

**Administrative Committee
on Coordination**ACC/1996/21
17 September 1996

ENGLISH ONLY

REPORT OF THE AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON SECURITY

(Geneva, 8 and 9 May 1996)

INTRODUCTION

1. The Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD), in consultation with the agencies, programmes and funds concerned, convened the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security at the United Nations Office at Geneva on 8 and 9 May 1996.

2. The agenda of the Meeting is attached in annex I, the list of documents in annex II and the list of participants in annex III.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS EMANATING FROM THE MEETING

A. Recommendations requiring action by the Consultative
Committee on Administrative Questions

3. The Meeting recommended to the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) that, as part of the existing arrangements for the reimbursement of residential security measures and on the understanding that the limits already approved would not be exceeded, greater flexibility be given to staff members in the choice of the security improvements available to them to enable them to select electronic security equipment (paras. 32 and 33).

4. The Meeting agreed that recommendations on possible system-wide changes to the malicious acts insurance policy that were being developed by the World Food Programme (WFP) and other interested organizations would be forwarded to CCAQ for its consideration (paras. 22 and 23).

5. The Meeting recommended that CCAQ consider the provision of security measures for women living alone in the field (paras. 38-40).

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

6. The Meeting decided that an informal working group would be convened, under the Chairmanship of UNSECOORD, to review some elements of the existing unified inter-agency security system with a view to further strengthening it and

increasing its flexibility, taking into account the experience gained during the most recent situations (paras. 14-18). The Meeting also recommended that the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Security Meeting be convened every year on a regular basis (para. 51).

7. As to field security officers, the Meeting endorsed four proposals that would streamline their recruitment and assignment (paras. 19-21).

8. The Meeting requested UNSECOORD to further examine the possibility of allowing implementing partners to execute a global arrangement for including staff in the United Nations security umbrella instead of on an individual duty station basis (paras. 24-26).

9. The Meeting recommended that, in situations in which there was no law and order and it was not possible to sign a contract with a duly registered company providing licensed armed guards, alternative methods of providing security be considered, in consultation with UNSECOORD (paras. 29-31).

10. The Meeting recommended that, with regard to locally recruited staff, care needed to be exercised to prevent the special measures designed to assist local staff from promoting the voluntary self-evacuation of large numbers of local staff and their families during a crisis. In addition, instructions issued by one agency, programme or fund to provide assistance to its own staff should not be provided to staff of other organizations, unless that had been authorized by the agency, programme or fund concerned, to avoid problems for the latter (paras. 34-37).

11. The Meeting recommended that agencies, programmes and funds instruct their representatives at the country level to share security-related information with the designated official and to participate fully in the activities of the security management team (paras. 41 and 42).

12. The Meeting recommended that a standardized system-wide security training programme be implemented as soon as possible using the UNSECOORD/Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) training package. The Meeting also recommended that methods of monitoring and evaluating officials responsible for security be developed (paras. 43-47).

13. The Meeting recommended that the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) explore further the area of security-related implications for United Nations staff who were obliged to fly in aircraft whose safety standards might be unacceptable (paras. 48 and 49).

II. DISCUSSIONS OF THE MEETING

A. United Nations field security coordination

14. The Meeting considered a conference room paper submitted by WFP on the need to review the system of field security coordination. The Meeting decided that the matter required an in-depth technical review before recommendations could be made to change or modify the existing system. In particular, it was necessary

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to differentiate between the need to revise the existing guidelines contained in the field security handbook and the need to ensure that the guidelines were implemented appropriately in the field. Accordingly, it was decided to form an informal working group to review some elements of the existing unified inter-agency security system with a view to further strengthening it and increasing its flexibility, taking into account the experience gained in the most recent situations.

15. An informal working group on security was accordingly convened in New York from 5 to 7 June 1996; it was composed of representatives from WFP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNHCR, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), ICAO and the United Nations and was chaired by Ms. Diana Russler, Principal Security Coordination Officer, UNSECOORD.

16. In accordance with a decision by the Meeting, the working group considered an informal working paper prepared jointly by WFP, UNHCR and UNICEF, which outlined, with examples, what those entities perceived as the problems with the existing inter-agency security management system.

17. The working group undertook an in-depth evaluation and discussion of all points raised in the informal working paper and made a number of recommendations to the Meeting.

18. The report of the working group, which is contained in annex IV to the present report, was subsequently circulated to all participants of the Meeting for comments. The Meeting agreed that once the present report had been approved by ACC, the recommendations contained in the working group report would be implemented and would become binding on all agencies, programmes and funds.

B. Field security officers

19. The Meeting discussed the management of the field security officers who are now assigned to 22 duty stations on a cost-shared basis. Although the field security officers system has generally functioned well since its inception, a number of bottlenecks and unforeseen problems have developed that need to be addressed to ensure that the system continues to respond to the security requirements of staff serving in the field.

