

Speech: Supporting UN Police in Their Missions

Thank you Mr President. And thank you very much to ASG Zuev, to these commissioners present here today, and to Ms Reitano for your briefings.

I would like to begin by asking all the Blue Berets to pass on to their colleagues the UK's thanks and admiration for their service and bravery. Their work and sacrifice in fragile and post-conflict states is a vital part of peacekeeping operations. In countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Haiti, the men and women of UN policing put their lives on the line to protect the most vulnerable as their communities emerge from conflicts. Their presence allows people to rebuild their lives, their communities and their livelihoods. They also help to embed longer-term stability by promoting the rule of law, human rights and by helping build capable and accountable national security institutions. In light of the important role played by UN policing in peacekeeping and maintenance of international peace and security, it is vital that the Security Council has the opportunity to hear first-hand from police commissioners about what the Council can do to support them and their officers.

Mr President, if UN policing is to remain effective, then we – whether Council members, police-contributing countries, or police commanders – need to listen to the experiences of police on the ground and consider how reform can make a practical difference. That is why the UK was a strong supporter of Resolution 2382 and the 2016 External Review. We look forward to the full implementation of the resolution and those recommendations of the external review that remain outstanding. We believe that the forthcoming report on policing by the Secretary-General will provide an opportunity to take stock of the various strands of reform and set out a clear plan for the future.

There are two particular areas I would like to highlight. Firstly, the United Kingdom would like to underline the full integration of policing advice into mission planning processes, ensuring that policing expertise is included in decision-making through the life of the mission. This needs to be underpinned by a strong analytical capability that can undertake the continuous assessment necessary to ensure that policing activity remains appropriate to the needs on the ground.

Secondly, it is vital that UN missions continue to support the development of law enforcement in host states and to do this based on assessment of the host state needs and capacity. The United Kingdom believes that to maximise impact, UN police need to be in a position to deploy sufficient numbers of specialists in those specific disciplines which are relevant to a particular mission. The United Kingdom would like to encourage the police division to improve efficiency in recruitment and subsequent deployment into police components so that the relevant expertise is available when needed most.

Mr President, UN police are present throughout the continuum of conflict. The

Blue Berets are usually the first and the last members of the United Nations family that a local population meet during any intervention or response to a crisis. So to succeed in their mission across the duration of their deployment, officers need to establish a relationship with the population and this must be one that is founded on trust. That trust is more readily formed if UN police officers reflect the diversity of the world that they are sent to protect.

Allow me therefore to close by expressing my support for the police-contributing countries that are addressing the obstacles preventing more women from entering the UN police. I also wish to encourage even greater efforts within UN police components to consult with communities including women and ensure that their views and needs are fully part of their day to day work and are reflected in their reporting to the Council.

Thank you.