

Statement

Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations

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Fourth Committee 22 October 2010

Agenda Item:

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

I am honoured to address the Fourth Committee as it begins its consideration of the agenda item *peacekeeping operations in all their aspects*.

Before turning to the issues at hand, I would like to start by expressing my sincere gratitude and admiration for our personnel in the field. They put their lives at risk every day. They have left their homes and their loved ones to provide peace and security to strangers in faraway countries. Alongside them our national staff also works selflessly in support of peace in their own countries. Without their sacrifices UN peacekeeping would not be possible. Above all, I would like to pay tribute to all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice this year serving peace.

Mr. Chairman,

UN peacekeeping remains a dynamic and essential element of the international community's response to international threats to peace and security. It has unique strengths, in particular its ability to deploy and sustain troops and police from around the globe and to integrate them, with civilian peacekeepers, to advance multi-dimensional mandates. It can provide a security guarantee and the political and peacebuilding support to help countries make the difficult, early transition from conflict to peace. Over the past two decades it has proven flexible and has deployed in many configurations. Success is never guaranteed, because UN peacekeeping almost by definition goes to the most physically and politically difficult environments. We face serious challenges in many arenas. Yet peacekeeping has proven to be one of the most effective tools available to us to assist host countries navigate the difficult path from conflict to peace.

Together, UN peacekeepers deliver and coordinate a broad spectrum of assistance and we must ensure, in all instances, that they deliver the most effective assistance in the most

efficient manner possible. Our collective task is to preserve, continue to improve and strengthen its qualities, and to address its weaknesses. This timely debate provides us with an opportunity to take stock of developments over the past year and to exchange views on the way ahead.

At this juncture I would like to summarize key developments over the last year starting with our vision, as presented under the New Horizon banner, of how to adapt to the requirements of today's operations and further strengthen the peacekeeping partnership while building on past peacekeeping reforms. I would also like to propose how to take this vision forward and conclude with an analysis of the way ahead.

From overstretch to consolidation

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

One year has passed since we last met in this forum. Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Ms Susana Malcorra, and I then presented the DPKO/DFS short- and medium-term priorities of the New Horizon agenda to you.

We were facing a situation with a seemingly never-ending increase in demands and challenges paired with rapidly diminishing resources. We were talking about peacekeeping suffering from overstretch and the need to reinvigorate the peacekeeping partnership by creating a greater consensus on how to tackle the challenges ahead.

To respond to this, we outlined an agenda focusing on four main areas:

- 1) achieving greater coherence around crucial policy issues, including the peace-building-peacekeeping nexus and protection of civilians;
- 2) generating the adequate capabilities for multi-dimensional peacekeeping;
- 3) making the field support machinery more efficient and cost-effective through the Global Field Support Strategy; and
- 4) strengthening planning, management and oversight of our missions.

Events over the past year have demonstrated the relevance of these priority areas.

Missions in **Chad, Darfur** and the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, for example, have struggled to fulfil local as well as international expectations regarding their protection of civilians mandates and enhance their response to threats from spoilers. At times effective mandate implementation has been hampered by limited consent and differences within the international community regarding strategy. They have also faced a lack of adequate capabilities and support structures to enable a robust response.

Meanwhile, in **Timor-Leste, Liberia** and **Côte d'Ivoire**, peacekeeping operations have focused on planning the progressive hand-over of security responsibilities to national authorities and transitioning to longer-term peace consolidation and development with the support of other UN and outside actors. Mandates of peacekeeping missions continue to

emphasize early peacebuilding tasks, notably in the areas of basic safety and security and political processes, but also in other areas such as institution-building, governance and economic revitalization. These are often interdependent factors; peace cannot be maintained without progress in all these areas. This underscores the importance of a strategic and integrated approach to critical peacebuilding objectives in the immediate aftermath of conflict

Another mission that faced similar challenges, MINUSTAH in **Haiti**, was pushed into crisis after the devastating January 2010 earthquake. The international community's response to this tragedy further underscored a series of challenges facing UN peacekeeping: the critical need for crisis planning and decision-making, contingency arrangements and rapidly deployable reserve capacities, flexible and speedy support arrangements and effective cooperation and interoperability with partners.

Other developments over the year demonstrated that the peacekeeping agenda is a moving target. Having coped with an almost constant surge in the field over many years, managing effective withdrawal or drawdown was a new challenge to peacekeeping over the last year.

In **Chad**, discussions on the future of MINURCAT started after the Government called for its withdrawal. Special attention was given to the continued protection of refugees and internally displaced persons, and enabling the provision of humanitarian assistance in eastern Chad. In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, a new phase began with the transformation of MONUC into the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) following agreement between the Government and the UN that the drawdown be gradual and based on joint assessments of conditions on the ground.

