

The most spectacular failure in the last 50 years of United Nations peacekeeping, had taken place in Rwanda in 1994, that countrys representative said during the final round of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations two-day debate, in which other speakers addressed issues of cooperation with regional organizations, rapid deployment, peacekeeping in Africa, sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers, and mismanagement of peacekeeping resources.

Rwandas representative said it was necessary to ensure that there was no repeat of what had happened in his country, anywhere else in the world -- e must ensure that United Nations peacekeepers do what populations under threat expect of them; that is to protect them and save lives, as well as promote human rights, the rule of law and reconciliation. The responsibility of the United Nations, in that respect, was clearly outlined in the Charter and several international conventions, and had been most recently reiterated at the 2005 World Summit.

The representative of Brazil stressed that building sustainable peace was a long, strenuous endeavour that should address the root causes of conflict. A truly representative Peacebuilding Commission, established by the 2005 World Summit, would play a critical role in providing a more coherent, timely and sustained approach. The situation in Haiti highlighted the problems that United Nations operations would face in the coming years. Their solution would not be achieved solely by military means, as those problems were deeply rooted in political and socio-economic shortfalls that went beyond security.

The representative of Iran, however, said strengthening the relationship with regional organizations on peacekeeping operations could be useful, but that regional arrangements should be seen as a temporary solution to filling the gap between United Nations peacekeeping capabilities and the demand for peacekeeping operations. United Nations peacekeeping capacity should be strengthened, rather than being regionalized. Turning to the issue of rapid deployment, he said a proposal raised by a Member State to use the capacity of non-United Nations forces, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), for the purpose of rapid deployment, had caused concern. Every country could contribute to peacekeeping through traditional United Nations peacekeeping operations, without having to resort to non-United Nations sources.

The representative of Namibia said the 2005 World Summit had supported the development and implementation of a ten-year plan for capacity-building of the African Unions peacekeeping capabilities. In that regard, he strongly supported establishment, within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, of a full-time capacity of an interdisciplinary nature, to help coordinate and be the focal point of contact with the African Union and other partners on matters relating to African Union peacekeeping. That should be coupled with the allocation of adequate resources, in order to ensure success in enhancing the African Standing Forces capability.

The representative of the United States said that there was a need for a greater commitment to responsible management in peacekeeping, especially as it related to addressing and eliminating misconduct and mismanagement. For years, the United Nations and Member States had largely ignored cases of sexual exploitation and abuse. A number of measures to prevent such crimes and to enforce United Nations standards of conduct had been implemented over the past year. However, new allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were surfacing.

She said there were also reports of misuse and mismanagement of funds and resources involving United Nations peacekeeping operations in the field. Such acts not only endangered peacekeepers, but also the viability of peacekeeping operations. That, in turn, directly impacted the vulnerable populations that peacekeepers were to protect. The cultures of impunity that fostered those illicit activities must be eradicated. It was critical that the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) operate with complete autonomy to investigate those matters.

Venezuelas representative expressed concern about the new illegitimate and illegal Peacebuilding Commission. That body amounted to a reverse, falsified version of multilateralism, placed at the service of the United States and its allies, he said. Venezuela did not accept the trend aimed at steering the United Nations, as well as the principle of multilateralism, under the pretext of organizational reform, when such manoeuvres actually served unilateral goals and violated every such proposed reform.

Many countries called for timely reimbursement for contingent-owned equipment and troop contributions. Uruguays representative was concerned that some Member States had not been reimbursed for the participation in certain peace missions. She stressed that it was especially important to address that issue in the case of missions that had been closed for some time, such as Somalia and the Transitional Authority in Cambodia. She pointed out the injustice of troop contributors, mainly developing countries, having to maintain troops in missions, without receiving compensation for their efforts.

The issue of safety and security of United Nations peacekeeping personnel remained one of the most challenging in peacekeeping operations, speakers said. Ukraine's representative stressed that securing the adequate level of safety and security of personnel must be the central element of any peacekeeping operation. He stressed the need for optimizing the pre-mandate operational preparedness, as well as better information gathering and analyses in the field.

Statements were also made by the representatives of Nepal, Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Costa Rica, Peru, Algeria, Belarus, Guinea, Japan, Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Cameroon, Ecuador, Kenya, Tunisia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Fiji, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Cuba, Burkina Faso, Syria, South Africa and Timor-Leste.

The observers of the Permanent Missions of Israel and the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea also spoke.

The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations will meet again in a formal meeting, at a date and time to be announced.

### Background

The General Assembly's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations met this morning to continue its 2006 general debate.

### Statements

FERMIN TORO JIMENEZ ( Venezuela) said his delegation fully supported the United Nations efforts to ensure international peace and security, including relevant peacekeeping efforts and initiatives. Venezuela was, nonetheless, concerned that peacekeeping mandates had been reformed of late towards the legitimization of the interventionist efforts of the colonial Powers. Peacekeeping mandates were being used as a pretext for certain countries to enter other countries and set up operations there. United Nations peace mandates should be strictly limited to guaranteeing a ceasefire between two or more conflict parties, without favouring either, he declared. The role of peacekeepers was solely to stop such conflict -- there should be no

interference in the functioning national institutions of the country which hosted a peace mission.

Neither should there be any obstacles or barriers set up to interfere with the wishes of the people and Governments of the affected countries, he continued. The United Nations had the duty to respect sovereignty and to give support and stimulus to the process of self-determination in such instances. That was all. There must be respect of sovereignty, otherwise, the United Nations, through its peacekeeping operations, would disregard the right of people to determine their own destinies. Peacekeeping mandates should be transparent and must be elaborated, with the consent of the parties, with a view to ongoing consultations. That would be a way to ensure that such operations did not go beyond the boundaries of their original purpose, which was happening more and more lately.

Again, he stressed that peacekeeping missions should not be used as a tool for imperial intervention. With that in mind, Venezuela was also concerned about the emergence of certain new bodies within the United Nations, such as the illegitimate and illegal Peacebuilding Commission. That new body amounted to a perverse, falsified version of multilateralism, placed at the service of the United States and its allies, he said. Venezuela did not accept the trend aimed at steering the United Nations, as well as the principle of multilateralism under the pretext of organizational reform, when such manoeuvres actually served unilateral goals and violated every such proposed reform. Finally, he stressed that Venezuela believed that peacekeeping mandates should follow the principles set out in the Charter.

