

**Administrative Committee  
on Coordination**ACC/1994/19  
14 July 1994

ENGLISH ONLY

REPORT OF THE AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING  
ON SECURITY MATTERS

(New York, 16-19 May 1994)

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## INTRODUCTION

1. In view of the serious deterioration in the security situation at many duty stations, the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD), in consultation with a number of organizations of the United Nations system, decided to convene an Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security Matters (hereinafter referred to as the Meeting). The Meeting took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York, from 16 to 19 May 1994.

2. As part of the general review of developments since the last meeting in May 1992, Designated Officials and officials responsible for field offices who had experience with unusual security situations were invited to attend so that other participants could take advantage of their advice with respect to methods for improving the safety and security of staff members and dependents of the United Nations system. In addition, for the first time, in view of the close working relationship between many United Nations organizations and non-governmental or intergovernmental organizations, representatives of those organizations were invited to participate as observers.

3. The agenda of the Meeting is attached in annex I; the list of documents appears in annex II; and the list of participants is contained in annex III.

### I. RECOMMENDATIONS EMANATING FROM THE MEETING

#### A. Issues brought to the attention of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) for action

4. There was no agreement among participants regarding what measures could be taken for local staff in the event of an evacuation of international staff, beyond those presented in the United Nations Field Security Handbook. The Meeting decided that this issue should be brought to the attention of the executive heads of organizations during their meeting at the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) (see para. 33 of the present report).

5. It was brought to the attention of the Meeting that a number of organizations had resorted to the hire and use of armed guards to protect staff members in such duty stations as Somalia and Angola. Many of these individuals were hired under Special Services Agreements (SSAs). The Meeting was advised by the representative of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat that it was against United Nations policy for organizations to use such armed guards. Given the need for organizations to function in conditions of great insecurity where those armed guards were providing an element of security, the Meeting recommended that this issue be brought to the attention of executive heads (see para. 34).

B. Recommendation requiring action by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ)

6. In view of the close relationship between security and compensation, the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) was requested to explore the possibility of developing a common approach to entitlements for staff members serving in high-risk duty stations (see para. 37).

C. Recommendations requiring action by the United Nations Security Coordinator or the organizations concerned

7. UNSECOORD, on the recommendation of the Designated Official and following consultation with the heads of organizations at the local level, should determine when and where a Field Security Officer (FSO) is required (see paras. 24 and 25).

8. As is the case with the malicious acts insurance policy, organizations should delegate to UNSECOORD the authority to proceed with the recruitment and funding of an FSO post. Organizations should undertake to cost-share the expenditure related to the recruitment of the FSO on a pro rata basis, given the number of staff at the specific station (see paras. 24 to 25).

9. The revised United Nations Field Security Handbook, as modified to reflect the structural changes in the security management system, should be retained as the policy document governing the security management of the United Nations system. UNSECOORD should prepare and maintain a separate security operations manual which could be amended to reflect current operating instructions and which should be read in conjunction with the United Nations Field Security Handbook (see para. 26).

10. UNSECOORD is requested to explore with the Underwriters the extension of the malicious acts insurance policy to cover all locally recruited staff who are serving on Special Services Agreements (SSAs) and for whom no statistics are currently available. Should Underwriters agree to the inclusion of the locally recruited staff, each organization should provide UNSECOORD with statistics on a quarterly basis regarding the number of staff having SSA status. In addition, Designated Officials should be provided by the local heads of organizations with the same statistics (see paras. 27 and 28).

11. UNSECOORD is requested to discuss with the Underwriters the possibility of extending coverage for locally recruited staff from "service-incurred" coverage only, to 24-hour coverage (see paras. 27 and 28).

12. In view of the deteriorating security situation in many duty stations and the corresponding increase in the workload related to ensuring the safety and security of staff members and recognized dependants of organizations of the United Nations system, UNSECOORD should be strengthened with additional staff resources (see para. 29).

13. The ceiling of \$500,000 which is available to UNSECOORD is inadequate to meet current security requirements. As an interim measure, rather than bill on

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an annual basis, UNSECOORD should bill organizations once expenditures have reached \$250,000. UNSECOORD is requested on an urgent basis to explore with financial authorities the possibilities of raising the ceiling (see para. 29).

14. As a matter of policy, in the event of an abduction or kidnapping of a staff member, no ransom should be paid. Bearing in mind this policy, UNSECOORD is requested to explore options that would allow for the negotiated release of such a staff member (see para. 30).

