

Statement
by
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Under-Secretary-General for Field Support
to the Fourth Committee
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Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me to begin by thanking you, and the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hervé Ladsous, for your kind words of introduction. I appreciate the opportunity to brief the 4th Committee members on the subject of UN peace operations and, specifically, on the work of the Department of Field Support. I would like, in particular, to express my appreciation to Hervé for the close collaboration with DFS that has been in evidence throughout his tenure with DPKO.

This is indeed a special occasion for me, as it is the first time that I address the 4th Committee as head of the Department of Field Support. Let me, therefore, emphasize my commitment to closely engaging with you, the Member States, in the months, and years, ahead. We meet at a time when multilateral efforts in peacekeeping are undergoing profound change. This process of change is driven by the vision and the ever-present pursuit of results articulated in no small part by this Committee.

The core of the UN's work in peacekeeping, and the compass that guides the work of the Department of Field Support, is partnership: partnership with you - and partnership among you. In this context, we in the Secretariat welcome the successful adoption of the report of the C-34 and the agreements captured therein. The agreement reached between and among Member States is a reminder to all of us of the universalism that underpins the UN Charter. The spirit of sacrifice for the greater good is manifest in the outcome of your deliberations; agreement on the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group is noteworthy in this regard. Your partnership is the lifeblood of UN peace operations writ large, and through your endeavours to reach agreement in recent weeks, you have proven that the ambitious experiment of UN peacekeeping - a process of discovery initiated half a century ago - proceeds unabated.

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

The next 2-3 years constitute a rare window of opportunity to seize the day in support of more effective peace operations. Indeed, this meeting takes place at a time when three factors – economic, technological, and managerial - are exerting an unusually powerful influence on multilateralism generally and on peacekeeping more specifically. For one, economic factors have transformed the landscape for the financing of peacekeeping, thus introducing greater emphasis on efficiency, greater sensitivity to cost, and a greater appreciation of the value of financial and human resources. In addition, technology in recent years has advanced with such speed and alacrity that hitherto unimagined ways of communicating, planning, and monitoring, have emerged, rendering obsolete many practices that continue to be practiced to this day. And lastly, management, even within the UN itself, is rightly recognized today as a science that can and should be informed by past experience.

These three avenues of human evolution - economic, technological, and managerial – constitute an impetus that should push UN peace operations to the next stage of their evolution. We have an opportunity, an obligation, to learn from the past, and to apply the lessons learned for the betterment of peacekeeping.

I myself intend to apply the lessons that I have learned since I began my career in the UN system as a P1 more than thirty-seven years ago. My last nine years in peacekeeping missions have, in particular, provided insights that will inevitably inform and shape my understanding of the challenges at hand. First and foremost among these lessons is the importance of focusing our energies, our efforts, our priorities, on the field. That is where things get done. That is where those who rely on our support are most vulnerable, most exposed. Our colleagues, our compatriots, our friends and family members, those on the front lines, are the ones who will face the consequences of our decisions.

I am also a firm believer in the role that we as staff members of the UN Secretariat have as stewards of the resources that Member States entrust to the Organization. Austerity or not, we have an obligation to use your resources responsibly. And effective stewardship of resources must begin with a shared understanding of the results to be achieved - what is the goal? Too often, resources are taken for granted, and this leads to supply-driven approaches that do little to make the lives of our colleagues in the field any better.

I also believe strongly, based on my experience in UN peacekeeping and special political missions, and the years I spent engaged in UN development efforts, that we must do more to strengthen the post-mission capacity of nationals and national authorities. They are the ones who must contend with the process of state-building in the aftermath of conflict. We must do more to ensure that the citizens and governments of host nations are in a position to take the baton from UN peacekeeping operations and to continue, seamlessly, onto a path of sustainable growth and development.

It is in this context that I anticipate the challenges ahead for peacekeeping generally and for DFS specifically. The next few years should see improvement in services to the field but also progress towards greater economies of scale and efficiency gains. The relationship between results, implementation strategy, and resources underpins everything that we do.

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

The proposition that perhaps we can achieve *both* better results with greater cost-efficiency underpins the Global Field Support Strategy, the vision set out by my predecessor Ms. Susanna Malcorra. Allow me to state in no uncertain terms that the GFSS has been - and will continue to be - the defining foundation for the work of the Department of Field Support, and it is with this in mind that I would now like to provide a brief update on its progress.