MADHU RAMAN ACHARYA ( Nepal) said no other organization could be better positioned than the United Nations to maintain international peace and security. There was, however, no reason to be complacent, as the international community had to put a huge amount of money into maintaining peace and security, which otherwise could be used for economic and social development. One could build on the five priority areas for reform of peacekeeping operations identified by the Secretary-General. While appreciating the recent practice of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations meeting with troop contributing countries, there were cases where permanent missions had been bypassed and national authorities contacted directly. His country, which ranked fifth in troop contribution, had predeployment training in place, including on human rights and humanitarian laws.

He said Nepal fully supported the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, and had taken legal action against its peacekeepers who had been found guilty of that practice. However, peacekeepers who had fallen victim to false accusations should be compensated. He supported the proposal to transform the present conduct and discipline team into a permanent integrated unit in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The emerging concept of

inter-mission support required a thorough examination, and troop-contributing countries should be fully taken on board, before any decision on redeployment was taken by the Security Council. The establishment of a Joint Mission Analysis Centre was a step in the right direction, but there was no mechanism to coordinate all available information between the intelligence agency of the host country and the Centre. At present, there was no need for a comprehensive review of the Standby Arrangements.

There was merit in the peacekeeping Departments proposal to establish a mechanism with interested Member States and regional organizations for the exchange of training material and, where appropriate, elaborating common guidelines and training courses. It was imperative that the safety and security of peacekeepers -- both physical and mental -- be at all times respected. In case a peacekeeper fell sick in the mission area, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was duty bound to provide medical treatment and not to repatriate him or her to the home country until the conditions was life threatening.

VLADIMIR F. ZAEMSKY ( Russian Federation) said the 2005 World Summit had reaffirmed the need to strictly comply with the basic principles of peacekeeping operations. First, and foremost, that had to do with the Security Councils main responsibility -- maintaining international peace and security. There was a need to improve military expertise when the United Nations decided upon prevention and settlement of conflicts. The full engagement of capabilities of the Military Staff Committee (MSC) -- one of the statutory United Nations structures that had been actually idle for decades -- represented one of the potential mechanisms for addressing that task.

He said the Summit had also expressed an intention to ensure closer cooperation of regional organizations with the United Nations. Experience in crisis response had demonstrated that the operations were more successful, if the United Nations comparable advantages could be combined, in a flexible way, with the capability of other entities. Sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as other forms of ignominious behaviour of peacekeepers, undermined confidence in the United Nations and must not go unpunished. In that regard, he welcomed the zero-tolerance policy, as well as a revised model memorandum of understanding, an Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) document on investigations and a code of conduct based on existing regulations. There was, however, still need for further elaborations on compliance with the national laws of troop-contributing countries.

He supported the Summit decision to create an initial operational capacity for a standing police component, which could ensure an effective and operational deployment of peacekeeping operations police contingents. The mechanism of interaction among members of the Council,

troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat, based on the practice of operational consultations, should be improved. Regarding the peacekeeping operations contractual system reform and allowing the United Nations administration to manage financial and human resources of the Organization more flexibly, he said that his country was seriously concerned about the financial implications of possible proposals to transfer the conditions applied at Headquarters to civil peacekeeping personnel. He favoured the preservation of the necessary level of control, on the part of Member States, of the Secretariats budget activities.

YERZHAN KAZYKHANOV ( Kazakhstan) said his delegation firmly supported the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to reinforce The United Nations peacekeeping capacity. He noted that the outcome of the 2005 World Summit had stressed that peacekeeping was one of the Organizations central activities and, as such, should be capable of responding effectively to challenges in the field. To that end, Kazakhstan believed that reinforcing missions in zones of ongoing conflict, approving rapidly deployable standby capabilities and strengthening police contingents were crucial. It was regrettable, he added, that the proposal to establish a strategic reserve, to provide operational assistance to United Nations missions facing challenges or crises, had not met with full support.

Kazakhstan also noted with concern that, although the Summit Outcome had reiterated the call for regional organizations to consider placing their peacekeeping capabilities under United Nations standby arrangements, none had, thus far, responded to that appeal. He stressed that it was necessary to continue to search for acceptable solutions to that issue, and to conduct a review of the United Nations standby arrangements system. He went on to say that Kazakhstan supported the peacekeeping Departments efforts to deal effectively with the five peacekeeping priorities, so that the wider Organization could be better equipped to respond to emerging challenges in the new century. e believe that it is, indeed, important to take care of peacekeepers, which is an issue directly linked to efforts to ensure their safety and security, as well as their financing, training and management, he said.

Kazakhstan supported the Organizations zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual misconduct of peacekeepers, and welcomed measures being undertaken to correct that situation...

RONALDO MOTA SARDENBERG ( Brazil) said the mechanisms of rapid reinforcement, in order to help missions in moments of crises, should be strengthened. In that regard, a wide spectrum of options should be assessed concerning rapid deployment, while other, equally relevant problems should not be overlooked, including development of a more accurate capacity to predict the future needs of peacekeeping missions. Cooperation with regional organization was another core issue. There were clear advantages to having a closer relationship with organizations that had detailed knowledge of the field in specific conflicts, but one should be careful not to overstretch the capacities of that organization.

(...)

Multidimensional peacekeeping and peacebuilding must go hand in hand to ensure that countries emerging from conflict would not relapse into it. Building sustainable peace was a long, strenuous endeavour that should address the root causes of conflict. A truly representative Peacebuilding Commission would play a critical role in providing a more coherent, timely and sustained approach. The situation in Haiti highlighted the problems that United Nations operations would face in the coming years. Their solution would not be achieved solely by military means, as those problems were deeply rooted in political and socio-economic shortfalls that went beyond security. Haiti would greatly benefit from adoption of a more pointed, longer-term strategic approach, encompassing the commitments of national and international stakeholders, and in cooperation with the newly elected authorities.

SUSANA RIVERO ( Uruguay) said the Committee was the only United Nations forum with a mandate to review all aspects of its peacekeeping operations, and her delegation was pleased to see that the latest report of the Secretary-General on the issue of peacekeeping incorporated many of the Committees views and recommendations. Uruguay was concerned that matters regarding the financial aspects of peacekeeping had not been fully addressed, particularly that some Member States had not been reimbursed for the participation in certain peace missions. She stressed that it was especially important to address that issue in the case of missions that had been closed for some time, such as Somalia and the Transitional Authority in Cambodia.

It was time for the Secretariat to take a more active role in addressing this matter, she said, adding that some solutions could include using surpluses from closed missions to settle debts of some operations which had ended with net cash deficits. The Secretariat also needed to address the matter of reimbursement for contingent-owned equipment, and Uruguay would point out the injustice that troop-contributors -- mainly developing countries -- had to maintain such troops in missions, without receiving compensation for their efforts.

On the issue of personnel, Uruguay supported the Secretariats zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual misconduct and looked forward to the updating of the existing Memorandum of Understanding on the matter, particularly so that all rules and obligations were made clearer...

