

Speech by H.E. Mr Marc Pecsteen de Buytsverve, Ambassador,
Permanent Representative

to the United Nations Security Council

Open debate:

"Investing in peace: providing quality training and building
capacity to improve the safety, security and performance of UN
peacekeepers"

New York, 7 May 2019

Madam President,

I would like to begin by thanking Indonesia for bringing this important aspect of peacekeeping to the Council table. The various incident reports have demonstrated the extent to which training and education lie at the heart of the required responses. Mr Secretary-General, your presence here today illustrates the importance of this issue to the Secretariat.

We consider your "*Action for Peacekeeping*" initiative the matrix that must encompass our actions.

I would like to make three points today (1) the primary responsibility of troop and police contributors for training their contingents, (2) the importance of continuing this training through specific and needs-based initiatives, (3) the importance of adequate training for contingents in the specific issue of children in armed conflict.

Madam President,

The primary responsibility for the training of uniformed personnel deployed in peacekeeping operations lies with the country supplying the troops or police. In this regard, it is important for the Secretariat to ensure that the contingents are operational following their pre-deployment training. Before taking up their post in a peace operation, peacekeepers and police officers must be operational and duly aware of the reality they will face. Beyond the mandatory training for all, the content of these training sessions must be determined by the person most aware of those needs, i.e. the Force Commander.

Belgium supports the Secretariat and in particular the Integrated Training Service in their mission to provide troop contributors with comprehensive and up-to-date training material. We

are providing particular assistance by translating training manuals into French, as we are aware of the importance of training in the language of the contingents or of deployment.

Madam President,

This brings me to my second point, training and education in the field, in the theatre of operations. This is where personnel - whether uniformed or not - must receive theatre-specific information and, where appropriate, participate in exercises that will enable them to carry out their specific mission more effectively.

One of the "ongoing" training tools after deployment is the use of **Mobile Training Teams**. At present, Belgium is providing such teams to MINUSMA for four six-week periods to provide targeted training in the Force's needs. This is a partnership between the Secretariat, an instructor-contributing country and troop-contributing countries, in close coordination with the Mission. The Secretariat should quickly ensure that a light coordination mechanism is operational.

Madam President,

It can be very destabilising for a soldier, even one with operational experience, to face an armed child. In an ideal world, we should not have to train our contingents in how to react to a child. Unfortunately, the situation on the ground is sometimes far removed from our ideals and unscrupulous groups continue to arm children.

More generally, in the diverse range of situations they face, members of peace operations must be made aware of **child protection measures**. As mandated by Resolution 1612 and related resolutions, including Resolution 2387 (2017), it is important that mission personnel receive adequate training in this regard.

Thank you.