United Nations peacekeeping missions is to train and build the capacity of the host nation to enable it to build sufficient expertise and skills in policing, which is an important task in the enforcement and maintenance of the rule of law. While the rapid deployment of formed police units may be required in certain contexts, such deployments should be based on clear and achievable mandates that are supported by adequate resources.

Second, the timing of deployment and role of police in peacekeeping varies according to specific contexts. Their capabilities and responsibilities are distinct from those of military peacekeeping troops. Therefore, their mandates should be clearly aligned with the tasks they are trained to handle and distinct from those of the peacekeeping troops.

Third, as we all know, armed groups, terrorists and transnational organized crime work hand in glove in the contemporary conflict environment. Therefore, it is essential that United Nations police and military contingents operate together and with other agencies. Developing joint training and operating protocols is critical in that regard.

Fourth, triangular consultations between the Security Council, the Secretariat and police-contributing countries (PCCs) are of paramount importance while making policy decisions on the role of United Nations police in peacekeeping operations. PCCs should be

involved at all levels of decision-making on police deployment planning, as well as on transition and exit strategies.

Fifth, close coordination between the United Nations police, the host Government's law enforcement machinery and the civilian population is essential to improving the efficiency of policing on the ground. Community policing should be the norm rather than the exception.

Sixth, as mentioned by others, women police officers and peacekeepers play an indispensable role in United Nations peacekeeping operations, in particular during high-visibility patrols and search operations, as well as in reaching out to communities in which only female police officers may be allowed to interact with female members of the community. They help to promote gender equality and can act as role models by inspiring local women and girls to pursue careers in law enforcement.

The Indian female formed unit in the United Nations Mission in Liberia, which I talked about earlier, helped to increase the participation of Liberian women in the security sector from 6 per cent in 2007, when they were first deployed, to 17 per cent when they left the Mission in 2016. That contribution was repeatedly and most graciously acknowledged by the former President of Liberia and Noble Peace Prize laureate, Her Excellency Ms. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. India's individual police officers, particularly women officers, notably Ms. Kiran Bedi, have also contributed immensely to United Nations peacekeeping.

In more recent times, an Indian woman police officer, Ms. Shakti Devi, who was deployed in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, was awarded the International Female Police Peacekeeper Award in 2014 for her contribution in the creation of a women's police council in Herat, Afghanistan. Going forward, I assure the Council that India remains committed to enhancing the footprint of our women in United Nations policing.

Seventh, the harnessing of technology is as important for the police as for the military. In that regard, we are of the view that the police need to be equipped with state-of-the-art technology for anti-riot, crowd control and other policing tasks.

I conclude by stating that, as a long-standing contributor, India looks forward to continuing its

active and positive contribution to United Nations peacekeeping operations. India has expertise in the investigation of serious and organized crimes, the investigation of transborder crimes, cyberforensics, improvised explosive device forensics and financial fraud investigation, among others, and we stand ready to share our experience by providing targeted training for the United Nations police peacekeepers of friendly States, as well as by offering to deploy Indian police officers to the various field missions and at United Nations headquarters.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Under-Secretary-General Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix and the Police Commissioners of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, Ms. Christine Fossen, and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Mody Berethe, for their assessments. We also listened carefully to Ms. Emma Birikorang.

Police components undoubtedly play an important role in contemporary peacekeeping missions. As an integral part of United Nations peacekeeping operations, the Blue Berets help to implement mission mandates that are determined by the specific situation in the country of deployment. One of the objectives of police components is to assist in reforming law enforcement institutions and build the national capacity of host States.

Peacekeeping missions are often deployed in countries in which national law enforcement bodies are considerably weakened and at times non-existent. In such situations, Blue Berets have to take over their functions. However, it is important to remember that the United Nations does not have unlimited capabilities, and that our global Organization cannot permanently replace the efforts of local police. In that regard, it is important for professionally trained and well-equipped United Nations police officers to be able to share their expertise, organize their work and train local personnel as effectively as possible, which will enable national security authorities to fully take over the maintenance of law and order and independently ensure the protection of civilians. It is the principle of national ownership that is the key to success. We can hardly consider international support to be effective if the long-term presence of missions results only in the United Nations replacing the efforts of local police.