JORGE BALLESTERO ( Costa Rica) paid tribute to those who had sacrificed their lives in peacekeeping operations, in particular to the former Chairman of the Working Group of the Special Committee, Glyn Berry, who, as a colleague, had always defended and promoted the principles and values of the Organization. He had motivated all, with his direct and sincere style, reminding colleagues constantly of the importance of achieving consensus. Glyn would be missed during the session.

He said that Glyn, setting an example, had accepted a dangerous mission, convinced that his work could make a difference. However, once again, intolerance had stood in the way of the path of solidarity and human rights. Kandahar put an end to a life that was so full of life.r

He said today, elements of peacekeeping operations and their challenges would be analyzed again, including security of personnel...

CARLOS OBANDO ( Peru) said that the exponential growth of United Nations peacekeeping operations had presented many opportunities and posed many challenges. Peru was concerned by allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation at the hands of peacekeepers, and supported the Secretariats zero-tolerance policy to address that matter. Peru also supported the call for the elaboration of a clear code of conduct for all peacekeeping personnel. He added that there was an urgent need to address the matter, and called on the Secretariat to step up its efforts, particularly since the latest reports showed that there had been a slowdown in investigations, which had resulted in an overall backlog of cases.

He acknowledged that the Secretary-Generals report had noted that a database would be set up shortly to deal with allegations, but was concerned that such a database would not go far enough. With that in mind, Peru believed such a database should include information on investigations, disciplinary actions that had been taken and pending cases, among other things. He also called on the Secretariat to step up its efforts concerning fraud and mismanagement in peacekeeping procurement. On the need for strategic reserves, he said Peru believed that such forces could include troops from all States, and would be used to head off domestic conflicts, which could turn into massive wars, as had happened in the past.

CLEMENT MWAALA ( Namibia) said the 2005 World Summit had supported the development and implementation of a 10-year plan for capacity-building of the African Unions peacekeeping capability. In that regard, he strongly supported establishment, within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, of a full-time capacity of an interdisciplinary nature, to help coordinate and be the focal point of contact, with the African Union and other partners, on matters relating to African Union peacekeeping. That should be coupled with the allocation of adequate resources, in order to ensure success in enhancing the African Standing Forces capability.

He said that, at the initiative of Namibia, the Council had held an open debate on Women, Peace and Security, which had culminated in the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000)...

The process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration/resettlement and reconstruction had always been the most complex aspect of peacekeeping processes that often went beyond peacekeeping operations and involved many players, he said. The success of such a process demanded sustained international support, both in human and financial resources. Welcoming the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission to coordinate all activities related to post-conflict, peacebuilding and reconstruction, he called for a speedy nomination of members, to enable the Commission to start its work of assisting countries emerging from conflict.

MOURAD BENMEHIDI ( Algeria) said his delegation would reaffirm the need for all peacekeeping operations to be governed by consent of the parties; non-use of force, except in cases of self-defence; clear mandates; provision of adequate resources; and the adoption of an integrated approach. The newly established Peacebuilding Commission should not be synonymous with the withdrawal of the Organizations traditional peacekeeping duties or mandates...

Algeria believed that the Secretariats identification of five priorities would be an effective contribution to the concrete objectives of peacekeeping. He particularly noted the affirmation of enhancing cooperation with regional organizations in peacekeeping matters. Such strengthening had been indispensable to the work of the African Union and other African subregional groups. Algeria supported all efforts to increase cooperation with relevant African entities, particularly towards the hopeful establishment of an African Standby Force.

On the issue of sexual misconduct at the hands of peacekeepers, Algeria supported the Secretariats initiative, which established disciplinary units in eight United Nations peacekeeping missions and at Headquarters...

SERGEI RACHKOV ( Belarus) said that the Committees current session was taking place at a time when the process of reshaping key aspects of the work of the United Nations, including its peacekeeping activities, was just getting under way. He said that his country had been taking concrete steps to prepare for participation in peace operations, and, at present, highly qualified officers from his country had been nominated to serve as United Nations military observers.

On the work of the Committee, he said that efforts should be made to enhance the security and safety of peacekeepers in the field... e need to implement better security arrangements and adjust operational concepts and techniques to prevent attacks on peacekeepers and the taking of United Nations troops as hostages, he said.

Turning to other matters, he said that financial resources, entrusted by Member States, should

be applied in the most cost-effective and efficient manner possible, and put to use in the most transparent and appropriate manner. Developing and land-locked States were as concerned as the Organization's top financial contributors by recent revelations of abuse and mismanagement in peacekeeping procurement...

JACKIE WOLCOTT SANDERS ( United States) said that there was a need for a greater commitment to responsible management in peacekeeping, especially as that related to addressing and eliminating misconduct and mismanagement. For years, the United Nations and Member States had largely ignored cases of sexual exploitation and abuse. A number of measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, and to enforce United Nations standards of conduct, had been implemented over the past year. However, new allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were surfacing. More action needed to be taken in pursuing justice and resolution for the crimes that had already been committed, as well as to ensure that those heinous acts were not repeated.

She said there were also reports of misuse and mismanagement of funds and resources, involving United Nations peacekeeping operations in the field. Such acts not only endangered peacekeepers, but also the viability of peacekeeping operations. That, in turn, directly impacted the vulnerable populations that peacekeepers were to protect. The cultures of impunity that fostered those illicit activities must be eradicated. She insisted that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and all other United Nations bodies cooperate fully with Member States in that endeavour. It was also critical that OIOS operate with complete autonomy to investigate those matters. Transparency was the key to any reform, she said, calling on the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and OIOS to provide Member States with timely, up-to-date information when requested.

As peacekeeping operations became more complex, there must be a distinction between tasks that were appropriate for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and those more appropriately handled by the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), through bilateral or regional arrangements, she said. In that regard, it should be recognized that the resources of the international community were finite. United Nations peacekeeping should not crowd out or substitute for potential bilateral or regional assistance.

She said positive steps made during the past year should also be acknowledged, including the establishment of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS). Authorized, planned, staffed and equipped in an expeditious manner, that Mission could become a prime example of how regional and multinational organizations could assist with United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Security Council would maintain strong support for the African Union Mission in the Sudan, until any eventual transition was completed. Two other positive steps in

peacekeeping involved the end of missions. The United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) had concluded its operations in December. Note should also be taken of accomplishments in implementing reforms recommended by the Committee. However, recent events also pointed towards an urgent need for Member States to do a better job in ensuring that the United Nations embodied the same high standards, effective practices and unquestioned integrity that all wanted to maintain.

