

Opening Remarks by USG DFS, Mr. Atul Khare
UN Chiefs of Police Summit
3 June 2016

Ministers and Heads of Delegations,
Excellencies,
Chef de Cabinet,
Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous,
Distinguished Chiefs of Police and Senior Police Executives,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to join you for the first-ever UN Chiefs of Police Summit in New York, as you chart the way forward for UN Police.

I will briefly highlight what we in the Department of Field Support, DFS, are doing to strengthen peace operations and our support to you. I will also share my views on your role, in collaboration with DFS, in strengthening peace operations.

Since I joined DFS over a year ago, I have been determined to approach field support from the perspective of our partners, stakeholders and clients, including the Police Contributing Countries and Police Components in our missions.

Based on my personal experience in the field including as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, I am fully cognisant of the difficult environment you are operating in and the multiple challenges you face.

And, my Department and I, are committed to ensuring that we find solutions to these challenges which are effective and grounded in data analysis. I have asked my Directors and Chiefs of Mission Support in the field to work closely with the senior leadership of their missions, including the Chiefs of Police, to address the particular support challenges of police personnel.

From our own performance data and from our global client surveys, for example, we know that support challenges for formed police units differ from those for individual police officers.

For the nearly 9,000 individuals in formed police units, who come to us from 20 countries, the main need is to come with sufficient engineering support, so they can integrate well with the mission infrastructure. Of 20 contributors, however, 7 currently have critical or near critical engineering equipment gaps. So, they need better support from home, from other member states, from partners or, in extremis, from the UN to overcome them.

For the 4,000 individual police officers, who come to us - often in very small units - from over 80 countries, the main challenge is integrating with our administration. The key issues for them are the timely processing of claims, benefits and entitlements. Our service centres typically process 80% of expense claims within 30 days, but we know that for police officers who only deploy for a few months, this may not be fast enough - especially if they first need to learn about our processes. So, they need strong training in our administrative processes, coupled with strong support from colleagues and from our service units.

We, at DFS, want to work with you from the start of your missions, to develop solutions that can meet your needs.

We expect to be: rapid, effective, efficient and responsible.

Over the next 2-3 years, we have also defined five priority initiatives to accelerate progress towards providing you with excellent field support. They are:

1: Supply chain management, which strengthens our ability to get the right products and service, to the right places, at the right time and for the right costs.

2: Environmental management, which is about controlling hazards, conserving resources and protecting natural habitats. In the short term, our focus is on energy, water, and waste. Reducing the share of energy produced from fuel, so that we cut emissions and costs. Recycling more water, so that we reduce risks for local communities. And reusing equipment and supplies to minimize waste. All of these activities require your support.

I call on Police Chiefs in our missions, to designate an environmental focal point who will work closely with Mission Support to ensure consistent implementation, monitoring and inspection of environmental policies and standards.

3: Conduct and discipline, which is about strengthening respect for UN standards of conduct and preventing, pursuing and rectifying misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse or SEA. It is self-evident that when our troops, police or civilians victimize those we are sent to protect, we cause horrific harm to victims, communities and the reputation of United Nations peacekeeping.

We will further enhance collaboration with the Police Component to ensure strengthened training on conduct, including on the prohibition against SEA, as well as the vetting of police personnel. I also hope to draw on the experience and expertise of police personnel and increase your role in: i) supporting investigations; ii) participating as an integral part of the missions' immediate response teams, which rapidly deploy to gather and preserve initial information and evidence following a report of SEA; and iii) contributing to risk assessments, prevention and compliance. I will look to you for support in making resources available to support these critical tasks.

4: Technology and innovation is about ensuring we use new technology that can make the field safer and more efficient. We have been exploring a number of possibilities. For example, technologies that can improve the operational and protective equipment of formed police units and individual police officers, or police surveillance technologies that can support better situational awareness in the field.

And 5: the follow-up to the recommendations of the High Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, which for field support is primarily about simplifying and streamlining processes, and aligning responsibility for results with the authority to take the necessary decisions – so that we can deliver more rapidly and effectively within applicable rules and regulations.

DFS looks forward to working with you to implement these initiatives and provide our police colleagues with support solutions.

I would also call on you to participate actively in the Triennial Meeting of the Contingent Owned Equipment Working Group early next year to ensure that the differing and specialized requirements of Formed Police Units can be appropriately addressed.

I am confident that this conference will inform the future of UN police in peacekeeping and reinforce our strategic partnership with Member States. DFS will remain a committed partner and we look forward to supporting the outcomes of this important meeting.