

**UN Peacekeeping: Mandate Needed For Civilian Protection In Conflicts**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 27 (Bernama) -- Malaysia wants a clear mandate for the protection of civilians in regions affected by armed conflicts to prevent unnecessary loss of lives.

While the principle in protecting civilians still lay with governments, United Nations (UN) peacekeepers must be guided by the principle of impartiality in discharging their duties, said Malaysia's Permanent UN Representative on UN Peacekeeping Operations.

"In this regard, Malaysia is concerned with the gaps in implementing mandates on the protection of civilians, which was echoed by some Force Commanders recently," said Datuk Hussein Haniff.

He was speaking on 'UN Peacekeeping Operations: Taking Stock and Preparing for the Future' at the Security Council Open Debate on Friday.

His speech text was released here today.

Hussein said the council should ensure the mandate on Protection of Civilians was clear and precise, adding that missions must also be provided with the required key enablers to implement its tasks.

He also urged the relevant authorities to facilitate quick and uninterrupted medical evacuation and access to medical care for wounded peacekeepers.

"This delay could lead to the loss of precious lives," he said in expressing concern over the delay in the evacuation of wounded peacekeepers recently.

Touching on the US\$8 billion (RM24 billion) annual budget for UN peacekeeping resources, Hussein hoped the funds would be utilised in an efficient and transparent manner.

"I would like to reiterate Malaysia's firm and continuous support for peacekeeping activities under the umbrella of the United Nations, and that the UN can continue to count on Malaysia's direct contribution in this important area," he said.

To date, Malaysia has participated in 24 UN Peacekeeping Operations worldwide, including North Atlantic Treaty Organisation-led peacekeeping operations.

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