PAUL GOA ZOUMANIGUI ( Guinea) said the evolution of United Nations peace operations had seen peacekeeping activities transformed into complex missions that went beyond what had been foreseen in the Organizations early years. And while Guinea was pleased with efforts to ensure greater cooperation between the Secretariat and troop contributors, it was concerned that more needed to be done to inform all States about peacekeeping obligations, challenges, objectives and goals. To that end, he said that the Secretariat should restart its dialogue with Member States on the matter of establishing a standby force.

Turning to other matters, he said that safety and security of staff was indispensable for peacekeeping operations....

On regional cooperation, he supported the creation, within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, of a unit dedicated to interaction with the African Union. Guinea also supported the Departments efforts to improve cooperation between the Member States and the Secretariat, particularly in the area of recruitment and training of peacekeeping staff...

Guinea also supported efforts to address the matter of sexual misconduct at the hands of peacekeepers, and was following closely the discussions aimed at revising the existing Memorandum of Understanding on the matter. At the same time, when allegations arose, the United Nations and the specific countries involved should work together to bring investigations to a close...

TOSHIRO OZAWA ( Japan) said peacekeeping operations had undergone a change in character, from traditional monitoring tasks to multidimensional peace activities, dealing more with domestic conflicts. Those qualitative and quantitative changes in peacekeeping operations posed many challenges, and the five priority areas needed an immediate and serious response. The partnership among the various parties dedicated to peace activities needed to be strengthened and, within the United Nations system, cooperation with traditional actors, such as UNDP, needed to be enhanced. The new partnership with the forthcoming Peacebuilding Commission needed to be defined.

He said a continued effort to better define doctrine was necessary, in order to reflect changes in the nature of peacekeeping activities and to realize effective and efficient management. He hoped that efforts to compile and document best practices would continue. Interacting with such initiatives as the Challenge Project would be meaningful. During a Security Council meeting on the role of the Security Council in humanitarian crisis, his Government had proposed that Member States consider a study to devise measures to further utilize civilian experts in peacekeeping operations. Japan had also proposed holding a discussion, at the expert level, on the possibility of dispatching civilians as observers.

He said he was very disturbed at the report of a not insignificant incidence of fraud and mismanagement with regard to procurement. He asked that the relevant parties continue the thorough investigation into the alleged wrongdoing in the procurement office of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in order to arrive, as soon as possible, at a full accounting of the facts. ..

IFTEKHAR AHMED CHOWDHURY ( Bangladesh) said peacekeeping had proved to be an indispensable and cost-effective tool in the maintenance of international peace and security. Still, the global search for the root causes of conflicts must continue, in order to secure a just and sustainable peace for all. Bangladesh would stress that peacekeeping operations must strictly adhere to the principles of the Charter and others that had evolved over the years, concerning the consent of the parties; non-use of force, except in cases of self-defence; and clear mandates, among others.

He said that meaningful, frequent and continued dialogue among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat in all phases of mission planning and implementation was critical. Private meetings between the Council and troop contributors should be held in an interactive format, so that the views of those countries could be heard. Troop contributors views should then be taken into consideration by the Secretariat. On the safety and security of peacekeeping staff, he stressed that Bangladesh had lost 70 of its brave sons in the Organizations peacekeeping activities, and would, therefore, continue to stress that the size, composition and other requirements for missions, be based on objective and thorough assessments of realities on the ground. He welcomed the establishment of a Standing Committee for Security, which would help coordinate safety issues between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Safety and Security.

Bangladesh believed that the success of any peacekeeping operation hinged on its image, integrity and credibility...

He went on to express support for the enhancement and replenishment of pre-mandate commitment authority and strategic deployment stocks, which had, no doubt proved successful.

Bangladesh also supported the creation of a standing police capacity and believed that the Committee was now in a position to take a favourable decision in that regard. On other matters, he welcomed improvements in the reimbursement schedule, and stressed that the process for the memorandum of understanding signing procedure needed to be streamlined, so that they were signed prior to, or at least immediately after, troop deployment. He also called on Member States to fulfil their obligations in paying their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions.

NURBEK JEENBAEV ( Kyrgyzstan) said that, as changes in peacekeeping operations took place, the proposed actions to address those changes, including those related to the five priority areas identified by the Under-Secretary-General, were important and timely. His country supported the whole range of comprehensive reforms conducted by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, but the present situation required additional efforts. At present, multidimensional peacekeeping operations carried a broad spectrum of tasks, including support for reconstruction and establishment of the rule of law. The rule of law was an essential element in settling conflicts and ensuring long-term peace.

He said one of the priorities should be the safety and security of peacekeepers...

Peacekeeping operations should reflect a better gender balance, he said. Women should participate at all levels in peacekeeping, including at the managing level. As training of peacekeeping staff was very important, his country would establish a training centre to that end...

MARTIN BELINGA EBOUTOU ( Cameroon) said the outcome of the 2005 World Summit had underlined the indispensable role that peacekeeping operations and their staff played in the maintenance of international peace and security. Such operations were involving an increasing number of personnel and institutions, and were becoming more and more complex. United Nations Member States must elaborate strategies for the missions to remain effective and adapt to new and emerging challenges. To that end, the implementation of the recommendations in the 2000 Brahimi report had led to many positive changes in the Organizations peacekeeping operations. Cameroon was pleased with progress towards the creation of a standby force, and would urge regional organizations to place their capabilities at the use of such a United Nations-led force.

Cameroon also noted that both men and resources were the central pillars of any peacekeeping operation. To that end, it was necessary to have qualified personnel and sufficient financial and materiel resources...

Having a reserve of highly trained men and women presupposed that the United Nations had such a reserve of well trained staff, he said, calling for the effective and broad training of military, civil and police personnel. On the issue of security of personnel in the field, he said that he hoped discussions under way between the Office of the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other parts of the Secretariat would find solutions to address that matter as a system-wide priority.

Turning to the issue of peacekeeping partnerships, he said Cameroon was pleased at the establishment of an assistance unit in the African Union. At the same time, it would call for such support structures for the African Union and other subregional organizations to be enhanced. Cameroon would also call for the rapid establishment, within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, of a unit dedicated to working with the African Union...

HOSSEIN MALEKI ( Iran) said peacekeeping operations should strictly observe basic principles, such as the consent of parties; the non-use of force, except in self-defence; impartiality; and respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States. They should not be used as a substitute for addressing the root causes of conflict. Such root causes should be addressed in a coordinated, comprehensive and coherent manner, using all political, social and developmental instruments available. The five identified priority areas for improving peacekeeping operations merited consideration by Member States.

He said the question of rapid deployment and quick reaction remained crucial...

