



**ROYAUME DE BELGIQUE**  
Intervention de S.E. P. Goffin,  
Ministre des Affaires Étrangères et de la Défense,  
de Belgique

**Débat ouvert du Conseil de Sécurité  
sous le thème**

**Maintien de la Paix et de la Sécurité internationale :  
Gouvernance Mondiale Post-COVID19**

New York, 24 sept 2020

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Mr President of the Council,

Mr. Secretary General,

Mr. President,

Dear colleagues,

Mr. President, thank you for drawing the Council's attention to the issues before us today.

In recent months, we witnessed unprecedented needs and challenges.

School closures on a massive scale have deprived children of safe learning spaces. Lockdown measures have exposed women and children to increased levels of domestic violence. Past epidemics have shown us the cost of deprioritizing public health services. Vaccination campaigns are disrupted, and children are at risk of dying because of a lack of regular vaccinations.

In addition, mistrust and misinformation undermine the effectiveness of the response. Hate speech and fake news stigmatize and fuel violence against civilians and health workers.

Armed groups are taking advantage of the health crisis to strengthen their grip on civilian populations.

In areas of protracted conflict, we see women, men, children, refugees and internally displaced persons being pushed to the brink of starvation.

The pandemic has highlighted global challenges and has served to exacerbate the inequality, fragility and the human cost of conflict.

That is why, Mr. Chairman, we share your concerns about the implications of COVID-19 on almost every aspect of our lives, on our international cooperation, on global governance.

The global challenges facing our world - conflict, poverty, climate change, natural disasters, and now COVID-19 - are a stark reminder of the true "raison d'être" of the United Nations, and of the simple and obvious need for enhanced multilateral cooperation.

We therefore fully support your leadership, Secretary-General, and your call for a global ceasefire and other initiatives to address the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. We welcome the efforts of the UN system to address this crisis on the ground and to implement Resolution 2532.

We continue to support the World Health Organization (WHO) in its transparent leadership of the global response to the health crisis. We call on all Member States to share comprehensive and accurate surveillance data with the WHO to ensure the effectiveness of our collective response.

We support the humanitarian system and OCHA for their work, their guidance across the sector and their tireless efforts to support the most vulnerable individuals.

Belgium contributes (22MEUR) to this multifaceted response and has contributed (5MEUR) to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations.

The EU and its Member States have spared no effort: as part of the "Team Europe" package, the EU has mobilised more than 36 billion euros to support partner countries in the fight against the pandemic and its impact.

It intends to mobilise up to €400m to support the WHO's COVAX facility, which aims to accelerate vaccine development and ensure fair and equitable access for every country in the world.

Indeed, in your words, Mr. Secretary-General: "vaccinationalism" is toxic, because no one is safe until everyone is safe. Solidarity is equal to self-interest.

Mr. President,

Dear colleagues,

Our discussion today must not be overshadowed by finger-pointing or accusations. The world today cannot afford a geostrategic divide.

A coordinated global response is the only way forward in the fight against these multiple crises. This response must be:

- based on trust and political will;
- fueled by respect for the principles and values of multilateral cooperation;
- accelerated by innovative approaches.

This also requires a Council that is 'future proof'. We lost too much time last March and April discussing digital working methods for the Council to meet the challenges posed by the pandemic. We took too long to reach an agreement on Resolution 2532.

What applies to working methods also applies to the means available to the Council to implement its decisions, especially peacekeeping operations. Belgium welcomes the fact that most of these operations have shown a great deal of flexibility and ingenuity in continuing to carry out their mandates, despite all the restrictions, including physical restrictions, imposed on them by COVID19 .

However, here again, the Council will have to address the issue of the adaptability of peacekeeping operations to future scenarios that are highly restrictive, such as the one we are facing today. Otherwise, Council resolutions - or even the Council in its own right - risk becoming less consequential.

Mr. Chairman,

Dear colleagues,

All of us - every individual, every community, every country, every government and every part of the United Nations - must learn together from the effects of the pandemic.

There is no doubt that COVID-19 has changed the world and has an impact on everything from the way we live to the way we work. This is not just a health or humanitarian crisis. It is an economic crisis, a security crisis, a health crisis, a hunger crisis, a protection crisis and a human rights crisis.

These challenges only demonstrate that we need to do more, and we need to do it together. Belgium stands ready to assume its responsibilities to this end.

Thank you.