

Security Council recognizes contributions of police components to UN peacekeeping

6 November 2017 – The Security Council on Monday adopted a resolution stressing the important contribution that United Nations policing can provide in peacekeeping and special political missions throughout the conflict cycle.

In the unanimously approved text, the 15-member body, while stressing the primacy of political solutions to conflict, resolved to include, on a case by case basis, policing as an integral part of the mandates and decision-making structures of UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions.

In doing so, the Council took into account the need for consistent integration of police expertise within the planning of such missions, and to give clear, credible, achievable, appropriately resourced mandates for policing-related activities.

While recognizing the role of UN policing in UN efforts to prevent conflicts, the Council called on the Secretary-General to make sure that planning of UN peacekeeping and special political missions with police mandates are based on a thorough analysis of the context, capacities and needs of host-States.

Further, the Council recognized the important role that UN police components can play in the protection of civilians, including in preventing and addressing sexual and gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence and violations and abuses against children in the conflict and post-conflict situations.

The Secretary-General is requested to submit a report by the end of 2018, including on the implications for the delivery of policing mandates of changes to the Secretariat's peace and security architecture, as well as efforts to strengthen and improve UN policing coherence, capability, accountability and police generation.

Briefing the Council were Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Issoufou Yacouba, Police Commissioner of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali ([MINUSMA](#)), Georges-Pierre Monchotte, Police Commissioner of United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti ([MINUJUSTH](#)), and Priscilla Makotose, Police Commissioner of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur ([UNAMID](#)).

VIDEO: United Nations' new Police Adviser, Luis Carrilho, speaks about expectations for the UN Police Week 2017. The annual event, running from 6 – 10 November 2017, brings together heads of police components in UN peacekeeping operations and special political missions around the world.

UN Security Council calls on Myanmar to end excessive military force in Rakhine state

6 November 2017 – Strongly condemning the widespread violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state, which has led to the displacement of over 600,000 members of the country's minority Muslim Rohingya community, the United Nations Security Council on Monday called on the Government to end the use of excessive military force and intercommunal violence in the region.

In a [statement](#) read out by Sebastiano Cardi of Italy, the President of the Security Council for the month of November, the 15-member body also called on the Government "to restore civilian administration and apply the rule of law, and to take immediate steps in accordance with [the Government's] obligations and commitments to respect human rights, including the rights of women, children, and persons belonging to vulnerable groups, without discrimination and regardless of ethnicity, religion, or citizenship status."

The Council also urged the Government to implement measures in line with its [resolution 2106 \(2013\)](#) to prevent and respond to incidents of sexual violence, and encouraged it to work with the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

The Council also expressed concern over severely limited humanitarian access to the affected parts of the region and demanded that the Government ensure immediate, safe and unhindered access to UN and other humanitarian actors, and ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel.

In the Presidential Statement, the Security Council also welcomed the Myanmar's decision to establish a "Union Enterprise Mechanism" and urged the Government to ensure that the Mechanism supported such return and allowed United Nations agencies full access.

Further, welcoming the Government's support for recommendations by the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State and calling for their full implementation, the Council stressed the importance of transparent investigations into allegations of human rights abuses and violations, including sexual violence and abuse and violence against children, and of holding to account all those responsible for such acts.

"In this regard, the Security Council calls upon the Government of Myanmar to cooperate with all relevant United Nations bodies, mechanisms and instruments, in particular the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights," added the Presidential Statement.

Also in the Statement, the Council commended the provision of humanitarian

assistance and support for dialogue by Bangladesh as well as other regional countries and organizations; and requested the Secretary-General to continue to engage with the Myanmar through good offices.

It also encouraged the UN chief “to consider, as appropriate, appointing a Special Adviser on Myanmar.”

UN chief extends condolences to bereaved families in wake of ‘horrific’ shooting in Texas church

6 November 2017 – Deeply saddened to learn of the horrific shooting in a Baptist church in the small town of Sutherland Springs, Texas, United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres on Monday extended his condolences to the bereaved families and to the Government and people of the United States.