Strengthening the relationship with regional organizations on peacekeeping operations could be useful, he said. Transparency was of paramount importance when such a relations was established. However, regional arrangements should be seen as a temporary solution to filling the gap between United Nations peacekeeping capabilities and the demand for peacekeeping operations. The capacity of regional arrangements should be utilized as complementary to, and not as a substitute for, solutions. United Nations peacekeeping capacity should be strengthened, rather than being regionalized. In the case of Africa, however, he supported increased cooperation with the African Union, and support for African capacity-building.

VICTOR KRYZHANIVSKYI ( Ukraine) said the issue of safety and security of United Nations peacekeeping personnel remained one of the most challenging in peacekeeping operations...

Further development of partnerships and arrangements with regional and subregional organizations could provide a unique and complementary facility to help the Organization

respond effectively to emerging conflicts and crises, he said. Ukraine welcomed steps by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to enhance such cooperation with relevant organizations and to assist in developing the peacekeeping capacities of regional organizations, in particular the African Union. He hoped that the higher level of interaction between the Department and troop-contributing countries would remain a high priority for the Secretariat. Cooperation, which also involved the Security Council, was an indispensable element for conducting peacekeeping operations in the most effective and efficient manner at every stage.

He said acts of misconduct, in addition to harming local populations, were also detrimental to the credibility of the United Nations and could not be tolerated. He welcomed the United Nations policy of zero tolerance, as well as efforts by the Secretary-General and the peacekeeping Department to implement measures to address sexual exploitation and abuse problems, and called for continuous actions to settle the problem.

DIEGO CORDOVEZ ( Ecuador) said that, due to the upsurge in United Nations peacekeeping and the difficulties and challenges facing troop contributors in that regard, it was important for the Committee not to confine its discussions to the five priority areas identified by the Secretary-General. Ecuador deplored sexual misconduct at the hands of peacekeepers, and fully supported the Secretariats zero-tolerance policy. At the same time, he called for clear obligations and codes of conduct to be laid out, and for responsibilities to be elaborated for all levels of mission staff. He also looked forward to the proposed revision of the Memorandum of Understanding on the matter.

Ecuador believed that training of staff, in planning and other areas, was important for a missions success and was concerned that the Secretary-Generals report noted that the United Nations lacked a core group of qualified staff. Ecuador looked forward to ongoing talks towards the establishment of standby peacekeeping capacities.

JUDITH BAHEMUKA ( Kenya) called for more coordination between field missions, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and troop-contributing countries. And, while Kenya fully appreciated the tremendous amount of work and coordination that field missions had to contend with, providing more timely information to troop contributors would go a long way towards helping those countries react in good time, as well as reduce unnecessary anxieties. She said that, with peace missions becoming more and more complex, comprised of military, police and civilian components from different countries and backgrounds, it was also necessary for the Organization to come up with a coherent common doctrine.

Considering the difficulties with negotiating such a document, Kenya would recommend that a

working group draw up a framework of basic principles, incorporating lessons learned, best practices and other field experiences. The exercise should be undertaken in close consultation with troop-contributing countries, who were the major stakeholders. Turning to the issue of partnership, she said that it was only logical that, in any partnership, the weaker partner must be strengthened, so that both partners could share a burden proportionately. In that regard, Africa was undoubtedly in dire need of support to realize its own security and stability. The African Union had demonstrated a strong will to take such responsibility, and the international community was, therefore, obliged to support the Unions ambitious vision of the Collective African Security Architectures, as well as the start-up of an African Standby Force, by 2010.

She stressed that the human resource component was the key to implementing any peace operation mandate. It was, therefore, encouraging that efforts were under way to address the concerns of civilian mission personnel and their training. Due to the environment in which mission staff operated, the ield Service category also needed to be closely examined. Kenya believed it was important for field commanders to have contingency plans for unforeseen events. And, while that issue was being addressed, in light of the establishment of strategic reserve capacity and enhanced rapidly deployable military capabilities, Kenya would stress that the main responsibility still rested with the Security Council, which ultimately authorized force levels in the field. The matter must be examined carefully, and the ultimate goal must be to ensure that field commanders had adequate force levels to meet the challenges at hand.

KAIS KABTANI ( Tunisia) said peacekeeping operations had undergone a remarkable evolution over the past years, resulting in new challenges. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations had made considerable efforts to cope with those challenges, in often complex situations.

He said peacekeeping could not replace the search for a solution to conflicts, or address their root causes -- poverty and under-development being major factors among them. He, therefore, welcomed the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission that would help post-conflict States to embark upon their path of recovery, rebuilding and development. The Special Committee was called upon to find ways for close and effective interaction between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Peacebuilding Commission.

The increase of conflicts in Africa required support from the international community for peace efforts on that continent, he said, calling for closer cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. The World Summit had supported a ten-year plan to strengthen capacities for cooperation with the African Union. He supported, in that regard, the establishment of an entity, within the Department, charged with helping develop African peacekeeping capacities. He also welcomed the intent of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to accelerate

responses to troop-contributing countries requests for reimbursement, regretting the fact that arrears for previous missions, especially for Cambodia, had not yet been paid.

TUVAKO N. MANONGI (United Republic of Tanzania) said that, as considerable sacrifices and resources had been made for peacekeeping in Africa, his delegation genuinely believed in strengthening regional arrangements for peacekeeping, as envisioned under Chapter VIII of the Charter. While Security Council resolutions 1625 (2005) and 1631 (2005) sought to pay attention to that particular aspect, with a special focus on Africa, it was obvious that the wealth of experience and capacity of the Organization and its Member States would remain crucial. Peacekeeping experience in Africa had amply illustrated that military action was sometimes needed to protect civilians and prevent the re-emergence of hostilities. Also needed, was appropriate matching of mandates and resources.

It was very important for the Committee to contribute towards a clear strategy that would seek to strengthen the United Nations relationship with regional actors, he continued. The current state of affairs, where there was no framework that clearly outlined an agreed division of responsibility between the United Nations and regional, or subregional, organizations, was unhealthy. At a time when Africa was surely moving towards the creation of a viable domestic capacity to manage conflicts on the continent, that must be seen as an effort to strengthen the United Nations capacity for peace operations, by providing a ready force package for utilization by the Organization.

One thing was clear -- peacekeeping was an expensive venture, but it was a worthy investment, he said. In Africa, it entailed investment in training, logistical support and institution-building. Human rights abuses required collective attention and, if need be, action.