At the same time, operations such as UNIFIL and more traditional peacekeeping settings such as UNFICYP, UNDOF or MINURSO continued to play an important role in support of peace and security.

Progress on the New Horizon Partnership agenda

In parallel to these developments in the field, a dialogue has taken place among the members of the Security Council, the troop and police contributing countries and the Secretariat that has helped shape the common agenda and strengthening the peacekeeping partnership.

Member States in the General Assembly - through the Special Committee on peacekeeping operations, in the Fourth and Fifth Committee - and in the Security Council have expressed their support for the implementation of this agenda. The GA Thematic Debate on peacekeeping on 22 June marking the 10th anniversary of the Brahimi report also added many knowledgeable voices to the discussion. Encouraged by this response and guided by the Member States feedback we have made progress in all of the four priority areas of the agenda. Our first progress report on implementation of these priorities was recently circulated to you.

In terms of **policy development** we are making good progress on developing a strategic framework to guide development of mission-wide strategies to protect civilians, as requested by the C34. We have also started the mapping of resources and capability requirements for the implementation of protection mandates and the development of training modules. A strategy for critical early peacebuilding tasks for peacekeepers is under development as well as a trend analysis on the inclusion of peacebuilding tasks in peacekeeping mandates. The strategy will focus on mandated activities in the areas of police, rule of law, DDR, SSR and mine action activities, and will seek to help missions establish priorities for implementing complex mandates and sequencing their activities in these critical areas. In addition, work has progressed on the development of the Strategic Doctrinal Framework for international police peacekeeping with the aim to enhance the effectiveness of UN police peacekeeping through delineating standards for international police, developing capacities, and engaging Member States. A global effort to increase female police peacekeepers to 20 percent of the deployed strength by 2014 has also been launched. We will also continue a dialogue with Member States, including through regional conferences gathering senior military officials, on the requirements to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping, including on how to deter threats effectively and when to use force in self-protection and in protection of the mandate.

In order to develop a **comprehensive capability-driven approach**, DPKO and DFS are primarily focusing on three areas: developing guidance and capability standards, generating and sustaining critical resources, and strengthening training. Within the capability driven approach the ongoing Formed Police Unit Review is the world's largest, most comprehensive and in-depth police-related project. Contributing to the efforts addressing civilian capacity gaps the standing police capacity has been expanded and a standing justice and corrections capacity has been established as well as a roster with Security Sector Reform experts. To ensure coherence we are working closely with the Peace building Support Office (PBSO) regarding the Civilian Capacities Review. The Secretariat is also looking into how to address the Member States' request to increase its capacity-building coordination role. In order to keep Member States abreast of critical capability requirements we have over the past year circulated lists with mission capability gaps. Within the process of setting common baseline operational standards for civilian and uniformed capabilities, we have constituted a three-folded pilot initiative, regarding military components in UN peacekeeping. It consists of Infantry Battalion, Staff Officers and Military Medical Support. The objective of this process is to bolster the effectiveness and interoperability of various peacekeeping components and enabling targeted capacity-building support.

Implementation of the **Global Field Support Strategy** is also well under way. It will transform service delivery to the field, adapting to the requirements of today's operations. The support to the field will become more predictable, professional and flexible while ensuring cost efficiencies and transparency. Susana will elaborate more on this.

With the aim to strengthen **planning and oversight**, a more comprehensive and systematic consultative process between the troop and police contributing countries, the

Security Council and the Secretariat has been developed. This includes the Secretariat briefing Council Members and TCCs/PCCs before and after Technical Assessment Missions to the field and the Secretariat's support to regular triangular consultations between the Troop and Police Contributing Countries, the Council and the Secretariat. Member States' efforts to strengthen linkages between the Council and the TCCs/PCCs have been extremely valuable. The Secretariat has also reviewed reporting practices to maximize the use of our resources to inform Member States about relevant developments in a timely manner. To strengthen oversight, compacts have been signed with the senior leadership in the field. A review of command and control structures is also underway.

Peacekeeping in consolidation

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

In May this year United Nations Peacekeeping deployed more than 124,000 military, police and civilian staff in the field. This represented an all time high. Since then the numbers have, for the first time in a decade, started to decline. The number of troops in MONUSCO was reduced by 1,650 this summer and MINURCAT will be closed down by the end of the year. UN peacekeeping has entered a phase of **consolidation**.

