

Delegation from the Republic of Poland
Position Paper for the United Nations Security Council

The topics before the United Nations (UN) Security Council (SC) are: Environmental Migration as a Concern for Peace and Security; Preventing Violence Towards Refugees and IDPs; and Partnerships Between the United Nations and Relevant Regional Organizations in Peacekeeping Operations. As a non-permanent Member of the SC, the Republic of Poland is determined to promote values in order to maintain international peace and security. Therefore, Poland will meet its responsibilities discussing the three equally important topics on the floor.

I. Environmental Migration as a Concern for International Peace and Security

The Republic of Poland is deeply concerned about the increasing numbers of refugees and displaced persons that were forced to leave their places of origin due to environmental changes and events. Although Poland is not situated in an environmentally volatile location, it faces the challenge of increased immigration, especially since Poland's accession to the European Union (EU).

Having ratified the *UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* (1951) and the *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* (1967), the Republic of Poland reaffirms the target of the *New York Declaration* in General Assembly (GA) resolution 71/1 (2016). Reaffirming SC resolution 1625 (2005), Poland acknowledges that environmental migration may pose a threat to international peace and security. Poland supports the statement made by former Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon who described climate change as a 'threat multiplier' which has various implications on social and economic problems that already serve as a reason for people to leave their homes. Poland also supports the work of the Office of the High Commissioner (OHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) providing data and analysis regarding migration and climate change. Additionally, the Republic of Poland recognizes the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as the primary instrument for global climate policy as stated in the Presidential Statement of the SC 2011/15 (2011).

The SC whose foremost principle is the maintenance of international peace and security should prioritize the nexus between environmental migration and international peace and security in its upcoming meetings. Three things will therefore be necessary: defining the term 'environmental migration', data collection and analysis and addressing root causes of migration in general. In order to find common ground, Poland encourages the GA alongside relevant actors in the field of migration and environment, inter alia the OHCR, IOM or UNFCCC, to find a definition of the term 'environmental migrant' which will help realize future legislation processes. Secondly, environmental migration needs to be clearly distinguished from other forms of migration, even though an interaction between can undoubtedly be observed. These data should not be replacing collections already conducted but should rather focus on two essential aspects: The first one being the impact of sudden or slow-onset environmental changes on current migration flows. The other one will be the examination of potential climatic events and how they will cause migration flows. Bearing in mind these interactions, the SC will now be fully aware of the vulnerability of these migrants and can carefully adapt possible SC action working towards maintaining international peace and security. As a Member of the SC, Poland will always reaffirm State sovereignty as one of the guiding principles of the UN when maintaining international peace and security. The Republic of Poland stays confident that the international community and the SC grasp the issue of climate change and its implications holistically.

II. Preventing Violence Towards Refugees and IDPs

Aside from being deeply concerned about approximately 59.5 million forcibly displaced persons worldwide, among which there are refugees as well as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Poland is aware of the high vulnerability of these groups. Between 1992 and 2007, approximately 3,100 people from the former Soviet Union and later the Ukraine, obtained refugee status in Poland. Since the European Migration Crisis in 2015 this number has increased steadily.

As a Member to the *UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* (1951) and the *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* (1967), Poland acknowledges the obligations that derive from the ratification of international treaties. The *1951 Geneva Convention* was implemented into domestic legislation through the *Act on Granting Protection to Foreigners Within the Territory of the Republic of Poland* (2003) and, among others, the *Act on Foreigners* (2013). The latter was amended in early 2018 in order

to include the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals from outside the EU which is part of Directive 2014/66/EU (2018). Given the fact that not everyone applying to obtain a refugee status, the Government of Poland has introduced the new status of 'tolerated stay permit' in order to provide legal recognition and entitle tolerated person legal guarantees and meet European standards as well. Having in mind the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, adopted in GA resolution 56/168 (2001), Poland also condemns violence against refugees and IDPs as stated in SC resolution 1296 (2000).

Even though Poland is not yet primarily seen as a destination country, but rather as a country used for transit, Poland respects the rights of migrants and refugees coming to Poland. Noticing political and economic instabilities in the Western Balkans and the situation in Ukraine, Poland will assist its allies to promote peace and security on a European level. However, State sovereignty remains a primary principle of the international order and will be defended if put in question. Poland will furthermore assist in addressing the root causes of migration and contributes to preventing large migration flows that put refugees and IDPs at risk in the first place. This will be realized through developmental aid where needed and possible from Poland itself or within the framework of the EU. However, there is also to mention that the primary responsibility to protect the rights of refugees and IDPs rests with the respective States themselves. If a case of non-compliance with internationally agreed upon treaties can be observed or the rights of refugees and IDPs are being actively violated, the Republic of Poland supports adequate SC action, taking into account the nevertheless existing volatile situation in the State itself. Poland will do everything that is necessary to protect the rights of refugees and IDPs.

III. Partnerships Between the United Nations and Relevant Regional Organizations in Peacekeeping Operations

As in 2015, the number of armed conflicts around the world has increased for the first time since the end of the Cold War, the need for international cooperation, working towards securing peace and international security, is more urgent than ever. Past tensions in the Western Balkan region and in Ukraine were putting European stability at risk which Poland defines as indispensable for the overall security European continent. Since 1953, the Polish Armed Forces have taken part in international peacekeeping and served in 29 UN operations in 26 countries, predominantly in the Middle East.

Involvement in international military operations constitute – next to national defence – the main element of the *National Security Strategy of Poland* (2014) that partly responds to SC resolution 2033 (2012) calling to further develop and strengthen peacekeeping collaboration. Poland is also a Member of the *Action for Peacekeeping Declaration* (2018). As a Member State of the European Union (EU), Poland engages in dialogue within the framework of the *Common Foreign and Security Policy* (CFSP) as well as in the EU's *Common Security and Defence Policy* (CSDP). The Republic of Poland is furthermore a Member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) which results in numerous engagements on a regional level. In addition to that, the report of the Secretary-General S/2015/229* (2015) puts forward the importance of a multidimensional partnership between the UN, the EU and the African Union (AU) which is highly supported by the Republic of Poland.

One of Poland's primary goal in security policy is the protection of the functioning of democratic, independent and sovereign States with territorial integrity and inviolability of their borders. This key principle needs to always be kept in mind when engaging in PKOs. Therefore, Poland will promote the values of solidarity, responsibility and commitment in foreign policy at all times, which also include modes of good governance. When deploying PKOs, the protection of civilian population, the safety of personnel involved in PKOs and enhancing the training system are key issues that Poland wants to dedicate its SC membership to. As regions are evolving differently and no PKO can be planned and executed like the other, cooperation with regional organizations will be more than necessary. However, these missions need to be planned carefully and deployed only with SC mandate because otherwise national sovereignty may be at risk. Having regional organizations help stabilizing a conflict region will contribute tremendously in legitimizing a mission. The Republic of Poland will look forward to continuing its engagement in PKO discussions and hopes to contribute fundamentally to the upcoming SC debate.