Within the framework of peacekeeping reform measures, he noted the efforts to stamp out misconduct in relation to sexual exploitation and abuse; enhancement of rapid deployment capacities; and improvement of personnel security. It was a source of great concern that reports of misconduct by a few, would seem to tarnish the good name peacekeeping forces had earned. In that connection, he shared the view that urgent measures were needed to restore and maintain the credibility of peacekeeping forces, without further delay. He welcomed the fact that conduct and discipline among peacekeeping personnel remained an important preoccupation of the Committee. Of particular importance, was its recommendation -- subsequently endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 59/300 -- to set up conduct and discipline teams, in response to increased allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation. In conclusion, he also noted, with concern, an increase in the rate of loss of life in peacekeeping missions. That was a matter to which the Committee must continue to pay close attention to.

ISIKIA R. SAVUA ( Fiji) supported the forging of strategic partnerships within the United Nations system. Each agency brought different skills and input to the collective endeavour, and the elaboration of a strategic framework for coordinated action, based on the identification of existing competencies and expertise, as well as the means of their effective deployment, was warranted. Also encouraging, was the Secretary-Generals interest in the elaboration of modalities for enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the European and African Unions. The proposal for the creation of a dedicated capacity within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, to serve as a single point of contact for the African Union and other partners, was in line with the commitment undertaken at the World Summit.

Among other welcome initiatives, he mentioned continued systematic collection of information on best practices and the completion of the inventory of existing written practice in peacekeeping tasks, and mission and management support. Like any culture, peacekeeping needed to evolve to remain relevant and effective. Fiji also endorsed the goal of putting in place, a cadre of professional field personnel, supported by effective leaders. He also supported the continuation of the mandatory Senior Leadership Induction Programme and the creation of the Integrated Training Service by the Secretariat.

Recalling the provisions of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, he asked for the inclusion of dedicated gender training expertise in the Integrated Training Service, and for the strengthened capacity in field mission training cells, including systematic collaboration with gender advisers. He also urged fellow troop-contributing countries to use or strengthen gender sensitivity training resources for national predeployment preparation. Fiji now conducted gender-specific recruitment drives, both for the military and police forces.

Also, while acknowledging the progress in the efforts to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse, he said he was disheartened to note the Secretary-Generals admission that not all managers, commanders and personnel were vigorously pursuing the zero-tolerance policy. Fiji undertook to strive towards the observance of that policy, in line with the spirit embedded in the widely distributed model Memorandum of Understanding, and would invoke all appropriate legal mechanisms to address breaches, should they surface. His country also supported the initiatives to improve the capacity for collection, analysis and dissemination of information on security, through the establishment of the Joint Operation Centre and the Joint Mission Analysis Centre. He also welcomed the proposal on the creation of the standing police capacity, and noted with interest, the three options under consideration in the efforts to enhance rapidly deployable military capabilities.

SEIFESILASSIE LEMMA ( Ethiopia) said that his delegation placed a high priority on the need to ensure coherent, United Nations-wide coordination in the planning, conduct and support of integrated peace missions, and looked forward to the completion of the inter-agency review on the matter, as well as the institutionalization of the Integrated Mission Planning Process, at both Headquarters and field levels. He went on to say that Ethiopia considered the recent establishment of the Organizations new Peacebuilding Commission one of the major accomplishments of the 2005 World Summit. With that in mind, he added that it was important to define a clear strategy on the nature of the relationship between that body, its Peacebuilding Support Office and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

Ethiopia also attached considerable importance to the partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations in the area of peacekeeping. He stressed that the Summit Outcome had placed a high priority on that issue, particularly towards providing support for peacekeeping efforts in Africa and bolstering the work of the African Union.

And, while there were commendable efforts under way in that regard, Ethiopia was concerned that United Nations support for the African Union had been provided on an ad hoc basis, driven by contingencies, rather than in the context of the international communitys overall peacekeeping strategy for the continent. He was also concerned that, to date, there had been no specific budget or staff dedicated to deepening the relationship between the two entities. On other matters, he said that Ethiopia believed in the need to provide adequate training for mission staff, and welcomed the creation of the Integrated Training Service as a single unit, and trusted that such an arrangement would greatly facilitate the Department of Peacekeeping Operations efforts in that area.

Finally, he said that Ethiopia considered preventing, combating and eradicating sexual exploitation and abuse, a matter of urgent concern, and welcomed the creation of permanent multidisciplinary conduct units at Headquarters and in certain field missions. But the specialized capacity of OIOS in that area also needed to be enhanced, in order to avoid the risk of backlog and delays in investigating allegations of abuse and other misconduct.

NANA EFFAH-APENTENG ( Ghana) said the recent surge and growing dimension of peacekeeping had had dire consequences for the Secretariats resources. The Under-Secretary-General and his staff had adapted to the ever changing circumstances, thanks to the effective implementation of reforms advocated in the Brahimi report. As United Nations peacekeeping was again at a crossroads, he agreed with the five priority areas, outlined by the Secretary-General to enhance peacekeeping. A major factor inhibiting United Nations peacekeeping operations was its rapid response capability. The current Standby Arrangement

should be critically examined. In the absence of the Strategic Reserve Force, there were three options offered by the Secretary-General: regional arrangements; short-term rapid deployment capacity by troop-contributing countries; and inter-mission cooperation arrangements. Those options should be pursued in parallel.

He said the United Nations and regional organizations could be vital partners in providing peace and security. Africa had, in recent years, demonstrated its determination to assume a greater role in ending and overcoming the scourge of conflicts. Progress had been made in the establishment of the African Peace and Security Architecture, focusing on the African Standby Force and the Continental Early Warning System. An area that required urgent consideration of support was the provision of resources and standardization of equipment for the proposed five subregional African Standby Brigades. The implementation of the African Standby Brigades concept was currently in the second phase, and one of the objectives was to strengthen the rapid deployment of those brigades.

He stressed the urgent need to address the lapses in peacekeeping management, to ensure efficient utilization of resources. Since contingent commanders were to be held responsible for the misconduct of their troops, especially relating to sexual exploitation and abuse, it was only fair that responsibility for misappropriation and malpractice should not be limited to the perpetrators, but extended to senior officials. Commending the Secretary-General for the remedial measures regarding sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by a few individuals, he hoped that the role of the conduct and discipline teams would be extended to cover the remaining missions.

BROWN B. CHIMPHAMBA ( Malawi) recalled that, given the challenges facing Africa, the World Summit leaders had supported enhancing Africas peacekeeping capacities, through the development and implementation of a ten-year plan for the African Union. Africas political will to respond rapidly to potentially explosive situations had led to the establishment of an African peace and security architecture guided by the formulation of five pillars: the Peace and Security Council; the continent-wide early warning system; the panel of the wise; the African peace fund; and the formation of an African standby force. The Secretary-Generals proposal to create a dedicated full-time capacity, within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as a contact point for both the United Nations and the African Union, to enhance African peacekeeping capacity, deserved the support of all African partners.

