

Minister's Statement to Plenary Session 1 - Sustaining Peace

Ireland joined the UN in 1955, not long after the end of Korea's own tragic war.

Within three years, Irish peacekeepers had commenced the longest continuous UN service of any member state.

Today, Ireland is the 6th largest per capita contributor to UN peacekeeping operations globally, contributing 544 personnel to nine UN peacekeeping missions or missions authorised by the UN.

But our support extends also to building and sustaining peace. This includes capacity building in those communities that our peacekeepers are deployed to protect.

As an elected member of the Security Council, Ireland is a strong supporter of the Secretary General's Action for Peacekeeping agenda, Ireland is working to ensure that peacekeeping mandates are clear, and realistic and provide a framework to create stronger and safer peacekeeping operations.

We have also strengthened the UN's peacekeeping architecture, bringing forward the first resolution devoted exclusively to the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding.

Transitions are not simple exit strategies – they are

- strategic reconfigurations of UN presence;
- responsive to conditions on the ground; and
- inclusive of local communities, not least women, whose role in peacebuilding we know to be so vital.

Friends,

Ireland's peacekeeping pledges respond to the UN's identified needs.

- Building on the “Buddy First Aid Train the Trainer” programme we launched two years ago, we will provide more than a thousand first aid kits to UNITAR.
- We will provide further training on mine awareness, engineer search and counter IED training, where such requirements are identified and where we have capacity to respond. We are currently in the process of deploying a fulltime expert C-IED trainer to the UN Mine Action Service.

- We will continue to invite other Troop Contributing Countries to join our pre-deployment and other relevant training courses at the Irish UN School.
- And we'll extend delivery of 'train the trainer' programmes, on subjects as diverse as international human rights, protection of civilians and, through our national police service, An Garda Síochána, police intelligence.
- Reflecting our work on transitions, for each of the next three years we commit to providing funding to the Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Sudan.
- And remembering our own history of land conflict, we will reinforce UNMISS by funding a specialist advisor on climate related threats in South Sudan.

Finally, as a state transformed by the digital revolution, Ireland will bolster the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations through support for the UN Digital Transformation Strategy.

We do all this, and more, reminding ourselves - “*again and again and again*” - of the importance of international cooperation in sustaining peace.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh.

Thank you all.