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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Statement and pledge by Lt. Gen. Batoo Tshering
Chief Operations Officer and Head of Delegation of the Kingdom of Bhutan
2023 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial

Accra, GHANA
5-6 December 2023

Mr. Chair,
Excellencies and
Distinguished Delegates

I would like to thank the Government of Ghana for hosting the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial. Our appreciation and acknowledgement also goes to the co-hosts for hosting the preparatory meetings.

Since this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, we would also like to remember and pay tribute to all those who have fallen in the line of duty in peace operations in order to maintain peace and protect the vulnerable.

Mr. Chair,

Bhutan attaches great importance to peacekeeping, and we are pleased to be a partner of the UN as troop and police contributing country since 2014. Since then, we have gradually deepened our peacekeeping engagement in keeping with our desire to contribute meaningfully, although in a small way, to the cause of peace and security. In doing so our peacekeepers have and will always adhere to and uphold the highest standards of integrity, ethics and professionalism in the discharge of their responsibilities. Bhutan's commitment also remains unconditional where our peacekeepers are deployed without national caveats.

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Mr. Chair,

Bhutan has 223 peacekeepers serving in various capacities in UN peace operations and contributing to global efforts. Bhutan has also implemented the pledges made previously. We have already contributed a Light Quick Reaction Force comprising of 180 personnel to MINUSCA. We have met the 20% target set for 2023 as per the uniformed gender parity strategy 2018-2028. Bhutan is also a member of the Group of Friends for Gender Parity since 2018.

Our pledged Formed Police Unit (FPU) is currently under Level 3 in the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System. We hope to have the FPU in the Rapid Deployment Level by the first half of 2024 and, thereafter, ready to deploy at the request of the UN. Recognizing the important role that women have in the maintenance of peace and security, nearly half of the FPU strength (2 platoons) will comprise of women police officers.

In keeping with Bhutan's strong commitment to climate change and sustainability, Bhutan had at the 2017 Vancouver Ministerial meeting, pledged to minimize our carbon footprint and impact on the local environment when our contingents deploy. I am pleased to share that we have accorded high priority to the pledge and it is a mandatory requirement for our military and police contingents deploying for peace operations to adopt the use of renewable energy and good environment management practices. Bhutan is also a member of the Group of Friends for Leading Environmental Management since 2018.

Towards broadening and deepening Bhutan's engagement and contribution to UN peacekeeping operations we are pleased to pledge at this Ministerial an engineering unit, which is currently registered in the PCRS under Level 1. Through this pledge we hope that Bhutan will be able to support peacebuilding efforts by the missions and host-state.

To enhance our contribution to peacekeeping and to generate fully trained peacekeepers who meet UN standards, Bhutan established a UN Peacekeeping Training Center in 2015. We are pleased to announce that the Peacekeeping Training Center in April 2024 will be hosting the course on "*Train the Trainers – Preventing and Investigating Sexual and Gender Based Violence*" for police officers in partnership with the Integrated Training Service of the UN and the Federal Republic of Germany.

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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. Chair,

Bhutan supports strengthening UN peacekeeping operations to meet new demands and deliver its vital services in the most effective and efficient manner. Bhutan was pleased to endorse the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) and Declaration of Shared Commitments. We note that the A4P+ action plan brings renewed focus on developing concrete deliverables to the A4P agenda, and that it would revitalize the collective efforts in making such peace operations effective and coherent. Peace and security is a shared concern and responsibility, and Bhutan remains committed in strengthening our engagement and partnership in the very important and critical work of the UN relating to peacekeeping.

In closing, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the leadership provided by Under Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix in chairing this session, and we look forward to a fruitful outcome.

Thank you.

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