



## Challenges Forum 2009 A New Horizon for Peace Operations Partnerships – What are the Next Steps?

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It is a pleasure to welcome you, on behalf of the Challenges Forum Partnership, to the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Forum for the Challenges of Peace Operations. It is a particular privilege to co-host this Forum 2009 with our colleagues from Pakistan, which is providing a key component to today's United Nations peacekeeping missions.

This has been an important year for UN peacekeeping, with a number of noteworthy initiatives aimed at identifying challenges and opportunities in UN peacekeeping. The Security Council has held several thematic debates on peacekeeping and the Secretariat launched the "New Horizon" process, which aims to develop a set of shared and achievable goals for the global peacekeeping partnership. It has been a year of debate and dialogue, but fortunately, this has been accompanied by concrete change in some areas, and commitments to pursue change in others.

Most of the issues that have been at the centre of this year's debate are not new, yet they continue to pose daunting challenges for peacekeeping. These are the very questions we will be addressing over the course of the next two days: How can we achieve greater clarity and consensus in multi-dimensional mandates, particularly where peacebuilding activities are involved? How do we prioritise and sequence a peacekeeping operation's support to the establishment of basic safety and security in the immediate aftermath of a conflict? How can peace operations serve as a partner in the fight against organized crime? How can the relationship among the Security Council, the Secretariat and Troop and Police-contributing countries be further enhanced? Can current UN command and control arrangements be improved? And we are especially pleased that we will be covering, today, a critical issue that the Challenges Forum has not extensively addressed in the past: namely, the issue of field support and how essential it is to successful peacekeeping.

But among these challenges lie important opportunities. The New Horizon non-paper calls for "a renewed UN peacekeeping partnership to help UN peacekeeping meet the challenges of today and tomorrow". Indeed, this is the theme of this year's Forum, and many of our discussions will be linked to the opportunities that can be created if we are able to enhance and expand existing partnerships, and build new ones.

I would just like to take a moment to recall how the Challenges initiative came about. It began 13 years ago as a joint effort by academic, diplomatic and defense organizations from Sweden, the Russia Federation and Jordan, which were later joined by a think tank from South Africa, and military organizations from the United States and India. Japan was the

first Ministry of Foreign Affairs to join. Over the years, new Partners from across the globe and spanning the academic, diplomatic and practitioners' spectrum have joined together to collectively reflect on the challenges of peace operations and share best practices.

Rather than seeking out our differences, Challenges has worked across the traditional geographic, religious, political, cultural and economic divides, searching for common denominators in our various experiences and seeking to learn from each other's successes and mistakes.

In this spirit, the Challenges Forum 2009 is intended to provide a platform for an inclusive dialogue aimed at moving forward some of the New Horizon recommendations. The goal is to contribute to a better understanding of the challenges facing the international community of peacekeepers, to identify realistic solutions, and, most important, to promote their effective implementation. Once again, I would like to welcome all the participants in this year's Forum. We look forward to a rich and interactive dialogue.