According to a [statement](#) from a UN spokesperson, Mr. Guterres also hoped for a speedy recovery of those wounded in the shooting.

Media reports suggest that Sunday morning, 05 November, a gunman carrying an assault rifle opened fire inside a church in a small church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, killing 26 people and wounding some 20 others.

Journalism under fire amid rise of ‘fake news’ and social media-driven echo chambers – UNESCO report

6 November 2017 – The media industry, which remains the primary source of news and information in the digital age, faces both vast opportunities and steep challenges, the United Nations cultural agency said on Monday in its flagship analysis of new trends in media freedom, pluralism, independence and the safety of journalists.

“Covering the period 2012 to 2017, this study not only maps [emerging global trends](#) – it makes an unequivocal call to action to counter new and persistent challenges,” stated Irina Bokova, Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)) in the foreword of the report, titled the World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development.

"This provides a unique reference point for Member States, intergovernmental organizations, civil society groups, academia, journalists and media professionals, and all those who wish to understand the fundamentals of press freedom in a changing world," she added.

The report highlights such positive developments as civil society mobilizing to push for greater access to information, media houses cooperating with fact-checking services to push back against a torrent of disinformation, and more and more Governments adopting freedom of information laws.

In the digital age, the report says, women journalists are able to develop an online presence liberated from newsroom hierarchies, and citizen journalists and activists have access to modes of mass communication that were previously unthinkable.

The report, however, warned that "across the world, journalism is under fire," citing the rise of 'fake news' stories that shroud the truth and muddy information, as well as social media algorithms that are contributing to the creation of virtual 'echo chambers' and exacerbating political polarization. Governments have shut down the internet, notably before elections. Journalists are under wide-ranging attack, facing rising violence.

"The stakes are even higher for citizens across the world, women and men, who rely on professional journalism to navigate the development and transformation of their societies," Ms. Bokova said.

The key findings were presented by Guy Berger, Director of UNESCO's Division of Freedom of Expression and Media Development at an event, held alongside the Communication and Information Commission of UNESCO's General Conference in Paris.

[Protect environment from wars and conflicts, UN urges on International Day](#)

6 November 2017 – Commemorating the international day for lessening the impact of armed conflicts and wars on the environment, United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres underscored the need to recognize that environment is also a victim of fighting.

"Whether caused by fighting or a breakdown in Government control, the damage to the environment has devastating consequences for people's health and well-being [...] it is not a new problem, but is one that can last for decades," said Mr. Guterres in a [message](#) on the [International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict](#).

“Areas of Europe are still affected by heavy-metal contamination from munitions used during the First World War.”

In his message, the Secretary-General also highlighted the importance of a healthy environment for people to rebuild their lives once fighting stops, noting that the shared management of natural resources can also provide avenues to maintain or improve relations.

Given the importance of the environment and natural resources for sustainable development, the UN chief called for steps to reduce the collateral damage from conflicts and protect them.

“The UN is committed to protecting the environment as an essential pillar of peace, security and sustainable development,” he stressed.

According to the UN Environment Programme ([UNEP](#)), conflicts over natural resources are among the greatest challenges confronting today’s world, with serious threats to human security.

Furthermore, at least 40 per cent of all internal armed conflicts over the past 65 years have had an important natural resource dimension. Since 1989, more than 35 major armed conflicts have been financed by revenues from conflict resources, and there are fears that in the coming years, extreme climate stresses could double the risk of violent conflict.

However, despite these risks, there are also “significant opportunities” linking the environment and peacebuilding, added UNEP.

“Let us not forget the power of environmental cooperation to drive peace and prosperity,” said UNEP Executive Director Erik Solheim.

Also today, joining forces with the Environmental Law Institute, the Earth Institute at Columbia University, Duke University, and the University of California at Irvine, UNEP opened the enrolment at the online course, *Environmental Security and Sustaining Peace*, which aims to build a community of 10,000 practitioners that can make natural resources a reason for global cooperation.

The course covers a range of natural resources, from extractives to land and water, as well as a range of tools and approaches from conflict and gender sensitivity to assessments, meditation and spatial planning.