Over the past year, we have been able to draw on various GFSS innovations to strengthen our support in Syria, Somalia, Libya and elsewhere. The Global Service Centre, which includes the UN Logistics Base in Brindisi and the UN Support Base in Valencia, has played a central role in responding to immediate operational demands. In Syria, for example, operational successes have been attributed to the effective leveraging of UNIFIL, UNDOF and capacities in Brindisi. In Libya, the Global Service Centre supported the start-up of the mission thus allowing the SRSB and a small team to be operational in Tripoli within a few days of the adoption of Security Council Resolution “Two-Zero-Zero-Nine” (2009 (2011)) – this saved the Organization nearly \$1

million. The deployment of fewer personnel into Libya, out of harm's way, was made possible through the provision of expertise and assets from the Global Service Centre.

This year, the UN Support Office for AMISOM, better known as UNSOA, relied on the GFSS Modularization programme to deploy African Union troops in Somalia. AMISOM troops were rapidly deployed to high-risk areas in three large pre-defined modular bases. The current focus of UNSOA is to construct three modularized logistics hubs in Baidoa, Beled Wayne and Kismayo so that AMISOM can expand its reach across south-central Somalia. We anticipate that further modularized battalion- and company-size camps may be required in the next phase of AMISOM's work.

With regard to the Regional Service Centre, my immediate focus is to ensure that the model for Regional Centres, namely the Centre in Entebbe, functions as a truly integrated hub of transactions support. As I have mentioned during discussions with many of you, only after "getting it right" in Entebbe would it be prudent to establish Regional Service Centres in other regions. The immediate priority is therefore to integrate the staff and functions transferred from the missions, so that each team, each staff member, serves a broad cross section of missions, and not only the one mission that they come from. Delegation of authority to handle human resources on behalf of missions was transferred to Entebbe between April and August of this year. On financial matters, the average response time to client queries has been reduced from 5 to 3 days. The time required to process vendor invoices has been reduced from two weeks, to less than one. So we are getting there.

Ultimately, GFSS will bring about a clearer division of labour between UN Headquarters, the Global Service Centre, the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, and the missions. Today, operational, transactional, and strategic functions too often take place alongside one another at all four levels of activity; this duplication of roles must be replaced with a clear delineation of responsibilities and functions. HQ must focus on dialogue with, and guidance from, Member States, and on strategic support to the field. The Global Service Centre must evolve into the role of logistics and IT hub for UN peace operations worldwide – the global supply chain manager. The Regional Service Centre should carry out the lion's share of administrative transactions for its client missions. And, in the field, missions and their staff and personnel must receive the quality support they require.

This division of labour is better known as the GFSS End State. In the next few weeks, Member States will receive a report on progress in implementing the GFSS and realizing the End State vision. Looking ahead, for my part, I will continue my efforts to meet with the membership regularly, to benefit from your views and to update you on progress achieved.

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to update you now on several areas of our work that demonstrate the opportunities ahead, as well as the continuing need for better service to the field. With respect to aviation, a contract has recently been signed for a long-term service agreement to conduct troop movements worldwide using a wide-body long-range aircraft. This arrangement is expected to save the Organization about US\$8 million in the first year. The first flight took place on 18 September 2012. The aircraft is meant to support UN military and police personnel movements and will reduce the number of short-term contracts. In short, fewer stopovers and reduced travel time for troops who want to get home. Significantly lower cost due to economies of scale and better planning.

Food rations is another area in which we have introduced innovations. New quality standards and specifications are now being applied. The recently awarded ration contract for UNSOA is 30% lower in cost with better quality of food and services than with previous contracts. This combination of lower cost *and* better results is the kind of win-win situation that we must aspire to across the board.

Several areas of our work continue to require attention. Despite the progress that I have just described, there are still significant gaps in the provision of medical, engineering and transportation support, especially with regard to helicopters. As Hervé mentioned, we continue to address persistent shortfalls through inter-mission cooperation to maximize the use of existing aviation assets and through intensified outreach to Member States for the provision of critical capabilities.