15. UNSECOORD is requested to compile an inventory of all existing agreements between organizations of the United Nations system and the intergovernmental or non-governmental community with a view to developing a standard "letter of association regarding security matters" to be cleared by the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. This letter of association which would be signed by the headquarters of the intergovernmental organization or the non-governmental organization and the United Nations would outline the mutual obligations, responsibilities and terms under which the intergovernmental organization/non-governmental organization could be included under the United Nations security umbrella. Once the agreements had been finalized, the headquarters of each organization would be responsible for ensuring that staff in the field were fully informed of these arrangements (see paras. 31 and 32).

16. Recognizing the difficulties that have existed in terms of security coordination at those duty stations where there is both a peace-keeping mission and staff of United Nations organizations, UNSECOORD is requested, on an urgent basis, to discuss the issue with the Department of Peace-keeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat with a view to developing better coordination and understanding (see para. 35).

17. After an extended period of evacuation when the prevailing security conditions in a country do not allow for the continuous regular presence of staff and where such a situation is likely to continue for some time, it is recommended that UNSECOORD advise organizations (within a period of three months but not exceeding six months) whether to cease payment of evacuation and related allowances, and either separate or reassign staff concerned to a temporary duty station, that is to say, a neighbouring country and/or safe haven (see para. 36).

18. At those duty stations where staff have been on extended evacuation status, organizations should consider the reassignment of such staff within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed six months (see para. 38).

19. A standardized format for an identification card should be prepared and sent to all duty stations. This card would be issued to all staff at the duty station and administered locally with the agreement of the local authorities concerned. The United Nations Field Security Handbook should be amended to include a paragraph instructing the Security Management Team (SMT) at each duty station to ensure that appropriate identification is available to all staff members as soon as a Phase One is declared (see para. 39).

20. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNSECOORD are requested to develop the training module related to stress management (see paras. 40-42).

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21. UNSECOORD is requested to develop a strategy for the deployment, in the event of a critical incident, of the necessary resources and specialized teams to manage the critical incident. Funding should be provided by organizations in the manner that obtains in making funds available for security expenditures (see paras. 40-42).

22. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UNSECOORD are requested to develop the training modules related to the issue of security training and to ensure that those modules are made available to all organizations. UNSECOORD is requested to serve as the clearing-house for all security-related training material. UNSECOORD is also requested to explore other options for the development of security-related training (see para. 43).

23. The pre-assignment briefing that agencies provide to their staff should include security training and stress management (see para. 43).

## II. DISCUSSIONS OF THE MEETING

### A. Policy issues regarding inter-agency security coordination

#### 1. Field Security Officers

24. The Meeting observed that in recent years, as security conditions deteriorated at a number of locations, the United Nations system had begun recruiting full-time Field Security Officers (FSOs) to be funded on an inter-agency basis for assignment at high-risk duty stations. Currently there were FSOs in Afghanistan, Algeria, Cambodia, Chad, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Rwanda, Somalia, the Sudan, Turkey and Uganda.

25. The Meeting observed that the fielding of an FSO at duty stations where the Designated Official was the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Coordinator currently involved a lengthy consultation process between UNSECOORD, UNDP, Designated Officials, the headquarters of the organizations and their representatives in the field. The Meeting discussed mechanisms for overcoming the delays that had been experienced in the process of assigning FSOs and that had occurred, inter alia, as a result of the need for the headquarters of an organization to allocate the account code against which an organization's share of the post would be charged. (For the recommendations of the Meeting, see paras. 7 and 8.)

#### 2. Revision of the United Nations Field Security Handbook

26. The Meeting noted that in 1993 an independent security firm had reviewed security arrangements and, inter alia, recommended that in order to avoid duplication and to strengthen the unified chain of command concerning security issues, the UNDP Field Security Section (FSS) should be incorporated into UNSECOORD. UNDP had decided to implement this recommendation effective 1 November 1993. The Meeting reviewed the revised draft of the United Nations Field Security Handbook, reflecting these structural changes. A discussion was

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also held regarding the need to issue operational instructions and guidelines to both agencies and Designated Officials. (For the recommendation of the Meeting, see para. 9.)

### 3. Malicious acts insurance policy

27. The Meeting considered the functioning of the malicious acts insurance policy which had been in place since 1 January 1990. Of principal concern to participants was the extension of the policy to cover locally recruited staff who had been hired under Special Services Agreements (SSAs). It was noted that so far coverage for these staff had not been possible, since there were no statistics available regarding the number of such staff that would allow the Underwriters to determine the premium due.

