

Under Secretary-General Susana Malcorra

Fourth Committee

24 October 2011

**Agenda Item: Comprehensive review of the whole question of
peacekeeping operations in all their aspects**

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

I am honoured to be here with you on United Nations Day for the consideration of this agenda item.

Since the Department of Field Support was created nearly five years ago, we have worked to make steady progress towards the goal of managing field support as a global enterprise. We have advanced a professional, structured and systematic approach that can adapt to diverse operating environments. Our vision for this Department continues to evolve from a headquarters organization that carries out day-to-day administrative and logistical support tasks to one that strategically manages the financial, human, information and communications technology and physical resources that you, the

Member States, have appropriated for field-based operations. At the same time we are strengthening our operational presence in the Global and Regional Service Centres.

In this time of fiscal restraint, realizing this vision becomes increasingly urgent and we must – and can – begin to yield some returns from our attention to reforms over the past two years. It is essential that we drive the organization towards strengthened accountability and efficiencies, as we improve our service delivery,

The Secretariat is acutely aware of the mounting economic challenges faced by most Member States and the concerns about the affordability and cost-effectiveness of UN field operations. To this end, the Secretariat's funding proposals for the current 2011-2012 budget for 'continuing' missions reflected a 2% reduction from the previous year, despite the normal pressures from rising prices. The budgets approved for the current year included savings of USD 83m resulting from the abolition or nationalization of more than 650 international staffing posts. In addition, as directed by the General Assembly, we are making further efficiencies in operating costs to offset the one-off \$85 million payment this year to troop- and police-contributing countries. Separately, equipment acquisitions will be prioritized in many areas, with a greater reliance on reserve stocks and deferred replacement.

At the same time, the level of peacekeeping activities remains high. Since approval of this year's budget, we have deployed two new missions (UNMISS and UNISFA); and, the Security Council has enhanced UNOCA's mandate and reaffirmed the role of

MONUSCO in supporting upcoming elections in the DRC. With 44% of total peacekeeping costs in the field incurred in directly financing uniformed personnel and another 22 % comprising staff entitlements, the Secretariat's capacity to reduce costs is essentially focused on the remaining 34%. The continuing implementation of a global approach to field support will therefore realize cost-savings through consolidating back office functions and reducing in-mission footprints, achieving economies of scale, and improving inter-operability with partners.

Efforts will also continue to target efficiencies in operational support going beyond the readily available gains that have already been realized. In moving forward, if we are to ensure that the most pressing peace and security requirements are to be properly resourced, we must therefore also be mindful of lower priority activities or longstanding capacities in field operations that might no longer be warranted.

Global Field Support Strategy

I want to thank this Committee once again for its insights, which continue to inform the Global Field Support Strategy. The bi-monthly briefings to the C-34 have provided opportunities for regular consultation and vital feedback throughout the development and implementation of the Strategy. We will also be sharing with you a non-paper that sets out a proposed end state for GFSS in 2015. Your continued engagement will be very important for us in further refining that vision.

As you recall, the objectives of the GFSS are to: expedite and improve support for peacekeeping operations and special political missions; strengthen resource stewardship and accountability while achieving greater efficiencies and economies of scale; and, improving the safety and living conditions of staff.

In my previous appearances before you, I have stated that the GFSS will improve the delivery of support to field-based missions. I am pleased to report to you this time that, in addition, the GFSS is helping us to ensure that appropriations are used more efficiently and without compromising the level of service that is being delivered.

As Hervé described, missions have confronted a number of major challenges over the past year, requiring DFS to operate in a rapidly evolving global environment under diverse conditions. In Sudan, we were called upon to provide logistical support to the referendum successfully held in January 2011, and immediately thereafter to deploy the new UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in July along with the concurrent closure and liquidation of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). At the same time, the Security Council called for establishment of an Interim Security Force (UNISFA) in Abyei, which is operational as well. On my visit to Sudan in July, I expressed my appreciation for the work and dedication of all our personnel who were called upon not only to support vital DDR and mine action programmes, but also to move equipment and troops over vast geographical distances in very difficult terrain. Like the people of Sudan and South Sudan, our mission personnel had to confront the additional hazard of landmines, which in

August tragically killed four peacekeepers outside Abyei. All of this was set against extremely tight timeframes to operationalize UNMISS and UNISFA.

DFS has also supported the deployment of a new mission to Libya, UNSMIL. Within a few days of the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2009 on 16 September, SRSG Ian Martin and a small team were operational in Tripoli. In order to expedite this deployment we've maximized the utilization of the GSC in Brindisi as the "Support HQ's" for the new Mission.

In Somalia, the UN Support Office for AMISOM is approaching its third year of delivering logistical support to the African Union peacekeepers. Our support in maintaining a critical supply line to AMISOM has led to improvements in their operational effectiveness and the quality of life of its troops on the ground. These troops have grown from 3500 when we started to close to 10,000 now, and heading to the full approved strength of 12,000 in the coming months. The provision of accommodation and office space for controlled numbers of UNPOS, UNSOA and United Nations agency staff, allow for essential work to continue, despite the perilous security environment, in support of our African Union partners, the Transitional Federal Government and the people of Somalia.