Another critical mission of police peacekeepers is to protect civilians from immediate security threats by patrolling, monitoring and dealing with those who violate public order. Those efforts and the role of the Blue Berets, as the link not only between the population and peacekeeping presence, but also between the population and the Government of the host country, helps to build citizens' trust in Government institutions and thus lays the groundwork for achieving national reconciliation and sustainable peace.

Of key importance in that process is establishing constructive communication with the host country and taking the priorities it defines into account. Another important aspect is effective engagement with the people, attention to their concerns and, at times, clarification of the mandate in order to win their trust while preventing high or false expectations.

Depending on the national, cultural and religious characteristics of the communities living in the mission deployment area, women peacekeepers can play a particular role in establishing communication with them. At the same time, we are convinced that the focus should not be on the pursuit of quantitative gender indicators, but rather on the experience, professionalism and competence of officers and on adherence to the principle of broad geographical representation, including at the senior level.

There is no doubt that for the police to effectively carry out their tasks, especially given the increasingly difficult operating conditions, proper logistical support and staffing are required. Missions should improve planning and management and avoid unnecessary expenditures and the duplication of efforts. As part of those processes, it is important that the Secretariat carefully consider the views and recommendations of police-contributing countries. Attempts to promote various outside initiatives and concepts that have not received the support of all Member States in the General Assembly Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations are counterproductive. In that regard, we believe there is a need for an ongoing dialogue between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries, as well as with host States, on all aspects of the activities of peacekeeping operations, including at the planning and mandate design stages.

We believe firmly in the importance of stepping up cooperation with regional organizations, including at the level of the United Nations police. In that regard,

we support the work being done by the United Nations Secretariat, as well as the initiatives of many regional organizations, particularly the African Union, to improve training for police peacekeepers. Russia is also making its contribution to that common cause. Our country conducts training for Russian and foreign law-enforcement personnel through United Nations-certified programmes at the peacekeeping training centre of the All-Russian Research Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation in Domodedovo. Over the past 20 years and more, the centre has produced more than 2,500 highly skilled professional police officers. The course curriculum is targeted at law-enforcement officers from developing States, particularly in Africa, with a focus on women police. Special attention is also given to language training, taking into account the specificities of host States.

As a police-contributing country, the Russian Federation has continued to systematically increase its participation in United Nations police peacekeeping and to deploy personnel with the relevant skills, including women, to missions. Women personnel from our Ministry of Internal Affairs have achieved positive results in Cyprus, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Abyei. As we underscored at the most recent United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit, Russia stand ready to continue contributing to the development of police peacekeeping.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): My thanks go to Under-Secretary-General Lacroix and all of our other briefers for their presentations today. Let me also take this opportunity to thank all United Nations police forces for their essential work in what are sometimes extremely tough conditions.

I am pleased that today's discussion is focused on Action for Peacekeeping and Action for Peacekeeping Plus. The United Nations police (UNPOL) has an important role to play in delivering whole-of-mission approaches to those reform priorities. I will therefore focus on the areas that were covered by the two Police Commissioners — the protection of civilians, and performance.

First, I thank Commissioner Fossen for her invaluable insights into implementing a protection-of-civilians mandate in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. When talking about the protection of civilians, we can sometimes forget how important

unarmed approaches are. Of course, that is only part of the picture, and both armed and unarmed activity complement each other. We must consider the full range of tools to prevent and respond to civilian threats. Peacekeepers not only need to protect civilians from physical violence, but they must also provide a protective environment and space for mediation and dialogue. UNPOL is uniquely placed for that task. Its personnel are often the first and the last to meet with the local population during any intervention or response to a crisis. It needs to establish strong relationships with those populations founded on trust.

Secondly, with regard to performance, I thank Commissioner Berethe for speaking to that point in the context of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). Operating in any mission environment has its challenges, but MONUSCO is arguably one of the most challenging, as we have seen in the increased violence directed at the Mission in recent months. The United Kingdom welcomes the ongoing implementation of the Integrated Peacekeeping Performance and Accountability Framework and the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System to monitor and evaluate performance and review progress against mandate implementation. Better performance means better missions.

