



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Namibia to the United Nations

135 East 36<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10016

Tel: (212) 685-2003 . Fax: (212) 685- 1561 . E-mail: [namibia@un.int](mailto:namibia@un.int)

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**H.E. MR. NEVILLE GERTZE**

**AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

**73<sup>rd</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**AT**

**THE SECURITY COUNCIL**

**ON**

**THE OPEN DEBATE IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
AGENDA ITEM "PEACE AND SECURITY IN  
AFRICA: STRENGTHENING PEACEKEEPING  
OPERATIONS IN AFRICA"**

**NEW YORK**

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**(Check against delivery)**

**Mr. President,**

1. I congratulate you on the assumption of the Peoples Republic of China to the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of November 2018 and thank you for organizing the debate on the important topic of peace and security in Africa.
2. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security for their insightful briefings.
3. My delegation aligns itself with the Statement to be delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

**Mr. President,**

4. A mere nine days ago, the World stood still for a moment to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War 1. While it was indeed a moment of celebration for the Armistice with Germany that had gone into effect on that day of 11 November 1918, it has become an annual day for the World to stand still and reflect on and commemorate the countless lives lost during that war and so many subsequent conflicts.
5. Following the recent shootings of innocent young people in a bar in California, or the unthinkable attack on worshipers in a Synagogue, a grief-stricken Mother of a young woman cried out for people to stop sending her thoughts and prayers, for nothing would take away the pain and sorrow caused by the cruelty of violence and death. This is the world we live in today, one where we all hate that we are confronted with what seems to be never-ending conflicts, death, destruction, terrorism, violence and threats to peace and security. It is in this real world where we, the United Nations and in particular, this Security Council now more than ever before has its work cut out to live up to our Charter obligations to promote, encourage and seek peaceful means to bring end to conflicts. My delegation therefore commends you Mr. President for affording us this opportunity today to reflect on the important topic of peace and security once again.

6. During the recently held High Level General Debate, H.E. Dr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, referred to peace and security as the bedrock of our collective determination to achieve sustainable development. He recognized that partnerships are key to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and that strategic partnership between international and regional bodies, such as the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) are fundamental for the realization of our common objectives and desires for peace and security.

**Mr. President,**

7. There are currently seven UN peacekeeping operations on the African continent. Strengthening the partnership between the UN and the AU is key to strengthening these peacekeeping operations. In April 2017, the UN and the AU signed the *Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security*. This framework, as stated in your Concept Note, provides “guidance for deepening cooperation between the two organizations at all levels in peace and security”. Security Council resolutions have also underscored the important UN-AU partnership in terms of peacekeeping cooperation.
8. The capacity of the UN and the AU to cooperate on matters of peace and security has been demonstrated. The organizations have successfully cooperated in various ways in Somalia with AMISOM and in Darfur with UNAMID.

**Mr. President,**

9. Africa has assumed its full share of contribution to peacekeeping and due recognition should be given to the contribution of African countries for its peacekeepers who have valiantly stood in harm’s way and on innumerable occasions laid down their lives for the cause of keeping peace in the world. In this regard, we wish to pay tribute to 7 peacekeepers from Tanzania and Malawi who lost their lives in the DRC last week. Their sacrifice should only strengthen our resolve to pursue peace. Africa’s decision taken at the highest level to take financial responsibility of 25% of its peace activities bears further witness to its unflinching commitment to secure peace in the continent.

10. Namibia reaffirmed its commitment to peacekeeping by endorsing the Secretary-General's *Action for Peacekeeping* initiative during the General Assembly high-level week. As a small country with a population of approximately 2.3 million, Namibia has been a longstanding troop and equipment contributing country. Namibia is close to achieving the Department of Peacekeeping Operations' target of 15% of women participating in peacekeeping missions by the end of December 2018, with 13.3% of deployed female members within the total number of Namibian peacekeepers deployed.

**Mr. President,**

11. Women played an incalculable role in Namibia's long fought liberation struggle. This, in part, is what led us to present resolution 1325 in 2000. The resolution reaffirms that peace processes, mediation, conflict resolution and negotiations are far more likely to be successful if women are included. While progress has been made since the adoption of the resolution 18 years, much remains to be done, as was highlighted during the annual Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security held a month ago in this Chamber. With new developments on the African continent, including the appointment of Ethiopia's first female President and the growing participation of women in politics across the continent, we trust that this will lead to more countries embracing gender equality. There can be no sustainable peace, security and development without gender equality and the full participation of women and young girls.

12. Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to remind Members that on 10 and 11 April 2019 Namibia will host the third capital-based Focal Point Network Meeting in Windhoek, Namibia. The theme for the event will be "Women, Peace and Security: towards full participation". All member states and civil society are invited to participate.

**I thank you.**