Our support to elections took place successfully in Liberia this month, and we look forward to a successful run-off election and a peaceful transition period. Pre-election assistance has intensified in DRC in preparation of elections next month, bringing into

play impressive logistical support planning.

The Global Service Centre, which comprises the capabilities of the UN Logistics Base at Brindisi and the UN Support Base at Valencia, has played a central role in responding to these operational demands. Specialist teams assembled and despatched by the Global Service Centre have supported UNOCI, UNSOA, MINUSTAH, BINUB and UNMIS over the past year, as well as UNSMIL. We are putting the finishing touches on our proposals to move additional functions from DFS Headquarters to the Global Support Centre. We will present them in our Support Account submission during the second resumed session.

The Regional Service Centre at Entebbe also has come on line, and is producing immediate impact. The Regional Training and Conference Centre and the Transport and Movement Integrated Control Centre are fully operational. Key back office support functions have been established, allowing for a lighter support footprint on the ground - particularly in Southern Sudan and Abyei.

Building on the success of RSC Entebbe and in response to requests from the field, as announced at our most recent briefing to the Special Committee a few weeks ago, the Secretary-General will put forward a recommendation in his upcoming second annual progress report on GFSS implementation to establish two additional regional service centres in West Africa and the Middle East.

Moreover, modularisation has advanced. The 200-man camp design has been completed and was used, with modification, in UNMISS and UNISFA deployments. Several steps are also under way to ensure that reliable enabling capacities, both internal and contracted, are on hand.

We have also completed a review of all human resources management and logistical functions with resulting in recommendations to transfer some functions to the Global Service Centre, in furtherance of the GFSS vision of DFS as a strategic headquarters. As per your clear guidance, functions related to Member State liaison will remain in headquarters, together with planning and work force monitoring.

Turning now to the last pillar, the financial framework, I am pleased to say that the standardized funding model was approved by the General Assembly at its resumed 65th session. Along side our modularisation efforts, this standardized model will contribute to faster deployment of new missions - meeting a critical operational priority highlighted in my previous statements before this and other Committees.

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

As with any major reform, risks accompany change. It is essential that all four pillars of GFSS evolve in a fully coherent manner that does not create unnecessary uncertainty for staff or points of discontinuity with our clients or strategic partners, such as the African Union. With OIOS support, we identified these risks through a controlled self-assessment.

We now have in place a risk management strategy that includes better communication with staff, clear performance indicators and timelines, as well as the preparation of an accountability matrix to clarify roles, responsibilities and authorities.

As Hervé mentioned, the principle of accountability is vital. It is a continuing priority for me to ensure that we align accountability with responsibility and authority. To this end, in response to the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/259, we are strengthening accountability through the introduction of risk management practices and Letters of Representation, which are both an internal control measure and a managerial accountability tool. When fully implemented across all field-based missions, they can provide evidence to support the public assertions that will have to be made under international public sector accounting standards (IPSAS) as to the strength and quality of internal controls over financial reporting. We continue to work with the Department of Management on these and other issues related to the implementation of IPSAS, and also the introduction of Enterprise Risk Management practices both within our resource management functions and within our operational programmes.

Furthermore, we have made concerted efforts to improve the processing of claims for death and disability incurred by the Member-States who have contributed troops and police to the UN's field operations. As directed by the General Assembly, the Secretariat endeavours to settle all cases within the prescribed three-month period, except when a longer period is required to determine the degree of permanent disability. In this regard, I am pleased to inform Member States that all pending claims have been cleared except for

cases in this category.

Moreover, payments have been made to troop- and police-contributing countries for contingent-owned equipment through the end of June 2011 for all peacekeeping missions, except for three missions due to result delays in payment of assessed contributions. The next contingent-owned equipment payments are scheduled for 22 December 2011 and we will endeavour, to the best of our ability, to keep you informed of the state of these reimbursements.

In this regard, the Secretary-General has taken concrete steps to fulfil the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 65/289 to establish a senior advisory group comprising: five eminent persons of relevant experience; five representatives from major troop contributors; five representatives from major financial contributors; and, one member from each regional group, to consider reimbursement rates for troop-contributing countries and related issues. If the senior advisory group is to take up its work as soon as practicable then it is very important that Member States complete their responses to the Secretary-General's request for nominations. Please be assured of my continued personal engagement and the full support of my Department to assist the Senior Advisory Group in achieving the fullest success. I have every confidence that, working together, the members of this Group, will resolve the important issues entrusted to them.

Securing Required Capacities

I would like to turn now to the issue of capacities. As Hervé mentioned, our missions are facing severe shortages of critical capacities, especially military helicopters. I cannot stress enough the importance of this capacity to our ability to meet our mandates to protect civilians and ensure the safety and security of our personnel. Despite the economic constraints many of you are facing, our missions depend upon the continued commitment of the TCCs and PCCs with required capacities. We are working very closely with Office of Military Affairs to find creative options to enlarge the pool of potential contributors and to ensure a seamless management of both military and commercial assets. At the same time we are reviewing some aspects of our LOA's to address concerns raised by TCCs.