For UNPOL to operate and perform at its best, it needs to deliver the full range of policing roles it is mandated to fill. That should include capacity-building and development efforts for host-State police and justice and corrections institutions. In line with the findings of the 2016 external review of the functions, structure and capacity of UNPOL, there could be a greater focus on institution-building and specialist capabilities rather than simply on the number of personnel deployed. It is those skills that support sustainable peace and the restoration of the rule of law.

Finally, our briefers and many speakers today have underlined the importance of the contribution that UNPOL makes to the women and peace and security agenda. The United Kingdom strongly supports that and welcomes the progress made to date. We look forward to continuing to work together to strengthen UNPOL to deliver on its full potential.

Mrs. Jaraud-Darnault (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, and the two Police

Commissioners for their briefings. I would like to highlight two points.

First, the United Nations police is an essential component of peacekeeping. United Nations police operate in an integrated manner in the missions. The Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System has been implemented in 10 peacekeeping missions. In some missions, police planners are present in the integrated strategic planning units, which helps to better link their own short-term operational planning goals with long-term strategic planning objectives that address the issues identified by the Special Representative. That is particularly important in improving the preparation for transition phases.

The United Nations police is there to protect. In South Sudan, United Nations police coordinate with the national police to conduct preventive patrols, as well as operations to apprehend suspects. The aim is to combat crimes, in particular sexual assault, committed within protection-of-civilians sites and internally displaced persons camps. In the Central African Republic, efforts over the past several years in the PK5 neighbourhood of Bangui have helped to build bridges with the population by reassuring them and keeping them informed.

The United Nations police strengthens the capacities of the internal security forces of host States. That is done in synergy with other United Nations entities, in line with the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy and with a focus on promoting the role of women. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a police station built as part of a collaborative project for peace and security in Djugu has enabled 25 police officers, five of them women, to be deployed. The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo provided them with training in combating impunity, human rights violations and gender-based violence.

Secondly, the United Nations police is preparing to begin a new chapter in its work in the service of peace following the appointment on 31 October of Mr. Faisal Shahkar as the United Nations Police Adviser in the Department of Peace Operations. There is no shortage of challenges. The United Nations police has been able to reform itself to meet the new requirements of peace operations. In particular, it has succeeded in strengthening the role and place of women in the police force, exceeding the targets set in the uniformed gender-parity strategy. It has developed an ambitious training

programme, including predeployment training, and has established a solid employment doctrine. It must continue to play a full role in the implementation of the Action for Peacekeeping Plus initiative. In that context, the United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference held in Seoul in December 2021 opened up new capability perspectives for the United Nations police. The complexity of the tasks entrusted to it increasingly requires specialized police capabilities that fully address the challenges identified in the Strategy for the Digital Transformation of United Nations Peacekeeping.

It also reinforces the importance of evaluating the performance of police contingents. The most recent report to the Council on the activities of the United Nations police goes back as far as late December 2018 (S/2018/1183). Now, as the New Agenda for Peace is being prepared, it would be useful to review the performance of those activities.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Ghana.

I begin by thanking Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix; Ms. Christine Fossen, Police Commissioner, United Nations Mission in South Sudan; Mr. Mody Berethe, Police Commissioner, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and Ms. Emma Birikorang, Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, for their briefings.

We thank all police-contributing countries for the sacrifices made by their personnel, their commitment to peace and their continued effort in providing effective, efficient and accountable policing in many parts of the world. We also salute all police personnel who have made the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives in the line of duty. May their sacrifice not be in vain.

Since Ghana's first police deployment to the Congo in the 1960s, our participation in several other missions has reinforced our confidence in the utility of United Nations policing. As the seventh largest troop- and police-contributing country currently, Ghana has seen first-hand the critical contribution of United Nations policing to the stabilization of many conflict situations.

Over the years, United Nations police (UNPOL) personnel have helped to restore hope to distraught and displaced civilians, including women, children and the aged, and have provided confidence for fragile societies

through intelligence-backed surveillance, community policing and the investigation of incidents of sexual and gender-based violence, human rights abuses and other serious crimes, including against children.

