



KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

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Intervention at

Security Council Open Debate on

Transitions under agenda item 'United Nations  
Peacekeeping Operations'New York, 09/08/2021

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Mr. President,

1. Firstly, Belgium **underlines the importance of sustained UNSC engagement to reinforce the political process of countries in transition.**

In a transition, the role played by national authorities is crucial. When a peacekeeping operation transfers its tasks back to national authorities, they should be in a position to take full ownership. This should take place in close coordination with the UN Resident Coordinator's Country Team and donor countries, taking into account the SDG's. Capacity must be sustained in government systems and human resources, in critical peace and security assets and amongst civil society actors. This transition will require a fundamental rethink of how development programming is prioritized, designed and delivered.

2. Belgium stresses the **need for increased cooperation, notably between UN and EU missions.** The UN Country Team and the EU, in a Team Europe approach, should improve coherence and complementarity of actions undertaken during the transition period based on joined-up contextual analysis and risk assessment such as the UN Common Country Analysis and the EU Early Warning Systems. **Multidimensional common analysis and planning is key** in ensuring the aforementioned synchronization between UN peacekeeping draw-downs and the ramp-up of national and regional capacity building efforts.

3. Any sustainable transition plan must be accompanied by **a phased financing strategy to avoid an expectation gap** – where different actors assume that the other will pick up the tab for sustaining critical peace and security interventions post-withdrawal. Such a financing plan must ensure clarity about who will pay for what during the transition, and how the different revenue streams will change over time, as the host government progressively takes on more responsibility. **The PBC's, via its Peace Building Fund, has a central role to play in this financing strategy.**

4. In order to operationalize an inclusive, gender-responsive, coherent and complementary transition, Belgium underlines the usefulness of establishing **a Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus Task Force in the transition theatre** comprising of all relevant actors in view of regular exchanges of views.

In this light, Belgium welcomes initiatives such as the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UN Women joint review of gender-responsive peacekeeping transition.

5. Finally, taking a step back in the peacekeeping process, in order to achieve focused, inclusive peacekeeping mandates with realistic objectives, member states must engage in an exercise of **collective strategic thinking well in advance of the mandate renewal** drafting process and with inputs from various expert groups. Translating clear political direction into action implies focus on strategic objectives and benchmarks to assess progress and inform transition planning. Indeed, Belgium **stresses the importance of defining, from the start, a PKO exit-strategy conditioned on contextual benchmarks.** Furthermore, it is important that **lessons learned** from previous peacekeeping transitions are incorporated into this process. Where there is significant unfinished peace programming and the ongoing need for good offices, the UN should consider mandating a Special Political Mission to follow-up on a peacekeeping withdrawal.

I thank you.