

Statement by
Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations
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Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations
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Madam Chair, Distinguished Members of the Special Committee,

1. I am honoured to have been invited once again before the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and to open this Committee's annual debate on the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

Introduction and operational context

2. UN peacekeeping is a unique global partnership. It brings together the General Assembly, Security Council and Secretariat in a combined effort to maintain peace and security globally. Its bedrock lies in the legitimacy of the Charter and in the wide range of contributing countries that participate and provide precious resources. It brings together military, police and civilian capabilities in an integrated system that is flexible and adaptable. And perhaps most importantly, it relies every day on the bravery, ingenuity and adaptability of tens of thousands of men and women drawn from around the world, representing the cause of peace.

3. For all these reasons, UN peacekeeping has, for decades now, been deployed into highly challenging environments. And it will continue to be tested by political and security challenges on the ground. Today, we face many trials around the world. And thus, even while we acknowledge the many strengths of peacekeeping, we are collectively entrusted with ensuring the continual improvement of the unique global partnership. It is the people we are sent to assist who ask, rightly, that peacekeeping be as effective as it possibly can be. And of course, we ask this of ourselves.

4. We share a common stake despite the different roles that we play. UN peacekeeping is privileged over other international instruments in that we have this deliberative body, the Special Committee, where military, policing and diplomatic expertise is brought to bear and the international community can collectively reflect on and respond to the constantly evolving challenges we confront. I am particularly encouraged to see the strong momentum and keen desire on the part of all member states represented here to build on the successful outcome of last year's session. The report of the Secretary-General to this Committee outlines the progress the Secretariat has made in fulfilling your agenda, and speaks also to areas we might further explore together. I believe that we must make 2011 the year when we collectively begin to demonstrate the operational impact of the Special Committee's efforts on policy development and peacekeeping reform in key missions on the ground.

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

5. The past decade was marked by exponential growth in the number and size of peacekeeping operations, and finally, we are seeing a consolidation of this trend overall, although demands for police continue to grow. Under-Secretary-General Malcorra and I view this overall consolidation as a period in which we should look to strengthen and fine tune our systems, not having to continually seek and deploy new resources into new missions at the same pace. Together with you, we should seek to understand the challenges faced during the surge, draw common lessons, and prepare peacekeeping for the future. I believe this spirit has guided our interactions with the Special Committee.

6. Yet we must bear in mind that while in numerical terms, the rate of growth of UN peacekeeping seems to be slowing, the complexity of UN peacekeeping remains incredibly high. We will continue to navigate a myriad of fast-moving and politically sensitive situations on the ground. Let me briefly review the challenges in some of our more difficult missions that we faced over the past year.

7. In Darfur and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNAMID and MONUSCO have experienced challenges in the implementation of their mandates, particularly in the protection of civilians across vast areas, and in responding to threats from spoilers. Difficulties related to the consent of the host Governments, divergence on strategy by the international community or inadequate capabilities have at times compounded those challenges.

8. The January 2010 earthquake in Haiti highlighted how fast missions can move from relative stability to crisis. This experience underscored once again the critical need for contingency planning, rapidly deployable reserve capacities, flexible and efficient support arrangements and effective mechanisms for cooperation and interoperability with partners. The controversies surrounding the first round of presidential elections in November highlighted again the fragility of political stability in Haiti; the second round, scheduled for 20 March 2011, requires our full attention.

9. The preparations for the presidential election in Côte d'Ivoire presented formidable challenges, most of which UNOCI helped national authorities to overcome. In anticipation of the related security and political challenges, an additional 500 peacekeepers were deployed prior to the 31 October 2010 election. An additional company and two military helicopters were deployed prior to the 28 November 2010 presidential run-off round to further reinforce UNOCI. Following the outcome of the second round, UNOCI took a principled stand, in accordance with the commitments signed by all the parties. The ensuing acute political crisis poses, as we all know, serious risks to the stability of Cote d'Ivoire.

10. In Sudan, UNMIS successfully supported the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and the Sudanese people, in peacefully holding the referendum on the future on Southern Sudan. The outcome of the referendum has set the stage for the establishment of a new independent state, and the United Nations stands ready to assist in

whichever manner it is requested to help ensure this momentous process continues in a peaceful and stable process. The planning for a future mission in South Sudan offers the opportunity to put into practice the reforms and innovations that have been discussed within this Committee as well as the lessons learned from recent peacekeeping experiences.