Even as present-day peacekeeping is complicated by the dangerous environment and challenging circumstances within which it must operate, United Nations policing is becoming ever-more critical within an enhanced-performance framework. It is in that context that I will make a few additional points that highlight the contribution of UNPOL, taking into account the priorities of the Action for Peacekeeping Plus initiative and emerging challenges to peacekeeping.

First, we welcome the sustained engagement and commitment by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and field missions to ensure accountability for crimes against peacekeepers. Despite consistent mobilization and the adoption of resolution 2589 (2021), accountability to peacekeepers remains relatively low as compared to the growing number of violent incidents against peacekeepers. We must therefore be resolute in working with host countries to demand accountability for crimes against peacekeepers, including in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali.

Secondly, we encourage the further deployment of innovative technological solutions to address the challenges of peacekeeping and note their critical role in supporting mandate implementation. We are happy with the work that is ongoing with the Unite Aware platform, which continues to build on the capabilities rolled out in the initial missions and is now being used to enable situational awareness for medical support and engage in radio mining and video data analysis. We thank India for its support for that project. We also commend the ongoing assessments by the DPO on the nature of the threat that misinformation and disinformation pose to missions and how missions have been countering that threat with the use of strategic communications.

Thirdly, we encourage the further implementation by UNPOL and the Department of Operational Support of the women and peace and security agenda and its priorities to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of women at all stages of the peace process and by systematically integrating a gender perspective into analysis, planning, implementation and reporting. Admittedly, there is much more that needs to be done to

achieve the targets, but the progress is steady and must be sustained.

Fourthly, peacekeepers are accountable. We therefore support UNPOL's efforts to improve evidence-based assessments of performance and to ensure adherence to standards of conduct by reinforcing zero-tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse.

In conclusion, Ghana endorses UNPOL's approach for the establishment and maintenance of strong partnerships with national counterparts and communities, including civil society and women's networks, for meaningful cooperation with host Governments and communities, as well as the identification and implementation of shared political strategies and agreements to address emerging threats to peace and security.

We therefore encourage the further implementation of the protection objectives through dialogue and engagement, which we heard earlier from the Police Commissioner of UNMISS. We also encourage the important role of United Nations peacekeepers in environmental management of the host country and mandated missions, as well as the intensification of efforts aimed at reducing the overall environmental footprint of peacekeeping operations, as called for by General Assembly resolution 76/274.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to Mr. Lacroix to respond to the comments and questions raised.

Mr. Lacroix (*spoke in French*): First of all, I thank all members of the Security Council for reaffirming their support for the United Nations police. I have noted a number of comments on important points, including the key role played by the United Nations police in national capacity-building in the area of the rule-of-law institutions, which is key to creating one of the conditions necessary for operations — to be able one day to withdraw and leave behind strong institutions. That point was raised by several delegations.

I also note the importance of integration — that is, police components working in close coordination at all levels — including at the planning and operational levels, in close coordination with the civilian and military operations components, as well as humanitarian and development partners. Accordingly, several missions have set up integrated planning cells,

and we have implemented the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System.

The role of women in carrying out the mandates of police components was also underscored. It is a matter of ensuring not only that there are more women in our police components but that their increased number be used as a tool to better implement our mandates in all areas, including the protection of civilians, which requires establishing a relationship of trust with all members of communities, including women.

With regard to the question asked by the representative of Norway on strengthening the role of the United Nations police in countering terrorism and organized crime, which — especially with regard to organized crime — are significant aggravating factors of conflict, several points must be underlined.

First of all, concerning the work of the police components, there is the role they play in strengthening national capacities and the competent institutions so that they are better able to combat those scourges. There is also the role that they can play in strengthening the capacities of our police components to be more familiar with and anticipate such threat; hence the importance of the systems that are being developed such as Unite Aware in the framework of the Strategy for the Digital Transformation of United Nations Peacekeeping, which is one of the key priorities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

I would add that, in the framework of optimizing our collaboration, which was recently strengthened by the establishment of the Inter-agency Task Force on Policing, co-chaired by the Department of Peace Operations and our colleagues from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna, we will be able to better articulate our response, in cooperation with other competent United Nations actors, in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the work of the police components in those two areas.