28. The situation of locally recruited staff members in Rwanda who had lost their lives during the events of April and May 1994 was also considered. Under the terms of the current insurance policy, locally recruited staff members were covered only for "service-incurred" events, including driving to and from work. The coverage would therefore not apply to those staff members who had lost their lives in Rwanda. (For the recommendations of the Meeting, see paras. 10 and 11.)

### 4. Financing of inter-organizational security measures

29. The Meeting recalled that inter-organizational expenditures for security matters were incurred by the United Nations and subsequently billed to the agencies on the basis of an agreed cost-sharing formula. The Meeting also noted that the ceiling of \$500,000 available to the Secretary-General under the terms of General Assembly resolution 48/229 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 1994-1995 did not provide sufficient flexibility to the United Nations Security Coordinator in meeting security-related expenditures on an emergency basis. As regards orders of magnitude, the Meeting noted that for 1992 security-related expenditures had amounted to \$180,823. For 1993, this amount had more than doubled, reaching \$472,917. For the first four months of 1994, the estimated expenditures had been in the order of \$710,000. On that basis, taking into account that the availability of funds was vital to ensuring the safety and security of staff, the Meeting recommended that as an interim measure, rather than continue with the present practice of billing on an annual basis, UNSECOORD should bill organizations once expenditures had reached \$250,000. (For the recommendations of the Meeting, see paras. 12 and 13.)

### 5. Security and independence of the international civil service

30. The Meeting discussed a new trend relating to the security and independence of the international civil service: kidnapping/hostage-taking. There was no agreement among the participants regarding whether a core group of staff should be given appropriate specialized training in order to conduct eventual hostage negotiations or whether organizations should have recourse to commercial firms that specialized in hostage negotiation. It was agreed, however, that as a

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matter of policy, in the event of an abduction or kidnapping of a staff member, no ransom should be paid. Bearing in mind this policy, UNSECOORD was requested to explore options that would allow for the negotiated release of any kidnapped and/or abducted staff member. (For the recommendation of the Meeting, see para. 14.)

6. Cooperation between the United Nations system and non-governmental/intergovernmental organizations

31. The Meeting noted that over the past two years, as a result of the dramatic increase in the number of complex emergency situations, organizations had entered into arrangements with non-governmental or intergovernmental implementing partners. Their staff worked side by side with United Nations personnel in the field as part of the Organization's humanitarian assistance activities. As a result there had been renewed calls to ensure that these non-governmental/intergovernmental organizations are covered by the United Nations "security umbrella". In response to a query from UNSECOORD, the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat had indicated that intergovernmental/non-governmental organizations and their staff could not and should not be engaged in United Nations operations, and therefore covered by United Nations security arrangements, without their express consent reflected in an agreement concluded for these purposes by each organization with the United Nations. That agreement should also specify that the United Nations would not incur any financial or legal liabilities through the inclusion of non-governmental organization or intergovernmental organization staff in United Nations security arrangements. The Meeting discussed this issue also with representatives of a number of non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations that were participating in the Meeting as observers.

32. A number of organizations indicated that they already had formal agreements with various non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations regarding a number of issues, including security. In order to avoid a proliferation of such agreements, many of which had not been reviewed by the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the Meeting requested UNSECOORD to compile an inventory of all existing agreements between organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations or non-governmental organizations with a view to developing a standard "letter of association regarding security matters" to be cleared by the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. This letter of association, which would be signed by the headquarters of the intergovernmental organization or the non-governmental organization and the United Nations, would outline the mutual obligations, responsibilities and terms under which the intergovernmental organization or non-governmental organization could be included under the United Nations security umbrella. Once the agreements had been finalized, the headquarters of each organization would be responsible for ensuring that staff in the field were fully informed of these arrangements. (For the recommendation of the Meeting, see para. 15.)



7. Question of local staff in situations of evacuation

33. The Meeting discussed extensively the question of local staff in situations of evacuation. Discussions focused particularly on the situation of local staff in Rwanda and what measures could have been taken to ensure their safety and security. Beyond what was already contained in the United Nations Field Security Handbook (see paras. 69-74), there was no agreement among participants regarding any additional actions that could be taken for local staff in the event of an evacuation of international staff. The Meeting recommended that this issue be brought to the attention of the executive heads of organizations during their meeting at ACC. UNDP would convene a working group that would include UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP) and UNHCR in order to elaborate proposals for the executive heads prior to the ACC meeting. (For the recommendation of the Meeting, see para. 4.)