11. As challenging as these four missions were, they represent but a portion of the operational demands put on UN peacekeeping last year. In Chad, MINURCAT reconfigured its presence in the country before starting its final withdrawal at the end of the year. During this process, it organised the transfer of its activities related to the protection of civilians to the Government and the United Nations Country Team. In Timor Leste and Liberia, our missions are charting the path for their transition out, even as they work intensively with the host governments to ensure the hard-won peace is maintained and peacebuilding proceeds effectively. In Lebanon, UNIFIL continued to play a critical role in providing confidence in their area of operations. In Afghanistan, DPKO and DFS continued to support UNAMA in carrying out its mandate to support electoral processes and peacebuilding efforts, amidst a very challenging security environment. Elsewhere, our traditional missions continued their important role in helping to maintain confidence through their presence, so as to enable the search for more lasting peace to continue. [A more detailed overview of the challenges faced by our missions, as well as their priorities, will be provided to you by ASG Atul Khare, my deputy, during the formal briefings later this week.]

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

12. Let me turn now to the agenda before the Special Committee. Allow me to begin by applauding you for the highly productive session of this Committee last year. Your efforts provided vital support to the work of UN peacekeeping operations. Last year, the Secretary-General put before the Membership a multifaceted agenda to strengthen UN peacekeeping in the face of unprecedented demands, the so-called New Horizon initiative. It focused on four dimensions: policy development, capability development, field support, and planning and oversight. A progress report was shared with Member States in October 2010. The report of the Secretary-General to this Committee (A/65/680) summarized progress on each of these fronts and on all recommendations of the 2010 report of the Special Committee. As I stressed last year, many of these initiatives are interlinked and their implementation, with your active engagement and support, will provide a mutually reinforcing set of efforts on behalf of UN peacekeeping and UN peacekeepers. Our focus for 2011 must be to ensure our work here in New York translates into concrete results in the field.

13. I am pleased to have the opportunity to discuss where we stand in a number of critical areas and to share with you my hopes for what might be achieved for UN peacekeeping as your deliberations proceed. I hope 2011 will set us on a path towards providing our personnel with the necessary political and operational support structures, resources, and guidance to deliver all of their mandated tasks effectively.

Gender and Peacekeeping

14. Let me start with one of the issues to which I attach top priority. Earlier this month, we shared with you the findings from our study of 10 years of implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. We will be working, in the year ahead, on applying the lessons of this analysis. Peacekeeping missions have made important impact in the institutional reforms related to gender equality and empowerment, increased women's electoral participation and representation in the past 10 years. In the next 10 years, we must go deeper and broader in supporting the empowerment of women.

Planning and Oversight

15. Let me touch briefly on political and operational support structures. This Committee has called consistently for strong cooperation and dialogue among TCCs/PCCs, the Security Council and Secretariat. In this regard, Under-Secretary-General Malcorra and I issued a directive to all staff at headquarters and in the field, in October 2009, to institute improved practices regarding systematically engaging troop- and police-contributors in advance of mandate renewals or changes on the ground and other critical points.

16. With regard to Headquarters support to the field, since the restructuring of DPKO, and the creation of the DFS in June 2007, I am pleased to say that the two departments have continued to work together seamlessly. The Integrated Operational Teams (IOTs), managed by the Office of Operations of DPKO, have become the principal mechanism for the delivery of integrated strategic and operational guidance to our missions. Each IOT includes political, military, police and support specialists and draws on expertise from other areas as required. In his recent report on the IOTs, the Secretary-General set out a number of measures we are taking to ensure cohesion in understanding the roles, responsibilities and functions of the IOTs. This integrated approach has ensured that Ms. Malcorra and I receive well-coordinated advice.

17. Furthermore, the regular convening of the Integrated Mission Task Forces by IOT leaders has also provided a forum for the review of mission-specific issues among relevant stakeholders in the United Nations system to ensure harmonized direction and support to multidimensional peacekeeping operations. We also now have a standing body, the Integration Steering Group, which I chair, where senior management across the UN system reviews integration policy and practice. We have also started a comprehensive evaluation of our Command and Control in peacekeeping, with a view to make improvements where necessary.

Global Field Support

18. With regard to global field support, Ms. Malcorra will speak in more detail about our continuing efforts to strengthen this vital area. It is gratifying that this effort is

undertaken in a manner fully integrated with the broader mandated tasks. In addition, we will aim to further enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping through improvements in screening and recruiting of UN peacekeepers.

Capability Development

19. Let me now turn to the vital issue of capabilities. DPKO and DFS have elaborated a comprehensive capability development strategy and we are deeply appreciative of the active engagement of member states in this first year. This effort works to ensure effective mandate implementation by filling critical gaps in both human and material, military and civilian, resources, ensuring that peacekeepers are well prepared and trained against an agreed set of standards for reasonable performance. I will shortly discuss each of these in turn.