Within the Police Division, we also have a team that is in charge of organized crime, with focal points that can work in cooperation with our colleagues on the ground and draw on the resources of the standby police unit in Brindisi in order to strengthen our response in that area, including with regard to early warning and strengthening our capacities at that level in terms of better knowledge and threat assessment.

Lastly, we enjoy close cooperation with other international organizations that have expertise in that area, including, of course, INTERPOL and its regional entities. In that context, the United Nations police component is well positioned to develop its work to address the challenges of terrorism and organized crime.

I also want to point out the importance of the role of police components in combating misinformation and disinformation, dangers that kill both civilians and our colleagues. In that context, I would like to pay homage to our police officers who recently lost their lives in the attacks — and we call them attacks because they were not spontaneous demonstrations — on personnel of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. And of course I also extend that homage to all of our United Nations police colleagues who have lost their lives in the service of the values of the Charter of the United Nations.

Finally, I would like to conclude by paying tribute to our colleague Luis Carilho for the excellent commitment, professionalism and efficiency with which he led the Police Division. I also wish every success to his successor, Commissioner Faisal Shahkar, who will soon take on that role.

The President: I thank Mr. Lacroix for the clarifications he has provided.

I now give the floor to Ms. Fossen to respond to the comments and questions raised.

Ms. Fossen: I thank everyone for their questions. First, I would once again like to thank the members of the Security Council for their support to the United Nations police (UNPOL) and the role we play in peacekeeping. Secondly, I would like to thank the many members of the Council who are police-contributing countries (PCCs). I can assure them that all the police officers from their countries are excellent peacekeepers, both as individual police officers (IPOs) and in formed police units (FPU).

I will start with the question from the representative of Norway as to how we can enhance the whole-of-justice chain approach. First, I would say that it is actually a question about continuously hard work. We have to work — both UNPOL and the other rule-of-law chain-of-justice components, and both in the Mission and at Headquarters. In my view, the United Nations can sometimes work in pillars, so this is something that has been very important for me, because we are working

in South Sudan with a whole-of-mission approach. We need to work on the justice chain, and, as we can see, many of our activities are interlinked. As leaders, it is important for us to continue to walk the talk. We need to talk about it, and we need to do it. We need to show our peacekeepers that we work hand in hand. I am lucky to have Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haysom, who always talks about the whole-of-mission approach he expects from all of us responsible for police components here in the Mission. Therefore, my short answer is that hard work is required. We have to talk about it in its entirety and about how the whole chain of justice is interlinked.

I will move on to the question from the representative of Ireland on how we can better respond to threats and the security situation for peacekeepers. First, I would say that we have to have good relations with the host Government. Regardless of what kind of conflicts or post-conflict countries we are operating in, we have to try the best we can to have good relations with the host Government. Secondly, UNPOL depends on good predeployment training. We need very good, skilled, trained police officers from the PCCs, and we need them to meet the skill sets required in the Mission, both for FPU and IPOs. There also has to be a clear dialogue between those of us in the missions, Headquarters in New York and the PCCs. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to have good predeployment training and the mission-specific training that is needed for the peacekeepers before they come. Then, of course, after they arrive at a mission, we need regular assessments and to evaluate their performance. And we need to constantly be alert to the security threat assessments from the Department of Safety and Security and other stakeholders, which provide us with information on how to operate in insecure environments.

I think that it is also very important for our peacekeepers to understand the conditions, cultural environment and security context of where they are in the world. We need to adjust them to where they come to. That is what we do in the induction training when they come to the Mission. But we also need to constantly talk about and make sure that all our peacekeepers understand the situation in which they are and the context in which they are operating. In that regard, as mentioned in some of today's briefings to the Council, women often play a critical role in establishing close contact in the environments or communities they are operating in. And we need both male and female

peacekeepers to understand the context and the security arrangements that need to be taken into account on our side. Therefore, I can say to the representative of Ireland that there are many layers as to how we can improve that, but we must always keep it at the top of our minds, because we need to provide 24/7 security for our peacekeepers. That is the most important thing we do — secure our own people — otherwise, we cannot be good peacekeepers in the host country and ensure we are at our best for the populations we are serving.