He thanked the European Union for financing peace operations, such as those in Darfur and the Central African Republic, and urged NATO to follow that lead. Clearly, Africa needed all the assistance it could get to render its standby force operational. Malawi had a battalion that was

fully trained, highly motivated and ready to deploy, but as was the case with most third world militaries, it lacked the logistical equipment to do so. He, therefore, appealed to the donor community to step up its financing and logistical support. Regarding the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, Malawi had been training its personnel on the crucial prevention strategies to which everyone must adhere, at all times. OIOS and the newly established field conduct and discipline teams were the way forward. He fully supported the use of highly qualified professional civilian peacekeepers. Africa's skilled and well-qualified men and women should not be ignored in the context of due regard for equitable geographical distribution.

RODRIGO MALMIERCA DIAZ ( Cuba) said that, with more than 85,000 personnel in the service of 18 United Nations peacekeeping missions, the Special Committee had become especially relevant as the Organization's only forum tasked to thoroughly review peacekeeping operations, including measures aimed at improving the United Nations ability to lead such missions. We cannot afford to fail, he said, stressing that peacekeeping operations were an important part of the Organization's practical work, as well as its public image, and any problems in that sphere, often directly affected the credibility of the United Nations.

Likewise, it was important to observe basic principles when establishing and deploying peace missions, namely consent of the parties, and impartiality and the non-use of force, except in self defence, among others. He said that, before an operation was deployed, it was essential that a clear-cut exit strategy be worked out. Cuba would stress that peacekeeping could not be a substitute for addressing and solving the root causes of conflict. It was a temporary measure, aimed at creating a framework of security that would allow the implementation of a long-term strategy for sustainable economic and social development.

He said that, while there were differences in the amounts of financial contributions States could provide peacekeeping operations, that did not mean that States with the capacity to pay greater amounts to the peacekeeping budget should receive additional prerogatives, or have the right to place conditions on their payments. Further, while certain countries repeated, over and over, to the press that their special interest should be addressed, because the high percentage of the Organization's peacekeeping budget they paid, little mention was made about the huge sacrifices developing countries made, considering the scarce resources at their disposal. In that context, with the peacekeeping budget already upwards of \$5 billion, it was most important to guarantee, that resources entrusted to the Secretariat by Member States, be used as efficiently as possible.

Recalling the Security Council's meeting last week on peacekeeping procurement, he said that

Cuba was concerned by that 15-nation body's increasing interference in issues that were under the purview of the General Assembly. He said the Council had neither the mandate, nor the capacity, to duly address matters related to procurement or financing of peacekeeping operations, and urged that body to refrain from hampering Assembly action on such matters. Turning to other issues, he said that troop contributors were not guaranteed active participation in all the stages of the peacekeeping decision-making processes. Cuba would urge the Secretariat to ensure that such participation was made possible, particularly since 20 troop contributors were currently developing countries.

MICHEL KAFANDO ( Burkina Faso) said the Special Committee was meant to find adequate responses to the concerns of the international community regarding the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as for peacebuilding. The guidelines established by the 2005 World Summit should be followed in that regard. He welcomed the robust approach by the Secretariat regarding instances of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers, and supported the establishment of the conduct and discipline teams. However, those acts should not tarnish the efforts of thousands of men and women, who risked their lives daily, in order to further the ideals of the Organization.

He said the Special Committee should also consider the use of the official languages of the United Nations in peacekeeping operations, noting that some services had flouted the multicultural nature of the Organization. Those facts could be clearly witnessed in peacekeeping recruitment and operations. Most posts required command of oral and written English. Job descriptions often required that future candidates had knowledge of English, even for those missions that operated in a non-English speaking area. That practice should be stopped, as it ran contrary to the multicultural character of the United Nations.

HAYDAR ALI AHMAD ( Syria) said his delegation was convinced that peacekeeping operations were an effective and important tool in maintaining stability and decreasing tensions. They also served an important role in post-conflict situations. At the same time, such operations were temporary measures, and should not replace the search for lasting peace, which should include a study of the root causes of conflict. He supported the call for enhanced and ongoing dialogue between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries, particularly in the earliest planning and deployment phases. On peacekeeping in the Middle East, he stressed that such operations in his region had been in place for many years, because of Israel's continuing occupation of Arab lands.

He called for all United Nations peacekeeping operations to be endowed with clear-cut mandates, and to be set up in line with the Charter-based principles of sovereignty and

territorial integrity. New concepts in peacekeeping should be discussed in depth with the Organizations wider membership. He also agreed with others who had stressed that matters involving peacekeeping procurement must be discussed only in the context of the work of the General Assembly.

MZOLISA BONA ( South Africa) supported the current peacekeeping reform plan and noted the Secretary-Generals identification of the key priority areas to enable United Nations peacekeeping operations to address major operational challenges. Appreciating the strong emphasis on partnerships in peacekeeping, he supported the proposal to establish a focal point for African Union/United Nations cooperation on matters related to peacekeeping. Of particular importance, was the need to forge closer partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, as key stakeholders in conflict resolution, in their respective regions. He trusted that the initiative with the African Union would not be perceived as absolving the United Nations of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under the Charter. Also, with logistics remaining the most critical area of weakness in peacekeeping in Africa, he welcomed the establishment of the African Peace Facility by the European Union.

Among other crucial matters, he mentioned the issue of personnel, stressing the need to recruit peacekeepers responsible for upholding the core values of the United Nations: professionalism, integrity and respect for diversity. Those values were irrevocably compromised when peacekeepers committed acts of serious misconduct. It was necessary to strengthen capacities to promote an environment that would discourage acts of exploitation and abuse, and also educate local populations about their rights. To that end, closer cooperation was required among all concerned. For its part, his country was cooperating closely with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on that matter. Noting the proposal to make the conduct and discipline teams permanent, he said his delegation looked forward to engaging the Secretariat on the impact and strength of those units on the ground.

Linked to that, was the quality of peacekeepers training, he said. Even though military training remained critical, there was also a need to include training in conflict resolution, negotiations and humanitarian actions. Peacekeepers must understand what it is they are doing, so that the people with whom they come into contact are treated with respect and dignity. Another important issue was the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel. In that regard, he was encouraged by the progress reported on the sharing and management of information in the field. He also welcomed the creation of a standing police capacity.

In conclusion, he said that his delegation was looking forward to discussing the interaction between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

South Africa would argue for an integrated approach, which would incorporate peacebuilding during the start-up of a peacekeeping mission. That could facilitate a smooth transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding.