8. Use of armed guards

34. It was brought to the attention of the Meeting that a number of organizations had resorted to the hire and use of armed guards to protect staff members in such duty stations as Somalia and Angola. Many of these individuals were hired under Special Services Agreements (SSAs). The Meeting was advised by the representative of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat that it was against United Nations policy for organizations to hire such armed guards. He also indicated that the use of SSAs was not in accordance with any administrative instruction regarding this issue. Concern was expressed by a number of participants regarding the need for standardized training and weapons control of those armed guards. Participants agreed that given the need for organizations to function in conditions of great insecurity where those armed guards were providing an element of security, this issue should be brought to the attention of executive heads during their meeting at ACC. (For the recommendation of the Meeting, see para. 5.)

9. Synchronization of individual agency security requirements with the United Nations security system

35. There was a lengthy discussion on the relationship between the security-related aspects of peace-keeping/special operations and those of the civilian organizations of the United Nations system in those duty stations where both types of operations existed side by side. Many participants expressed the view that peace-keeping operations often underestimated the security needs of United Nations civilian staff and, in effect, perceived security from a different perspective. An example of this was reflected in the fact that on one occasion when security of civilian personnel from United Nations organizations was entrusted to a peace-keeping mission, United Nations organizations had been advised that they could not see the security plan because it was "secret". Participants also expressed unease about having one integrated system with peace-keeping forces responsible for decision-making concerning United Nations civilian organizations. Participants were of the view that the existing system of having a separate Designated Official for United Nations civilian organizations should be maintained. In those cases where peace-keeping/special

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missions were launched, a system of two Designated Officials should be established with the appropriate mechanisms to ensure a well-coordinated approach to security matters between the Designated Official for United Nations civilian organizations and the Designated Official for peace-keeping/special missions. (For the recommendation of the Meeting, see para. 16.)

B. Policy issues regarding operational matters and entitlements

1. Entitlements for staff/dependants on extended evacuation

36. Over the past three years as a result of security-related evacuations, some United Nations system staff in a few locations had been operating outside the country of their duty station. In those cases, even though the greater part of the staff member's time had been spent outside the original-country duty station, the emoluments of that duty station had continued to be applied, including hazard pay, thereby creating an uneasy situation *vis-à-vis* other newly assigned United Nations staff who worked at the same duty station but received a much lower remuneration. It was felt that while this was appropriate in a short-term evacuation it was unfeasible in the long term. (For the recommendation of the Meeting, see para. 17.)

37. The close relationship between security and compensation matters and the need to explore the possibility of developing a common approach to entitlements for staff members serving in high-risk duty stations was also considered. (For the recommendation of the Meeting, see para. 6.)

38. For those duty stations where staff had been on extended evacuation status, the Meeting agreed that organizations should consider the possibility of reassigning such staff within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed six months. (For the recommendation of the Meeting, see para. 18.)

2. Question of uniform identification cards for staff

39. Since 1981, the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security Matters had been discussing the question of issuing a uniform identification card to all United Nations staff (both international and national) world wide. After a discussion regarding the feasibility and cost, as well as the utility, of issuing such cards, the Meeting agreed that rather than issue those cards from a centralized location, UNSECOORD should prepare a standardized format for an identification card to be sent to all duty stations. This card would be locally issued and administered with the agreement of the local authorities concerned. (For the recommendation of the Meeting, see para. 19.)

## C. Training issues

### 1. Stress management

40. The Meeting noted that as the security situation prevailing world wide deteriorated, the occupational stress inherent in the activities of the United Nations system was an issue that could no longer be ignored. Staff members of the system were increasingly being asked to confront situations for which they had not developed appropriate coping skills. While the United Nations system was aware of the realities of misery and disaster, little attention had been given to the long-term effects of these situations on staff. Participants discussed the fact that there was little awareness among organizations of the negative impact on alertness, performance and judgement. Also mentioned was the fact that the United Nations system had not yet fully realized the cost of operational problems and long-term medical costs for those situations in which the staff were not provided with basic planning, training and support.