20. It remains the case that too many of our missions struggle without critical assets necessary to properly fulfil their mandates – assets that only Member States can provide. This question of matching resources to mandates continues to be a central problem for UN peacekeeping. Military helicopter units, in particular, are an absolute force requirement for operations conducted in vast and remote locations – as many of our missions do. We have consistently faced a gap of such units; we expect the shortfall of military helicopters to expand to 56 out of a requirement of 137 by April 2011; UNMIS, UNAMID and MONUSCO are the most affected. Ms. Malcorra will speak to this in further detail, but we need strengthened incentives and creative options to reach a solution.

21. Since December 2009, the Secretariat has been distributing gap lists covering military, police, rule of law, and other capability gaps in current missions. Their objective is to identify in a systematic manner critical requirements for peacekeeping operations and to support Member States in both their immediate and longer-term planning. We are currently assessing the impact of these gap lists with a view to further refining our approach.

22. We are also working to better link the identified needs with a mapping of globally available capacities and political strategies for securing critical assets. This includes exploring options to bolster information-sharing among peacekeeping partners. We welcome a continued dialogue with Member States on possible mechanisms to strengthen capacity-building coordination and coherence. Some progress has been made but more and better resourced outreach is needed.

23. Identifying the right quantity and quality of peacekeeping capabilities, however, requires a clear set of agreed capability standards. This means defining critical tasks and associated core capabilities, as well as developing training tools and standards in terms of requirements for equipment, organization, and evaluation. Based on the successful experience with the comprehensive review of Formed Police Units, we have begun this effort through a pilot initiative for military components, focused initially on operational tasks and capability requirements in three areas: infantry battalions, staff

officers, and military medical support. The pilot will serve to identify lessons and best practices in terms of methodology and scope of capability standards development. With your engagement and sustained support, we hope to have results, including lessons learned and preliminary tools in these three initial areas by the end of 2011 in order to feed into successful deliberations of this Committee as well as future work on contingent-owned equipment.

24. As mentioned earlier, the development of capabilities also requires well-coordinated training, based on clear standards and on realistic, field-driven requirements and scenarios. Core Pre-deployment Training Materials for military, police and civilian personnel have been updated and are being supplemented with training for specialized functions. In August 2010, DPKO issued Mission-Specific Induction Training Standards. Peacekeeping training institutes at the national and regional levels are vital partners in this capability-driven approach. We are working closely with them to identify and develop practical tools in support of contributing countries.

25. This broad work on capabilities is complex, but it is aimed at ensuring our ability, collectively, to continue to deliver on mandated tasks. Our efforts in this area must be informed by ongoing work to develop further clarity and practical guidance in critical policy areas. With that in mind, let me turn now to the policy development agenda before this Committee.

Policy Development Agenda

Protection of Civilians

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

26. For the past few years, this Committee has engaged in a serious and sustained dialogue on the protection of civilians. We have come a long way in our collective deliberations, as reflected in the ambitious agenda that the Special Committee set out for us in this area in last year's report. We have been hard at work to deliver on those requests, and feel that we have made strong progress.

27. The implementation of protection of civilians mandates continues to be one of the most operationally complex tasks for United Nations peacekeeping. In this regard, 2010 has been an exceptionally challenging year. I must underscore, once again, that peacekeepers do provide protection to millions on a daily basis. This is a fact that far too often goes unnoticed. Nonetheless, we are eminently aware of instances where we could have done better and remain committed to enhancing our performance. Our troops, police and civilians on the ground continue to develop innovative approaches to protection of civilians. For instance, pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1925, MONUSCO has worked to improve early warning systems, including thorough the use of telecommunications technology. We have already seen the results, when recently peacekeepers were able to free seven abducted women thanks to the early warning system.

28. At headquarters, in 2010, we focused on the four principal elements set out in last year's Report of the Special Committee: the development of a Strategic Framework to guide the drafting of comprehensive POC strategies; the development of protection of civilians training modules; an outline of the resource and capability requirements for the implementation of Protection of Civilians mandates; and an examination of resources and concepts of operations to assess their effectiveness for the implementation of this mandated task.

29. During the informal briefings, we presented to you the draft Strategic Framework. It draws on our collective experience in the field and contains a set of practical reminders to assist missions in developing their own comprehensive strategies, covering key aspects of strategy development such as consultation and coordination with all partners, threat analysis, and resource requirements. We seek your endorsement of this key document.

