

UN debates peacekeeping missions, moves closer to reforms

13/10/2015 15:58 by admin

United Nations: Many member states have approved recent high-level reports on UN peacekeeping missions and promised procedures to ensure such missions "are effective as possible", Mogens Lykketoft, president of the 70th session of the UN General Assembly has said.

The work of the high-level independent panel on peacekeeping operations and the subsequent report by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon were welcomed by many as useful contributions on how to best assure the effectiveness of the UN peacekeeping operations, Xinhua quoted him as saying on Monday.

"Today's debate is both necessary and timely," the president said. "The global refugee crisis and the other humanitarian as well as security dimensions of ongoing crises demonstrate just how complex today's conflicts have become."

"Evolving challenges and threats to international peace and security make it necessary for the UN to strengthen its role, capacity and efficiency and more particularly the effectiveness of field operations," Lykketoft said.

Ban's report, accompanying the independent panel's report, set out what he called an agenda for action to translate his priorities into concrete steps over the next 18 months.

His agenda calls for bringing prevention and mediation to the centre of international peace and security because "early action saves lives and money".

Ban sees a need to change the way UN peace operations are planned in order to become faster and more agile in limiting the spread of violence and seizing opportunities to resolve conflict, he said.

Regarding several recent reports of sexual abuse by UN peacekeepers of civilians mainly in Africa, the secretary-general has instituted a "zero tolerance" policy for such abuse and alleged abusers have been repatriated.

"When the momentum behind peace falters, the UN, and particularly member states, must help to mobilise renewed political efforts to keep peace processes on track," the report said.

Ambassador Asoke Mukerji of India said the most important issue is the way in which the mandates for peace operations are formulated by the UN Security Council.

Mukerji called on Lykketoft to take lead in prioritising the agreement on an early reform of the Security Council during this 70th session in order to bring hope to millions of ordinary men, women and children disrupted by conflicts.

Calling the report's overall tone "rightly optimistic and forward looking", Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi of Pakistan, said its recommendations provide a pathway for much-needed reform endeavours including assessments of planning capabilities, leadership and training as well as more focused mandates.

- IANS