Another area is the need for greater workforce diversity. We continue our efforts to support an increase in the number of women serving in the field as Head and Deputy Head of Mission. There has been a positive trend over the past five years: from only 2 per cent females serving as Heads of Mission or Deputy Heads of Mission in 2007 to 12 per cent in 2009 and 17 per cent in 2011. By September of this year, unfortunately, the proportion of women serving as senior mission leaders fell to 13 per cent.

With regard to field personnel, I have initiated a review of the field service category with a view to analysing the current use of field service, professional and national staff in mission support functions. The review will also assess the potential of nationalising field service functions to bolster national ownership of peacekeeping efforts. As I mentioned earlier, it is my view that too often, peace operations draw down and depart without leaving any tangible legacy of improved national capacity, despite considerable resources invested. In this context, DFS is implementing a key recommendation of the Secretary-General's report on Civilian Capacities in the Aftermath of Conflict. The focus is on tapping into expertise that may otherwise remain unidentified in governments, NGOs and other civilian entities.

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

As Hervé mentioned, the principle of accountability is vital to the effectiveness and credibility of UN peace operations. To this end, we are taking various measures to strengthen accountability at all levels of the UN peacekeeping machinery. This includes requiring that heads of missions employ risk management practices in their decision making and that chief fiduciaries execute Letters of Representation at the end of each financial period. An Integrated Conduct and Discipline Framework (ICDF) has been noted by the General Assembly. The framework sets out a vision of conduct and discipline as a strategic management function. Available data suggests that, this year, we may once again have fewer allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse compared to previous years. Nonetheless, we continue to be very concerned due to allegations regarding the most egregious forms of sexual exploitation and abuse, namely sexual activities with minors and non-consensual sex. I urge Member States to continue to work closely with our two departments, to make every effort to ensure full compliance with the Secretary-General's zero tolerance policy, and to swiftly respond to allegations with prompt action particularly in those instances where misconduct may amount to crimes under national law.

In 2013 – 2014, DFS will pilot the roll-out of two system-wide initiatives aimed to strengthen accountability. The first initiative is IPSAS, which will bring greater transparency in financial planning and resource management. The other is UMOJA, which will streamline a range of transactional workflows. UMOJA will help DFS to better manage the global supply chain and ensure

that missions are properly equipped through transparent and effective inventory management. It will also help us to reduce the time and effort required to carry out human resources-related and financial transactions, a core aim of the GFSS.

Finally, we must improve accountability with respect to ensuring a lighter environmental footprint. This requires closer engagement with host countries and the UN Environment Programme to improve stewardship of environmental resources. The UN Support Base in Valencia has placed a 700-solar panel farm over its parking lot that will save over 300 tons per year of CO2 emissions. The project has already resulted in a 10% savings on the Base's yearly energy bill. In Timor-Leste, we initiated measures to reduce the idling time of our vehicles by 22 percent, which led, in turn, to a 15 percent drop in fuel consumption over 12 months. But this is not nearly enough. We must strive to realize a way of doing business that values environmental sustainability not as an afterthought but as an important determinant during the planning of peace operations - not as a cost-saving measure but to demonstrate that the UN system takes seriously the compelling signs that our world is reaching the limits of sustainable consumption and production.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

In the year ahead, we anticipate several milestones in the evolution of support to peace operations. We must take stock of the results of GFSS achieved thus far and enunciate a clear End State vision that will lead us into the next phase of GFSS implementation. This will also be a time to continue breaking down the barriers to a truly one UN wherein departments and funds and programmes are working together from the very outset of mission planning until the point of handover to UN Country Teams.

The coming year also offers an opportunity to strengthen our relationship with the AU and other regional and sub-regional organizations. Our experience with UNAMID and UNSOA has provided a wealth of useful lessons learned. We will also begin preparations with you, the Member States, on the next COE Working Group in January 2014.

In all of these efforts, our foremost concern must be for the countries we are assisting and the personnel serving in the United Nations. Further to Hervé's remarks, I would like to take this opportunity to remember the 73 UN peacekeepers who have lost their lives this past year. I would also make a special reference to the African Union peacekeepers we support in Somalia, who continue to suffer casualties with tragic frequency.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

It is a privilege to appear here in my new capacity and to support our missions around the world. I thank you again for this invitation to contribute to this vital debate on peacekeeping and I look forward to regular and strong engagement with you as we work together in support of peace and security.

Thank you.