The Kingdom of Morocco intends to continue its action to adapt peacekeeping to the operational contexts of the 21st century, said on Tuesday, December 7, 2021, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates, Mr. Nasser Bourita.

Speaking via video conference at the 4th Ministerial Conference on Peacekeeping, held in Seoul, Mr. Bourita highlighted the Kingdom's commitments in five areas of action, namely "Medical Capabilities", "Safety and Security of Uniformed Personnel", "Digitization", "Training" and finally "Women, Peace and Security Agenda." Morocco's commitment to peacekeeping is "permanent and constant" since its independence, said Mr. Bourita at the Ministerial Conference, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of National Defense of the Republic of Korea.

The UN Ministerial Conference on Peacekeeping is a follow-up conference to the 2015 UN Leaders Summit on Peacekeeping.

"Embracing the ideals of the UN Charter, the Kingdom has contributed since 1960 to fifteen Peacekeeping Operations mandated by the UN Security Council, and currently deploys about 1,700 Blue Helmets in three operations," the Minister pointed out.

Noting that at a crossroads, UN peacekeeping is deployed today in a context fraught with challenges, to which the COVID-19 pandemic has been added, he stressed that traditional operations have been joined by multidimensional operations, reflecting the growing complexity of conflict and the changing continuum of conflict prevention, crisis management, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

"The expansion of peacekeeping mandates cannot overshadow the imperative of establishing a true performance culture. The value of these operations can only be measured by the achievement of political solutions, the ultimate indicator of their effectiveness," he said.

In this regard, he noted that the contemporary changes in peacekeeping reflect the installation of a new holistic paradigm of peacekeeping, based on three fundamental principles.

The first of these principles dictates that "peace is not a state but a process. It is

not simply the absence of armed conflict, but the treatment of the root causes of conflict," said Bourita. The second principle is that peace process success depends on the planning of a strategy to exit the crisis, even before the arrival of the first Blue Helmets.

The third principle shows that "peace can only be sustainable if there is sufficient capacity in the host states of peacekeeping operations," he continued.

"Today, peacekeeping is experiencing an inflation of interdependent tasks, a strong demand for coordination between more and more stakeholders, both in the field and at the UN, and an increased need in terms of human and financial resources," said MFA Bourita.

Peacekeeping also depends on the safety and security of uniformed personnel, who face many traditional and emerging threats, including those related to hate speech against peacekeepers, the minister said, arguing that "more than ever, the UN is called upon to preserve peacekeeping from this insidious scourge."

The minister said that the microcosm of the Francophone environment, which concentrates half of the UN peacekeeping operations, illustrates these challenges perfectly.

For this reason, Mr. Bourita announced that the Kingdom of Morocco will organize, with France and the UN, the Second Ministerial Conference on the UN and Peacekeeping in the Francophone Environment, as soon as the health situation allows.

Returning to the importance of organizing this Conference, despite the challenges of the global health situation, the Minister said that the spirit of this meeting, based on a results-oriented approach, is "relevant, proven and promising".

It is "relevant, in the context of the urgent need to accelerate the reform of peacekeeping; proven, in view of the success of the first three Conferences of this process; and promising, because it responds to a growing need for concrete actions for the implementation of the Initiative Action for Peacekeeping of the UN Secretary General, which Morocco was among the first Member States to support, in accordance with the High Instructions of His Majesty King Mohammed VI," he explained.

The Moroccan diplomat concluded that “Member States have shown a spirit of creativity that presided over the creation, sixty-three years ago, of the first peacekeeping operation. These same member states must demonstrate the same spirit in their efforts to reform this fundamental tool of international peace and security.

The 4 th Ministerial Conference on Peacekeeping, which is being held in Seoul brings together more than 700 participants from 155 countries, including Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense, Heads of International Organizations, academics and journalists.

Its objective is to strengthen UN peacekeeping, particularly by improving the performance and impact of UN peacekeeping operations in accordance with the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative.

To this end, the Conference aims to address capacity gaps through concrete commitments, including facilitating new and sustainable partnerships while strengthening existing ones.

This Ministerial Conference is designed to garner the international community’s political support for peacekeeping operations, identify new commitments by countries to strengthen peacekeeping operations, and assess the implementation of these commitments.

On the agenda are the topics of “Sustainability of Peace”; “Performance and Accountability”; “Partnerships, Training and Capacity Building” and “Protection of Civilians and Safety and Security”, as well as “Strengthening Technological and Medical Capabilities”.