

# **Rede des Bundesministers der Verteidigung**

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**anlässlich der Eröffnung des UN**

**Peacekeeping Ministerial 2025**

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Es gilt das gesprochene Wort!

Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Guterres,

Ministers,

Ambassadors,

State Secretaries,

Generals and Admirals,

representatives of international organisations and ministries,

ladies and gentlemen!

It is an honor to welcome you all to the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial 2025. I am impressed and delighted to host such a truly global event here in Berlin. Thank you all for being here, I know many of you travelled a long way to Berlin and that truly means a lot.

Without exaggeration one can claim that the whole world is gathered here today. A very timely and very necessary gathering, since the challenges we face are also truly global and urge us to act.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We would not be able to protect peace and stability around the world without the valuable service of our men and women in peacekeeping missions.

Let me therefore take a minute to thank the many military and civilian peacekeepers from all over the world that you are representing here today.

For decades they have stood on the frontlines of our peace-keeping efforts, often under the most difficult conditions.

All contributions, whether small or big, deserve our highest recognition. And we need to particularly remember those who did not come home. They remind us of the cost of peace and the duty we bear.

They are one of the reasons why we need and want to do better.

This is why we are here today and tomorrow. We want to look forward and discuss ideas for how to make our missions safer, more effective and fit for the future.

Such considerations are a first at a peacekeeping ministerial, but I believe they are highly necessary.

I see three areas where change is needed:

First, the digital transformation of peacekeeping and the use of technology at large! Uncrewed Aerial Vehicles or drones are one important capability amongst others that UN Peace Operations could largely benefit from.

Second, our communication about the roles, tasks, and successes of missions needs to be improved. More tangible results will increase mission acceptance, thereby further contributing to effective mandate implementation.

And third and most importantly, we should discuss the role of the mandates themselves. We need to ensure that they are achievable and aligned with the realities on the ground - and even more importantly: the mandate has to be matched by instruments and capabilities. UN Peacekeeping missions must be adequately resourced.

Therefore, I am looking forward particularly to the pledging sessions tomorrow. They are extremely important as they have a direct impact on our preparedness. Only through national contributions can we close capability gaps in existing and future missions. It is therefore especially important that all nations big and small honor their commitments: be it financially, politically or operationally. As an international community all of us are responsible for safeguarding peace and security.

Together we can and will make an impact. We will increase overall mission effectiveness, while enhancing the safety and security of our personnel deployed. Together let us make UN Peacekeeping stronger and safer.

This is particularly important in today's times. We have come together in times of turmoil. Times when our international order is under attack.

The world as we know it is changing. Climate change is affecting the northern and the southern hemispheres. While radical technological developments are impacting on all areas of politics and on our societies.

Emerging technologies, such as cyber and space capabilities and drones, are transforming the nature of conflicts and allow interference in crises without even having boots on the ground. They blur the boundaries between war and peace.

These challenges are epochal. They affect our daily lives, our economies and our prosperity. They will shape our collective future. And most importantly: They cross borders, continents, hemispheres. They can only be tackled and solved together. Globally.

Too many people around this globe are living in violence, displacement and despair. For some nations represented here today this suffering is a daily reality.

In the Middle East, conflict dynamics continue to escalate after the Hamas-led attack on Israel.

And across the African continent, longstanding grievances are colliding in some regions with growing economic hardship and ecological stress.

In the Indo-Pacific region, unresolved territorial disputes and deep mistrust between nations equally carry potential for conflict and escalation.

At the same time, Europe is witnessing the massive impact of Putin's illegal and ruthless war against Ukraine. It is a war not solely directed against the brave people of Ukraine. It is an attack against international law, stability and peace.

Essentially, the question we face is whether we, as an international community, will allow an imperial power to trample on the freedom of another sovereign nation.

All these power struggles are leading to the slow but constant erosion of the very institutions that once allowed us to navigate such crises – our frameworks for dialogue, our arms control regimes, our collective security mechanisms, leaving us with fewer tools to navigate the challenges ahead.

This is the reality we live in. A reality which shows that peace and security are not a given, but need to be defended.

Ladies and gentlemen,

For Germany this means two things: First, we take firm measures and do more for our own security. We are stepping up on deterrence and defence for our Allies in Europe, while at the same time making sure that Ukraine gets the support it needs to defend itself.

Second, this focus on deterrence and defense in Europe cannot and will not mean doing less for peace and stability in other regions of the world.

We believe in a broad, integrated concept of security, building on traditional and new partnerships across the globe. Our commitment worldwide is and remains unabated.

With many countries around the world we work together to uphold and to strengthen a rules-based international order – be it the freedom of navigation, be it international arms control conventions or be it the protection of our livelihood.

As a member of the European Union we are committed to strengthening our regional partnerships – be it with the African Union, with ECOWAS with ASEAN and with many other stakeholders of active multilateralism around the globe. I am glad that many of these stakeholders are also represented here today.

Our aim is to intensify our bilateral relations with the countries of the Global South. We want to expand them into a global network. It is a matter of sustainable partnerships – even when things get difficult.

We are convinced that we need strong global partnerships on equal terms.

A significant part of our global engagement takes place within the framework of UN peacekeeping.

Germany has been involved in UN peace-keeping since the 1970s and has been a troop contributor since the 1990's. At present, we are participating in five of the 11 UN missions, either with Bundeswehr or with police and civilian personnel.

Over the last decade, from land to sky and sea, we have sent women, men and assets. Currently, Germany is a driver of UN Peacekeeping reform as its largest voluntary donor.

Since the inception of the Peacekeeping Ministerial process, we have provided almost eight billion US-Dollars in assessed contributions and operational costs for German troops and capabilities deployed in UN operations.

Through our multifold training- and capacity building efforts with missions and troop contributing countries, we champion the idea of making peacekeeping more professional and fit for the future. One of

our main concerns is the safety of every man and woman on missions.

We strongly believe that UN-Peacekeeping remains one of the most legitimate, effective and cost-efficient tools of international crisis management. It is multilateralism in action. It is active burden-sharing.

UN peace-keeping has proven to be a cornerstone of international crises response for over 77 years. It has protected lives, supported political processes and helped rebuild stability over violence.

It is the depth of experience, the ability to work across military, civil and political lines and the commitment to always putting people's safety first that makes it so enormously valuable.

For Germany there is no doubt: We need to preserve and strengthen UN Peacekeeping!

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you all once again for coming to Berlin. And thank you Secretary-General Guterres for joining us and speaking to us. It is a great honor to have you here. A special thank you also to the UN Secretariat and the group of co-chairs for supporting the preparation and organization of this year's Ministerial. Last but not least, thank you Mr. Wadephul and the colleagues from the German Foreign

Ministry for jointly hosting this important conference. We are looking forward to host all of you at the Ministry of Defence tonight.

Let us make it clear that UN Peacekeeping today is more vibrant than ever. It is and will remain a corner stone of international stability and order. Let us commit to making it even more effective, for the sake of those who depend on it. Thank you very much!