30. With regard to the C34's request that we outline the resource and capability requirements for the implementation of Protection of Civilians mandates, DPKO and DFS have developed a draft POC Resource and Capability Matrix. The matrix captures the various resources and capabilities that missions require to implement specific POC tasks. We are seeking consensus on these resources and capabilities, so as to enhance planning, and ensure that our missions are properly resourced.

31. We are also developing a series of Protection of Civilians training modules for military, police, and civilian personnel. These training materials will be ready for consultation with member states by the end of March 2011.

32. Finally, with respect to the adequacy of resources and concepts of operations for the implementation of protection of civilians mandates, we have reviewed the military and police CONOPS for the seven missions with a mandate to protect civilians 'under imminent threat of physical violence.'

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

UN Police

33. As I mentioned earlier, demand for UN Policing continues to grow. Police mandates have become significantly more complex. Certain specialized police capabilities will continue to be in high demand. We need to recognize the important work undertaken by UN Police to build institutional police capacity in post-conflict environments, and the fact that institutional development is a long-term undertaking. The necessary strengthening of DPKO's Police Division has already yielded benefits with respect to its capacity to plan, select and recruit qualified police experts and well-equipped Formed Police Units, as well as to liaise closely with Member States. The expansion of the Standing Police Capacity will help support field missions at start-up, downsizing, or other critical transitions.

Peacekeeping Peacebuilding Nexus

34. Over the past year, the nexus of peacekeeping and peacebuilding remained a topic of intensive discussion in the General Assembly and the Security Council. A recent example is the debate in the Security Council on security, peace and development with the participation of over 65 Member States. Within the United Nations system, peacekeeping operations often play more prominent role at the early stages of national peace processes that can last decades. Peacekeeping operations typically perform three roles in the broader peacebuilding effort: working with national authorities to help articulate priorities and focus effort, to enable peacebuilding efforts by others, and to implement a limited set of peacebuilding support functions.

35. We recently briefed the Special Committee on preparation of a strategy on the early peacebuilding tasks undertaken by peacekeepers. We look forward to continued engagement as we further refine this strategy. We will also remain fully engaged in discussions on the upcoming International Review of Civilian Capacities and its recommendations on how to expand our collective capacities in a manner that is effective, strategic and complementary. The review will also discuss how to improve interoperability across the UN system. In mine action, DDR, SSR, criminal justice and corrections, and other critical areas, DPKO chairs or co-chairs interagency processes or is a service provider and it is essential we are able to align our guidance and ensure complementarity of our efforts with those of other UN entities.

Enhancing Operational Effectiveness of UN Peacekeeping

36. Enhancing the posture of military components to undertake robust roles remains a core issue for the Departments. The number of missions that require such posture has increased over the last ten years and now includes MONUSCO, UNOCI, UNAMID, UNIFIL and MINUSTAH.

37. The Special Committee last year called for intensified dialogue between Member States and the Secretariat on ways to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions, including by addressing the requirement to deter threats to mandate implementation, the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel, and ongoing peace processes. Since then, intensified dialogue on military aspects, including deterrence, operational readiness and use of force, has been taking place through regional conferences. Although such expert consultations cannot substitute for C34 deliberations, they should help inform them. Additional consultations are being planned to facilitate a broader dialogue on the political dimensions of robust posture.

Conclusion

Madam Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

38. In conclusion, I would like to recall one of the enduring points made by the Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations – the “Brahimi report - in August 2000:

“For peacekeeping to accomplish its mission, as the United Nations has discovered repeatedly over the last decade, no amount of good intentions can substitute for the fundamental ability to project credible force. However, force alone cannot create peace; it can only create a space in which peace can be built.

In other words, the key conditions for the success of future complex operations are political support, rapid deployment with a robust force posture and a sound peace-building strategy.”

39. These words very much still hold true today. I believe we must see the connections across and between mandates and capabilities, between delivering on mandated tasks and delivering improved global field support, between human, material and enabling capacities, between standards, training, and guidance.

40. As I mentioned earlier, our principal objective for 2011 will be to consolidate the work that we started last year on peacekeeping in the areas of policy and capabilities, field support as well as planning and oversight. We look forward to your sustained commitment so that we can continue this important work. Meanwhile, we also seek your clear endorsement of progress achieved thus far, so that we can bring the reforms and innovations to the field.

41. I look around this chamber and I see many of you who have long been engaged in this vital effort to bring the collective expertise and political commitment of Member States to the service of strengthening UN peacekeeping. I look forward to hearing your views and forging, with you, a stronger global partnership for UN peacekeeping.

Thank you.