

**UN Peacekeeping Ministerial, 7 – 8 December; Seoul;**

**Virtual format**

**Statement by Vice-Minister for European and International Affairs,**

**Peter Launsky**

*Check against delivery!*

*Undersecretary General Lacroix,*

*Foreign Minister Knapen,*

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Let me start by expressing Austria's gratitude to South Korea for organising this year's UN Peacekeeping Ministerial in close cooperation with the United Nations, particularly in light of difficult circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than 60 years ago, the first Austrian peacekeepers were deployed to the United Nations Operation in the Congo. Since then, and without interruption, more than 100.000 Austrians have served in UN Peacekeeping Operations. We continue to uphold this strong commitment, with current deployments to UN missions in the Middle East, Africa and Europe.

Austria fully supports the "**Action for Peacekeeping Plus Initiative**" (A4P+) and its priority areas. In particular, we welcome the initiatives regarding partnerships for training and capacity building. These frameworks allow countries, especially medium-sized and small countries, like ourselves, to join forces and to avoid a duplication of efforts. With our long-standing history as a

contributor to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, we stand ready to further support and cooperate with other countries to make peacekeeping even more effective.

Therefore, it is an honour for me to announce the following pledges by Austria:

- Within the framework of the “**Light Coordination Mechanism**”, Austria will conduct two UN-certified courses in 2022 and 2023 on the Protection of Civilians and for the training of Military Experts on Mission, for which we will provide fully sponsored spots to our cooperation partners;
- Austria stands ready to support the United Nations as host nation for the roll-out of the Specialized Training Material for Peacekeeping Intelligence in 2022 and to explore possibilities for the roll-out of the updated Specialized Training Material for Peacekeeping for UN infantry battalions in 2023;
- Austria further pledges to continue our contributions to regional training and capacity-building efforts by deploying one officer to the “Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre” (KAIPTC) in Ghana as well as to the “Peace Support Operations Training Centre” (PSOTC) in Bosnia-Herzegovina;
- Austria continues the deployment of a logistics contingent to UNIFIL, staff officers to MINUSMA and UNFICYP, and military observers to UNTSO and MINURSO.
- Furthermore, Austria considers an integrated approach of the **Women, Peace and Security Agenda** paramount for sustainable peace and stability

and for the long-term success of peace efforts. In support of that, **Austria is currently funding a Junior Professional Officer to UNWOMEN.**

In closing, let me reiterate that Austria will remain a reliable partner for the UN Peacekeeping agenda including reform discussions. We will continue our longstanding support for UN Peacekeeping Operations in the years to come.

Thank you.