NICHOLAS SHALITA ( Rwanda) said that the most spectacular failure in the last 50 years of United Nations peacekeeping, had taken place in Rwanda in 1994. It was necessary to ensure that there was no repeat of what had happened there, anywhere else in the world. We must ensure that United Nations peacekeepers do what populations under threat expect of them; that is to protect them and save lives, as well as promote human rights, the rule of law and reconciliation. The responsibility of the United Nations, in that respect, was clearly outlined in the Charter and several international conventions, and had been most recently reiterated at the 2005 World Summit.

On peacekeeping doctrine, he said it was critical that peacekeeping procedures, practices and guidelines were elaborated, promulgated and disseminated, as a matter of high priority. The new peacekeeping doctrine would be very useful to new troop-contributing countries like Rwanda, as well as the more long-standing troop contributors that found that there were many grey areas that needed to be clearly defined. Like Singapore, his delegation also believed that the elaboration of a doctrine should be linked to the new Integrated Training System and the Best Practices Unit.

In connection with regional arrangements, he supported the proposal to establish a dedicated full-time focal point within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations for support to the African Union. Among other things, his delegation also welcomed the support being offered by the United Nations towards the establishment of the African Standby Force. On Darfur, he said he would welcome further cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union that would result in the strengthening of the African Union Mission in the Sudan, and overall operational capabilities on the ground. It was necessary to be creative about the scope of the cooperation, because, in his view, Chapter VIII of the Charter provided many possibilities.

Turning to sexual exploitation and abuse, he said that the problem must be dealt with firmly and decisively, and he welcomed the zero-tolerance policy, as well as the range of measures to address the problem. It was logical that commanders and managers in the field should be held to account for misconduct and lack of discipline among their subordinates, especially if such misconduct was known to them and persistent. However, he had heard from some statements yesterday that there was a possibility that the issue might be used unjustly to tarnish the reputation of individual troop contributors, or to settle old scores. It was essential that the principles of due process be respected, and that concerned troop-contributing countries were

provided with full information, in a timely manner, about the allegations against their nationals, as well as results of any investigations.

JOSE LUIS GUTERRES (Timor-Leste) said his country had had a long association and partnership with the United Nations and the international community, and was now approaching the closure of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) this May. He thanked everyone in the United Nations family for their role in securing peace, security and progress for his country. He also paid particular tribute to all troop- and police-contributing countries for their support.

Timor-Leste was aware of the importance of maintaining peace, stability and security in the world and, in that regard, understood the need for Member States to support United Nations peacekeeping operations. As a sign of its deep commitment to peace and in recognition of the assistance it had received, Timor-Leste had, last year, deployed 10 of its police officers to serve with United Nations police contingents in the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK). He hoped that his country would continue to be able to provide such assistance in the future to the Organizations various other peacekeeping operations around the world.

GERSHON KEDAR ( Israel) said long-term reform should ensure that United Nations peacekeeping would continue to be relevant, useful and cost-effective in the various and multifaceted tasks of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Welcoming the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, he said temporary peace could be kept, but permanent peace must be built through the promotion of democracy, the building of institutions, economic development and the deepening of understanding between peoples. The young State of Israel had, despite facing existential threats, come far in the field of democracy-building and economic development, and was ready to share any relevant experience that might benefit the Peacebuilding Commission.

He said his country attached particular importance to ensuring the cost-effective and responsible use of resources, an issue that had been prominently addressed in the Secretary-Generals report. Israel had dramatically improved its payment record of contributions to peacekeeping operations, and was discussing the possibility of becoming a contributor of personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations. Three United Nations peacekeeping missions were active, either within Israel, or on its borders. The first United Nations peacekeeping mission, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), had been established in 1948. Peacekeeping missions could not be a replacement for peacemaking, and Israel looked forward to the day when, through direct negotiations held in good faith, it would be able to arrive at peace treaties with all its neighbours.

He welcomed the emphasis given in Security Council resolution 1655 (2006), extending the mandate of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), to the importance of the extension of Lebanese authority throughout its territory. Only one of the three elements of Council resolution 425 (1978) had been fulfilled, he said, namely the withdrawal of Israeli forces to the Blue Line. The situation along the Blue Line remained tense, while much of Israel's population was under the threat of more than 12,000 rockets and mortars in the hands of Hizbollah. The fulfilment of the remaining two elements, the restoration of peace and security and ensuring the return of effective authority of the Government of Lebanon, was a task in which UNIFIL should, and could, have a significant role.

PAK GIL YON (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that the principle of respect for State sovereignty should be strictly observed, in order for peacekeeping missions to serve their purpose of contributing to world peace and security. He said that sexual exploitation and abuse at the hands of peacekeepers should be regarded as a violation of human rights. His delegation believed that such violations continued in the twenty-first century, because the sex crimes, like those committed by the Japanese army in the previous century, had not been completely eradicated. Therefore, it was necessary not only to take practical measures to punish the recent criminal acts in current peacekeeping operations, but also to hold Japan accountable for and liquidate past crimes and their consequences.

He went on to say that the United Nations should address all matters related to peacekeeping reform with impartiality. Recently, the United States had taken issues regarding sexual abuse in peacekeeping missions and procurement fraud to the Security Council. That had aggravated every discontent of most UN Member States, including the countries of the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement, he said. The Council's handling of issues under the General Assembly's purview, or that of the Special Committee, could damage the credibility of the Council, as well as weaken the Assembly's authority.

In light of the overall United Nations revitalization efforts, competition for the same issues between principal organs was contradictory to one of the main principles of that reform, which was to avoid duplication in the work of the Organization's main organs. He went on to say that, recently, in the context of United Nations reform, the United States had argued that peacekeeping operations that had not played a significant role in ending conflict or securing peace and stability, or had lasted longer than necessary, should be terminated. In that regard, the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea believed that the illegal N Command that had existed in the Republic of Korea for more than a decade should, therefore, be the number one target of United Nations reform.

The Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea could not consider such reform credible, if the angovers from the past century, which had no actual relationship to the United Nations, were left intact, merely because they had been created by a super-Power. Indeed, in 1959, the United States had arbitrarily given the name N Command to the ommand of the US Armed Forces in the Far East, which was typical of that countrys abuse of the United Nations.

That Command, which unlawfully abused the name of the United Nations, was also creating an obstacle to the settlement of the Korean issue and damaging the Organizations credibility, he said, reiterating that, despite the United States insistence on the continuation of the Command, revealing its own ulterior motives to maintain its military supremacy in the Korean peninsula and Northeast Asia, the United Nations reform process should be focused on wiping out traces of the past century, which had abused the Organizations name for mproper political and military purposes

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/gapk188.doc.htm>