



Third United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit (UNCOPS)

Session 3: Bridging the gap on performance

1 September, New York, GA Hall

Statement by Portugal

Ladies and gentlemen,
Distinguished participants,

On behalf of the Portuguese delegation here today, allow me to say that it is with great pleasure and pride to participate in this event and address you.

I would like to express our gratitude to and appreciation of the magnificent group of moderators and speakers, for their excellent speeches, endowed with deep knowledge and experience on International Security matters.

In effect, this conference provides a unique platform for chiefs of police, key partners and senior UN representatives to engage in discussions and contextualize the role of the UN police as a facilitator in peacekeeping actions, thus constituting an extraordinary and unique moment.

The trend toward international security cooperation has increased, manifesting itself in a wide-range of international crisis management missions and operations aimed at stabilizing volatile environments.

Within the UN, especially since the early twenty-first century and after the Brahimi Report, the deployment of police forces has increased and is acknowledged as a key component of the integrated approach.

Police work is thus crucial for peacekeeping and for fulfilling mandates, and exit strategies depend on reforming and strengthening national capacities.

The contribution of the Portuguese Police Forces in United Nations peacekeeping missions began in 1992, in the former Yugoslavia. Since our first participation, we have been part of different missions on several continents - Europe, Africa, America and Asia - where both the National Republican Guard (GNR) and the Public Security Police (PSP) have already participated with more than four thousand personnel.

Throughout the years we have undertaken different roles in command and planning, training, criminal investigation, intelligence, riot control, community policing, among others, and we have secured Formed Police Units in Timor-Leste.

In spite of all the history of previous participations, we recognize that the current international order is marked by the growing and valuable benefits of globalization, which, despite all the added value it encompasses, also bears several increasingly complex challenges, particularly in terms of security.

In order to keep up with the trends emerging in the International Environment, the Portuguese Police Forces, with the support of the Line Ministry, have promoted the (re)edification/(re)building of their institutional capacity, so as to have deployable innovative and suitably capable forces.

As far as the GNR is concerned, a draft Statement of Unit Requirements was drawn up, as a reference document for a new type of unit - the Rapid Response Police Unit - a process that culminated in a UN Assessment and Advisory Visit.

The Rapid Response Police Unit is a “tailor-made” solution, with modular capabilities of gendarmerie forces, corresponding to a multidisciplinary, modular, flexible and robust police force, autonomous or integrable in another civilian or military structure, composed of sixty military personnel ready and deployable within forty-eight hours, after the national decision has been taken, self-sustainable for up to sixty days, with full self-sufficiency for up to three days, capable of ensuring fundamental police functions in crisis scenarios.

Regarding the PSP and concerning the Specialized Police Teams, we underline that in 2020, at the request of the Police Division, two Specialized Police Teams were created, which were intended to be deployed for missions in French-speaking countries, within the scope of the police doctrine of sexual and gender violence, each team consisting of five policewomen, and two Specialized Police Teams, in the context of maintaining public order, each team consisting of nine policemen.

Similarly, in 2021, in order to be deployed to English-speaking missions, the PSP created two Specialized Police Teams, composed of police officers of both genders, from different police careers and with specific training in the police doctrine of sexual and gender violence, as well as two Specialized Police Teams, in the police doctrine of maintaining public order, composed of policemen of all police categories.

To conclude, we would like to stress that it is our duty to rethink solutions and focus on anticipation, prevention, protection and rapid response mechanisms to neutralize or mitigate the vast spectrum of emerging threats. It is essential to deepen security cooperation, strengthen permanent cooperation structures, foster the ability to respond quickly, ensure the capability to plan and execute missions, and strengthen security partnerships with the United Nations and other international organizations.

The Portuguese Police Forces are deeply committed to making a decisive contribution to overcoming the challenges faced by the United Nations peacekeeping missions, to ensure international peace and security, by promoting Human Rights protection in accordance with implementing International Conventions and Protocols to which Portugal is a party.

Thank you very much.