I will move on to the third question, from the representative of the United States, which was related to climate change. In the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), in both UNPOL and the Force, we are all affected by climate change and the flooding. Those are the most significant effects of climate change we see here. The flooding, combined with the difficulties it creates in food distribution, creates tensions that in turn affect security. Those are the most significant areas in which we are affected directly by climate change. And the same goes for UNPOL — we are affected just as all the other components in the peacekeeping Mission are, because UNPOL supports the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

I will try to answer the other part of the question from the representative of the United States, which was about disinformation. We are trying our best, here in UNMISS, to ensure that we have the technical capabilities to work on data-driven peacekeeping and use it, so as to be a component that uses intelligence-led policing. But sometimes it is also important to remember that we are in a post-conflict area. We have troubles with the Internet. We have very, very bad infrastructure. The level of illiteracy is very high, and the road conditions and infrastructure are very poor. It is therefore necessary to go out and talk to people in order to gather information. For those reasons, we are not able to use all of the information and the systems as well as we wish we could. We are therefore taking things step by step here in South Sudan. I think that the first thing we have to do is to work to build the capacity of the South Sudan National Police Service as our main mandate here in the country. I think that my good colleague Mr. Berethe is better placed to answer with regard to the challenges of disinformation and how to prevent it having consequences. I will leave it to my colleague to better answer that question.

Those were the three questions that I understood were meant for me. I am happy to respond further if

there are any more questions. I once again thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to brief the Council.

The President: I thank Ms. Fossen for the clarifications she has provided.

I now give the floor to Mr. Berethe to respond to the comments and questions raised.

Mr. Berethe (*spoke in French*): I will try to summarize the comments that I have on the questions raised.

First, regarding the question from the representative of Norway about the status of capacity-building, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo we are in a situation in which all our work must be shaped by so-called humility. As Council members know, it is a huge country with numerous problems. We often forget the fact that there are more than 100,000 individuals in the police in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Congolese police force has 138 police officers, while the Congolese army has 150,000 troops. We are in a process of transition, which has been a great opportunity for us. When the Security Council established the parameters for the transition by drawing up benchmarks, in terms of the police we followed discussions at the political level with strategic discussions with the police leadership. For us, the strategy is to take into account the fact that any transformation process is based on national leadership, and, on that basis, whatever the political direction, we must build on what already exists. In terms of capacity-building, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is therefore on its third five-year plan for developing the police capacity. At the time of the transition, the discussions focused on which elements of the current, third five-year plan could help to improve the security environment in order to meet the benchmarks, as well as the capacity-building needs.

As the Council knows, for us that was more of an exercise that allowed us to refocus on our priorities, knowing that those priorities already existed. That exercise was also a great opportunity for us to continue with the directions and guidance provided by the Security Council, whereby the transition process meant that the Democratic Republic of the Congo should of course be able to shoulder its responsibility for security, but also that there should be greater integration between the peacekeeping operation and the other United Nations entities. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General therefore instructed us to set up a joint police capacity-building programme, which means

that the United Nations Development Programme, the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Mine Action Service and the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are now all working together in a number of areas of engagement, the purpose and objective of which are to build capacities so as to tackle the root causes of the conflict.

The last aspect of that issue is that the Democratic Republic of the Congo itself, in taking control of its presence, remains very open to bilateral and multilateral cooperation. That is how, while the United Nations is working together, we also have the European Union, which is providing assistance through a new programme; the United States, which continues its support through the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs; France, which also supports the Congolese people through the police forensic programme; very recently, the Republic of Korea, which is strengthening its presence in new technologies with regard to investigations; Japan, working in community policing; and a new training partnership that is being developed with the United Arab Emirates.

On the second question from the representative of Norway about the mindset of the population, I can say that there is indeed a feeling of general distrust with regard to the presence of the United Nations mission, because we are associated with the problem or due to the fact that the basic problems of the population in terms of security have not been resolved. Against that backdrop, I think that, as humbly and realistically as possible, we can say that the assessment of the work of the United Nations police (UNPOL) overall is positive. As I was saying earlier, our assessment and evaluation is made very specifically based on the kind of support that we provide. When we have gone into communities, whether it be places that we left, such as the Kasai or now Tanganyika province, the operational strategies that we implemented have in fact been opportunities for the Congolese national police to carry out community policing. People were able to use free access numbers to telephone the police, and the police received fuel and other support in order to answer those calls. That meant that UNPOL's presence and work received positive feedback.