As you are all aware, the Secretary-General has tasked me with a system-wide role on the review of civilian capacities. While not the largest driver of cost, the civilian personnel -- support and substantive, local and international -- play a vital role in the success of UN peacekeeping and in the integration of complex and interdependent tasks. The recent report of the Secretary-General proposes a realistic set of recommendations in this difficult fiscal climate. It identifies initiatives within the Secretary-General's or United Nations' Executive Heads' authority which offer the greatest potential for impact on the ground, making better use of systems already in place. It aims to make the UN a more responsive, effective partner for national counterparts as they strengthen core national capacities after conflict. In that regard it recognises the important contribution peacekeeping operations and special political missions can make through our training of

national staff. In UNMISS today, for example, we are collaborating with UNDP and other partners to mobilize national expertise for South Sudan, including from the Diaspora.

We also need to work more effectively with our international partners, particularly from the Global South, in delivering civilian support. This means becoming a more responsive partner. We have to explore ways of improving flexibility in planning and budgeting for civilian capacities so we can respond to changing demands. This cannot come at the expense of accountability, but it requires a greater willingness to recognise, address and accept a certain degree of risk in the environments in which we work.

Conduct of UN peacekeepers

Madam Chair,

Strengthened accountability is a fundamental prerequisite for ensuring that authority for managing conduct of personnel is properly exercised and directed towards the achievement of efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness and transparency. Our goals are to promote respect for core values, to strengthen accountability within the Organization among its leaders and personnel at large, to preserve the image, credibility, impartiality and integrity of the United Nations and, above all, to protect and serve those in need.

Nowhere is our commitment to our core values more visibly demonstrated, and tested, than in the exercise of the fundamental duty of care that all peacekeeping personnel (uniformed and civilian) owe to the local population that they serve and protect. Despite the collective and noteworthy accomplishments and dedication and sacrifices of our peacekeepers over the years, this exemplary record continues to be clouded by serious acts of misconduct by a few individuals including inexcusable acts of sexual exploitation and abuse that continue at an unacceptable rate.

As you can see from the data on our public website, it is correct to say that the trends are in the right direction – down. But, downward trends are not good enough. Allegations relating to rape or sexual relationships with minors remain high as compared to the total number of allegations received. The Secretariat is following very closely those cases where civilian staff are involved to ensure due process within a reasonable timeframe. I have reached out to TCCs to ensure that allegations are addressed promptly. I sincerely thank those member states that have done so. It is also critical that Member States inform us of the status of all pending investigations, under the agreed procedure set out by the General Assembly. It is disheartening when, despite such a comprehensive approach, strong messages from management to all personnel, and the investment of significant resources on training, we still find ourselves confronting allegations that tarnish the reputation of all peacekeepers everywhere. We must collectively recommit ourselves to eradicating this scourge, by making every effort to swiftly respond to allegations and then follow through with speedy prosecution, where the evidence demonstrates that criminal misconduct may have occurred.

In closing, Madam Chair, distinguished delegates, I would harken back to Hervé's opening remarks, and remember the 86 UN peacekeepers who lost their lives in tragic incidents this year - ranging from the despicable attack on the UNAMA compound at Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan, to a stray bullet fired in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire during the post-election crisis, to an ambush of a UNAMID mounted patrol in Darfur, to the crash of a UN passenger aircraft that was attempting to land in Kinshasa. Other UN staff members have narrowly avoided serious injury or death by improvised explosive devices, car bombs, ambushes and carjackings; still others have suffered the indignity and pain of being kidnapped. I share all of this to illustrate the increasingly dangerous places and circumstances where we are asked to deploy uniformed and non-uniformed personnel in the cause of peace. I would also like to make a special reference to the African Union Peacekeepers we support in Somalia, who continue to suffer a significant amount of casualties given the challenging tasks they must deliver under very harsh conditions.

I pay tribute to their sacrifices, and the sacrifices of their loved ones, which strengthen my resolve to press forward on implementation of the safety and security policies and procedures established through the Interagency Security Management Network. This network, in which both DPKO and DFS participate fully, has addressed a range of issues over the past year, including: the use of private security companies; the control of firearms; road safety; security risk assessment practices; and, interaction with host countries. I am pleased to report that we have adapted the security risk management process to military and police activities in the field. Full implementation across all

missions will allow headquarters and mission management to better assess the risks associated with the operations of uniformed elements and, thereby, lead to better operational decision-making.

Conclusion

Madam Chair,

Since I last addressed this Committee, I have visited many of the peacekeeping operations that we support, as well as the African Union peacekeepers operating in Somalia. I have seen our national staff become agents of change and progress in their own societies. I have seen our peacekeeping personnel perform with dedication despite extremely difficult working conditions. It is my privilege to continue to lead the Department of Field Support working in close partnership with my colleague Hervé Ladsous and to further contribute to the vital work of our missions around the world.