

UN Peacekeeping ministerial 2025, Berlin -speaking points-

Distinguished delegates, esteemed guests, and respected colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to speak about the importance of United Nations peace operations, which represent a key mechanism in maintaining global security, preventing conflicts and protecting the civilian population. This is particularly significant as we are approaching the 80th anniversary of the United Nations and marking the 10-year anniversary of the Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping.

Effective participation of Member States in these operations requires continuous investment in training, capacity building, and international partnerships. I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that Montenegro, in accordance with its capacities, has been actively contributing to the UN Peacekeeping Operations for many years and will continue to do so. This confirms our commitment to the basic principles of the United Nations peacekeeping forces: protection of civilians and respect of human rights.

Armed Forces of Montenegro made a significant contribution during nine years of engagement in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Additionally, Montenegro has provided nine rotations so far to the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), with further deployments being prepared.

Bearing in mind the importance of peacekeeping missions, Montenegro will continue its proactive contribution to the collective defence system through participation in UN missions and operations. Here, I can confirm our readiness to send military personnel to the United Nations Mission in Cyprus (UNCIFYP), further affirming our commitment to global peace and security.

In these challenging times, when global peace and security are threatened by complex and evolving crisis, UN Peacekeeping must rise to meet new demands - The nature of violence has changed and so must our response. We must make missions more agile, better equipped and politically responsive, through strengthening partnerships with regional organizations and investing in modern technologies. Peacekeepers must also be trained to address emerging threats like a terrorism, cyber and other transnational and hybrid insecurities.

In accordance with the UN's "Women, Peace and Security" agenda, and recommendations to increase the number of women in UN missions, the Armed Forces of Montenegro have been deploying female members to these missions since 2020. We are strongly committed to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 through national action plans aimed at raising awareness of gender equality in the defence system. Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces of Montenegro are committed to greater representation of women, especially professional military personnel, encouraging their participation in international missions and career development.

Over the years, the roles and opportunities for women in peacekeeping operations have expanded and their presence has made a tangible difference. Women bring unique perspectives, bridge communication gaps and foster trust within communities affected by conflict. An inclusive peacekeeping force is a stronger one. When women are empowered within these operations, peace efforts become more comprehensive, communities feel more represented, and long-term stability becomes achievable. It is our collective responsibility to break down barriers, challenge outdated perceptions and create an environment where women in peacekeeping are valued for their expertise.

With that being said, and bearing in mind Montenegro's strong commitment to the implementation of the principles of UN SCR 1325, later this year we intend to organize Regional 1325 conference, which will gather defence ministers of the region, define further joint activities related to the promotion of gender perspective and send a clear message of the importance of equal participation of women in all efforts aimed at maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

Let me conclude my remarks by highlighting that modern peacekeeping operations have a multidimensional scope. They are tasked not only with facilitating peace processes, but also with strengthening governance, rule of law, child protection, gender equality, and civil society support, which are critical pillars of sustainable peace. In crisis situations—when civilians are endangered and human rights are violated—the credibility and moral authority of peacekeeping missions, backed by political support, become imperative. To ensure the necessary political support, we need to stand united in this mission, ensuring that our actions reflect our ideals, and that every peacekeeper, every mission, and every decision we make are guided by unwavering commitment to human dignity and security. Clear mandates, sustainable funding and respect of sovereignty of host nations are essential.

Thank you.