Our presence within the population and the various investigations that we carry out in relation to our

presence also mean that all those actions also look at promoting human rights. In each area in which we are present, we set up ad hoc committees to discuss the issue of police violence. Whenever there are demonstrations, we work with our human rights colleagues, who sit down with local police to see, incident by incident, why such a person was injured and what happened. By way of a response, we also enter into discussions every time that the police say that they were violent because they did not have enough materiel or because they did not have teargas. The police component mobilizes with the mission leadership to find out what is needed.

The final positive assessment of us from the population are the teams combating sexual violence, which were initially in Goma and Bukavu. They are in contact with the community. They carry out awareness-raising, and they show that the Congolese national police is listening to victims of sexual violence. We believe that that was an important step in the overall strategy of our commitment to combating sexual violence. The police component was able to report and raise awareness, as well as change the behaviour of the police towards communities.

Nonetheless, as was recalled by the representative of India, we are the subject of attacks because, overall, we are seen as the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). And very often we are also scapegoats for the situation here in the country because — and by way of conclusion on this part — the mandate requires that we ensure the protection of civilians. When we talk about the protection of civilians, we know that the United Nations policy, as was recalled in this Chamber today, is to take into account two thirds — that is, political engagement and dialogue on protection, engaging in physical protection against imminent threats, but also creating a protective environment. All the work that we do with regard to those two thirds is taken up with, and often overtaken by, considerations linked to the second third, which is that the violence is ongoing, and they expect the United Nations to literally replace the State of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in protecting the population.

With regard to the question from the representative of Ireland on strategic communications in relation to the anti-MONUSCO climate, which is my third response, I think that — moreover, Under-Secretary-General Lacroix reiterated this on several occasions — what is happening with MONUSCO is unprecedented.

The provisions that we have for MONUSCO stipulate that the host State can help us with security and support us in our efforts to protect ourselves. Unfortunately, with regard to the most recent outbreaks, at the end of July, the host State's security services, which we have been working with for almost 20 years, failed to take action. Police components are therefore considering some of the elements of our strategy for engaging with the force and the Department of Safety and Security when we set up contingency plans. We always try to take into account the possibility that we may have to make supplementary efforts if our partners do not support us.

The police component is working in an integrated way to defuse the anti-MONUSCO sentiment. We are in contact with the police and with the community. We make use of early warnings, and every time we receive information we make sure that the information is passed on. We make sure the information goes up the chain, and propose solutions based on the knowledge that we have of the networks and actors on the ground. I gave an example in my briefing of that as an effective tool for addressing organized crime. We are continuing to build capacities among the Congolese, where this problem can be addressed at the level of the police, as a crime that manipulates public opinion in order to carry out attacks.

That leads me to the last questions posed by the representative of the United States. The final question was about the link between disinformation and the manipulation of information. In UNPOL, we believe that we must continue to equip the national police in their investigations with tools, and those are the same tools that can be used in preventing and identifying misinformation.

In terms of our expectations for the Security Council — in response to a question that was asked — we need the police-contributing countries and the Security Council to acknowledge the expertise that is needed. The Congolese people are urgently seeking new technologies. At the moment, South Korea, as I mentioned, is partnering with the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but we need new technologies to address crime. The Congolese police have already asked us if new partnerships could be initiated to monitor and prevent disruptions of law and order, particularly in the pre-electoral period in 2023. And we are thinking that we can have partnerships with actors such as the United

States that already have programmes there, to see how we might be able to build something with them.

I would like to make a final point with regard to climate change. The Mission is in a country where every time we try to discuss the issue of climate change, we talk about country solutions. We can point to the discussions being held in Egypt around the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. However, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the real concern for us is the question of conflict and violence, and every time the issue of climate comes up people say the solutions are already there. But there is a climate-change dimension in our efforts with the Congolese police. The work we have done with the police on natural disasters — for example, in Goma last year when the volcano erupted and when we worked with them two or three years ago managing an Ebola outbreak in the Beni area — all those experiences and our work with them are things we must capitalize on in managing any disasters linked to climate change. So we are conducting Action for Peacekeeping activities with them to help to increase their training on the concepts and the capacity-building needed to tackle climate change.