However, even if there has been a slight reduction in terms of numbers, by no means does this indicate that the challenges we are facing are diminishing. While military numbers are decreasing, the scale of deployments will remain extremely significant and one of the most complex operational tasks the United Nations has. Moreover, the political complexity facing missions and the range of their mandates, including on the civilian side, remain very broad. The UN support to the referenda in **Sudan** as well as continued support to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the elections in Côte d'Ivoire, for example, will be challenges in terms of planning and additional capability requirements. Furthermore, there is no indication that the demand for UN policing will wane – rather the opposite. Certain specialized capabilities – including police – will be in high demand over the coming years. This reflects the growth in complex peacekeeping operations in general, but also the increased complexity of tasks enshrined in the policing mandates issued by the Security Council. Provided there are no unforeseen developments in the coming months and years, we will hopefully also be focusing more attention on the specific requirements and challenges related to the successful transition of peacekeeping operations.

Overall, in terms of challenges, the picture painted last year at the launch of the New Horizon process still remains relevant. The global scarcity of resources highlighted last year only seems to have become more acute. Financial and other national restraints have led to, in several cases, the withdrawal of crucial mission capabilities - most notably military utility helicopters – from some of our most complex operations. UNMIS, UNAMID and MONUSCO are now facing critical military helicopter shortages.

Another example is the widespread or systematic use of sexual violence against civilians in armed conflicts as a tactic of war. The horrendous mass-rapes of hundreds of civilians in eastern DRC are sadly not isolated incidents. While the primary responsibility for protecting its citizens lies with the government of the DRC we are, together with other relevant partners of the international community, addressing how we can improve our response in these situations. I should say a word about expectations that missions face when addressing their protection of civilians mandates. When we deploy peacekeepers amidst ongoing conflict across vast areas, we cannot expect missions to achieve blanket protection. And we must be clear on this. However, we must be equally clear that we expect every part of our missions, and everyone in them, to do their utmost. This demands that missions use all means at their disposal – military, police and civilian - to actively anticipate, address and respond to threats against civilians.

In some host countries limited consent by the parties to the conflict and restrictions on our operations' ability to carry out their duties have hampered the peacekeeping operations ability to effectively implement its mandate – Darfur and Chad being two of the most striking examples.

Another disturbing development over the past year is the direct violence against our peacekeepers. The numerous abductions of peacekeepers in Darfur, the killing of peacekeepers in eastern DRC and Darfur and the tragic attack on a UN guesthouse in Kabul on 28 October 2009, that claimed the lives of five UN personnel, are horrible examples of this kind of utterly unacceptable violence. We are working with partners revising our measures to increase the security of our personnel and prevent reoccurrence of these deplorable acts.

Conclusion and the way forward - from challenge to opportunity

The nature of multi-dimensional peacekeeping and the challenges and threats we are facing are such that it is clear that we can only address them effectively if we act jointly.

Today's complex threats to peace and security require cohesive and effective responses from a united international community. It is important to keep in mind that peacekeeping is but one component of the international community's efforts to foster peace and security. Only with a concerted approach will we succeed. Bearing this in mind we will continue to ensure that further development of the peacekeeping partnership takes into account work in areas such as prevention, mediation and peacebuilding. The border between these areas and peacekeeping will not always be easily defined. Certainly they do not always appear in chronological order, rather they are conducted in parallel and are mutually reinforcing. On the ground, the political, security and peacebuilding challenges are inter-related and must be addressed through a common strategy. Therefore, the need for integration and cooperation becomes even greater.

In the same vein we will also continue to cooperate with regional organisations to make sure that regional knowledge and expertise is used to its fullest extent to foster international peace and security.

Furthermore, in order to prevent creating expectations that can not be met we will have to improve how we manage consent issues and how we address and respond to public perceptions of peacekeeping's role and impact on the ground. Since our mandates have become more complex and the interaction with the local population has increased, we have to become better at communicating both with the authorities and the population of our host countries what peacekeeping can and cannot do.

Facing these challenges, the current phase of consolidation presents an important opportunity to realize the reform priorities we have identified together and to consolidate gains achieved over the past year. Greater focus can be given to processes like the Global Field Support Strategy and the capability-driven approach. Both will help modernize UN peacekeeping to meet today's requirements in an efficient and effective manner and to enhance the safety, security and wellbeing of our personnel in the field.

We are acutely aware of the financial constraints facing the international community and the high total cost of peacekeeping requires that we ensure maximum efficiency and flexibility. At the same time, we do believe, and independent studies have also shown that peacekeeping is cost effective. It is a minute fraction of global defence spending. It also shares the international burden of addressing conflict and provides critical space for war-shattered economies to revive and humanitarian, peacebuilding and development assistance to take effect.

As I said at the outset, United Nations peacekeeping is a unique, and I believe, indispensable tool developing through trials of fire and bursts of innovation. We must continue to improve its flexibility and readiness to meet evolving challenges.

We owe the people that look to UN peacekeepers as their last hope to do our utmost in our continued quest to help bring them the peace and security they deserve - even when the challenges sometimes seem insurmountable and stable peace far away.

Thank you.