41. Participants discussed two components of stress management. The first related to the coordinated development of a pre-departure training programme to ensure that staff at all levels were equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to deal with cumulative stress. For example, all staff would receive special training to cope with the eventuality that they might become targets of hostility, shellings or car-jackings or that they might witness atrocities and the death of colleagues. As part of this programme, senior-level staff and programme managers would also be trained to recognize situations that required immediate action within their sphere of responsibility. Training would help them to recognize symptoms of stress and burn-out, in themselves as well as in others and would cover criteria for recognizing when a situation required outside expertise. The Meeting noted that UNICEF had already begun developing an approach to this issue. In order to ensure a coordinated inter-agency approach to the matter, the Meeting requested UNICEF and UNSECOORD to coordinate the development of the training module related to the issue of stress management.

42. The second component related to the development of a local/regional response capability to handle critical-incident stress. In view of the close link between security and critical-incident stress, the Meeting requested UNSECOORD to develop a strategy for the deployment, in the event of a critical incident, of the necessary resources and specialized teams to manage the incident. It was recommended that organizations should undertake to provide funding for this component in the manner that obtained in making funds available for security expenditures. (For the recommendation of the Meeting, see paras. 20 and 21.)

### 2. Security training

43. The Meeting discussed developments that had taken place over the past few years that highlighted certain gaps in the existing security management system, particularly the need for security training for all levels of United Nations personnel. Since a number of organizations had already independently developed security-related training packages for their staff, participants agreed that

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what was now required was the development of standardized training modules that would be available to all agencies and would ensure that all those serving in the field had a comparable level of training. The Meeting stressed that the pre-assignment briefing that agencies provided to their staff should include security training and stress management. (For the recommendations of the Meeting, see paras. 22 and 23.)

Annex I

AGENDA

1. Report of the United Nations Security Coordinator and of Designated Officials on security developments since the last Ad Hoc Meeting.
2. Policy issues regarding inter-agency security coordination.
3. Policy issues regarding operational matters and entitlements.
4. Training.

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Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Conference room papers

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Annex III

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chairman: Mr. Benon Sevan

Secretary: Ms. Diana Russler

United Nations entities and programmes

United Nations	Mr. Hocine Medili Ms. Momoyo Ise Ms. Linda Hazou Mr. Roy Stubbs Mr. Nigol Vanian Mr. Richard Manlove Mr. Terence Burke
United Nations Children's Fund	Mr. Daniel O'Dell Mr. Franco Sguera Ms. Sandra Haji-Ahmed Mr. Abou Tall Ms. Manolita O'Campo
United Nations Development Programme	Mr. Eduardo Gutierrez Ms. Kerstin Leitner Mr. Bruce Frank Ms. Khin Khin Morvan Ms. Jocelline Bazile-Finley Mr. Edmund Cain Mr. Gualtiero Fulchieri Mr. David Whaley Mr. Yvon Le Moal Mr. Jean-Francois Faivre Mr. Julio Grieco Mr. Gerhard Jelonek
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Mr. Alejandro Henning Mr. Anthony O'Connell
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Mr. Aidan Walsh
United Nations Population Fund	Ms. Serina Chao
United Nations Environment Programme	Mr. Patrick Fox
World Food Programme	Mr. Andrew Toh Mr. Roger Michiels

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Specialized agencies and International Atomic Energy Agency

International Atomic Energy Agency	Mr. Berhan Andemicael
International Labour Organization	Mr. Lawrence Ezewuzie Mr. Gert Gust
International Civil Aviation Organization	Mr. Edward Antonov
Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations	Mr. Philippe Mengin
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Mr. Somar Wijayadasa
World Health Organization	Mr. Andrew Asamoah
International Monetary Fund	Mr. David Cook
International Telecommunication Union	Ms. Marie-France Fosaneli

Observers

Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat	Mr. Vladimir Golitsyn
Security and Safety Service of the United Nations	Mr. Michael McCann
International Civil Service Commission	Ms. Enid Steward-Goffman Ms. Linda Saputelli
Coordinating Committee for Independent Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations system	Ms. Rosemary Waters
Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations	Mr. Wayne Dixon Mr. Narinder Aggarwala
International Committee of the Red Cross	Mr. Barthol Bierens de Haan Mr. Philippe Dind
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	Ms. Debra Bunt
International Council of Voluntary Agencies	Mr. Burgess Carr
Inter Action	Ms. Lauren Landers
International Organization for Migration	Mr. J. Bunker

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Lutheran World Federation (Steering  
Committee for Humanitarian Response)

Mr. Tilo Becher

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