Today I can say that the lessons learned in that area have to do with dealing with the movement of crowds — as we saw in Goma — and on establishing containment measures when there are outbreaks of disease or pandemics. We are also trying to capitalize on that in terms of capacity-building, and that is what we did during the Ebola outbreak. Finally, our commitment in UNPOL means that within the Department of Peace Operations and our police component we have officers in charge of health and the environment. The police officer who was named police officer of the year last year was from MONUSCO. She was a Nepalese doctor, and she had been working with the Congolese police during the coronavirus disease, but she also undertook many initiatives, including one of working with the Congolese to plant a billion trees in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The President: I thank Mr. Berethe for the clarification he has provided.

I now give the floor to Ms. Birikorang to respond to the comments and the specific question posed to her at this meeting.

Ms. Birikorang: I thank the members of the Security Council for their interventions.

There was one question directed to me by the representative of Ireland, regarding adaptive peacekeeping, to which I will respond. With respect to that, I have two key responses.

First, adaptive peacekeeping should be flexible and responsive to the environment within which peacekeepers operate, and it should be country-specific. However, there are a few challenges when it comes to adaptive peacekeeping, which I am aware of as a trainer of peacekeepers in Ghana, where peacekeepers from several other countries go for peacekeeping training. When interacting with peacekeepers, some of the challenges that they tell us about is that some of the rules of engagement, some of the rules that are expected to make peacekeepers accountable, some of the mandates that they are expected to abide by can be really disabling rather than enabling them to perform their tasks. So it is important that while we want norms for peacekeeping and resolutions and we want peacekeepers to be able to play their roles well, we also do not want to tie their hands when they are expected to adapt to certain operational environments. We all know the complex environments that peacekeepers work in. A lot of the time, they are expected to adapt to certain situations that may not have been envisaged in the rules that they were trained on. We need to make sure that we give them the power to operate and interact with local communities and other vulnerable groups without worrying about the possible repercussions. Again, adaptability is about training and preparation, especially for the complex challenges within which peacekeepers operate, and especially the police, who often are at the forefront and interact with the locals. We also need to make sure that they have the right tools and equipment for the terrain in which they operate. And we need to ask ourselves if we are giving them the right tools to operate in those complex environments. That is what I want to say with respect to being flexible and responsive to operational environments.

The other point that I want to raise is about local ownership when we want to be adaptable. Often as peacekeepers, it is important that we trust in the local actors to resolve their own challenges. We often go into those environments seeking to spoon-feed them, thinking that they may not necessarily know what they are about. But sometimes we need to trust them and trust in their judgments.

The other thing that I also want to bring to bear is that in a lot of the environments in which peacekeepers operate, there are hybrid security mechanisms that are already in existence. These hybrid security mechanisms comprise local chiefs, traditional authorities, community-based groups and civil society groups. They are all part of a hybrid security structure that ensures that the places in which we operate continue to exist and that they function with a minimum sense of order. It is therefore important that we bring these hybrid security actors on board and integrate them into policing of the local communities. That is where we will attain the greatest success.

Successful peacekeeping missions are the ones that have adaptable mandates, operational flexibility in their actions, and consistent, innovative training methods. They also need to have the right tools to operate in their complex environments.

If I may, I would like to respond to the United States representative's comment on climate change

and how it affects peacekeeping environments. Climate insecurity in Africa is a major threat. Even in countries that may not be experiencing conflict, they are nevertheless affected because their neighbours and countries of the region may be suffering from climate change. Desperate young people are looking for avenues to succeed and for ways to live, and often their desperation leads them to crime, which brings them to the forefront of the challenges that peacekeepers face. Many of these young people threaten peacekeeping missions, either through extremist activities or through fundamentalism. I would urge that we strive to ensure, pursuant to the Sustainable Development Goals, that fragile countries are able to adapt to the dire effects of climate change.

The President: I thank Ms. Birikorang for the clarifications she has provided.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.