20. To address that need, six proposals were made to streamline the process of recruiting field security officers as part of a unified inter-agency approach. Four of these proposals were endorsed by the Meeting, as follows:

(a) Account codes would be provided to UNSECOORD by the headquarters of United Nations agencies, programmes and funds no later than 30 days after they were requested;

(b) The curriculum vitae of three candidates would be submitted to the duty station requesting a field security officer; if the selection process was not completed two weeks after their receipt, the candidate would be selected by UNSECOORD. The curriculum vitae of the prospective candidates would also be

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shared with interested headquarters of United Nations agencies, programmes and funds, who were also encouraged to provide UNSECOORD with résumés of qualified candidates;

(c) The decision on whether a vehicle and a secretary were needed by the field security officer would be decentralized to the field; UNSECOORD would provide designated officials with a checklist of the items that could be applicable when the post was established;

(d) Agencies, programmes and funds were invited to instruct their representatives to participate actively in assessing the performance of field security officers.

21. The Meeting agreed that two additional proposals related to cases in which more than one field security officer was required would be considered in the context of the working group recommendations (see para. 17 above), as follows:

(a) To avoid the breakdown of the existing inter-agency mechanisms, organizations should agree not to implement the single-agency approach to the recruitment of field security officers. Instead, agencies should respond to requests by UNSECOORD for the provision of account codes so as to allow the funding of one or more officers at a given duty station. Once recruited, all officers should report only to the designated official;

(b) In the case of those single-agency officers who had already been recruited by the respective agencies, agreement should take place on the implementation of a series of corrective steps by the organizations concerned to overcome the fragmentation of the system at the country level. To begin with, security officers in question should be seconded to the designated official and placed under his/her direct authority. Subsequently, at the expiration of their contracts, new contracts for them should be issued through the inter-agency field security officer recruitment mechanism.

C. Review of malicious acts insurance policy

22. The Meeting considered the functioning of the malicious acts insurance policy, which had been in place since 1 January 1990. The Meeting took note of the fact that some agencies, programmes and funds had put in place insurance coverage to complement the policy by providing coverage to locally recruited staff on a 24-hour basis as well as to locally recruited staff members on special services agreements.

23. The Meeting requested WFP, together with other interested parties, to examine some of the technical issues related to the malicious acts insurance policy and to make recommendations to UNSECOORD in that regard. Any recommendations having system-wide implications would be referred to CCAQ for its consideration.

D. Cooperation between the United Nations system
and non-governmental organizations regarding
security matters

24. During the Meeting held in New York in 1994, UNSECOORD had been requested to compile an inventory of existing arrangements between United Nations agencies, programmes and funds and non-governmental/intergovernmental 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.

25. The letter of association had been prepared and came into effect on 16 January 1996 as a security directive. According to the directive, international staff of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with the status of implementing partner could be included in United Nations security arrangements at a particular duty station, in accordance with the terms of the directive.

26. Some programmes and funds expressed reservations about the implementation of the directive, especially with regard to requiring implementing partners to make a financial contribution to the security system. The Meeting requested UNSECOORD to further examine the possibility of allowing implementing partners to execute a global arrangement to include staff in the United Nations security umbrella instead of on an individual duty station basis.

E. Security and independence of the international civil
service, including hostage crisis management

27. The Meeting discussed the continuing trend relating to the kidnapping/hostage-taking of staff. The 1994 Meeting had requested that UNSECOORD explore options that would allow for the negotiated release of staff members or members of their families who might be held hostage.

28. In cooperation with the Office of Legal Affairs, UNSECOORD had prepared a document that defined the policy of the United Nations on hostage-taking of staff members and their immediate families, and also identified the actions that should be taken by the responsible officials within the Organization. Agencies, programmes and funds were requested to indicate whether they would follow United Nations procedures in that matter.

F. Use of armed guards

29. Discussions had been held at the 1994 Meeting on the use of armed guards by agencies, programmes and funds of the United Nations system. In view of the need for a policy on that matter, UNSECOORD, in consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs, had prepared a security directive that had come into effect on 9 January 1996.

30. Under the terms of the directive, should the host Government (which had the primary responsibility for the security and protection of United Nations staff)

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be unable to provide the requisite security, under rare and exceptional circumstances, the agencies, programmes and funds of the United Nations system might protect their offices, premises and personnel by employing security service companies providing armed guards. The conditions governing the use of such guards were contained in the security directive.

31. During the discussions, due note was taken of concerns expressed by a number of participants about situations that were not covered by the directive, such as situations where there was no law and order and where it was not possible to sign a contract with a duly registered company providing licensed armed guards. It was recommended that in such cases alternative methods of providing security be considered, in consultation with UNSECOORD.

G. Residential security measures

32. Discussions centred around the current package of reimbursement of residential security measures. Under the current system, reimbursement of 80 per cent of the prevailing cost of installing security bars up to a maximum cost of \$1,000 per residence (i.e., maximum reimbursement of \$800) might be approved for the duty station on a system-wide basis by UNSECOORD. There was no provision for the installation of electronic security systems.

33. The Meeting recommended that CCAQ authorize greater flexibility in the choice of security improvements available to a staff member to permit the installation of electronic security systems as part of the present residential security measures, on the understanding that that would not exceed already approved limits.

H. Local staff

34. The Meeting discussed the complex issue of evacuation of local staff and agreed that the current policy and arrangements should remain in force, unless decided otherwise by ACC.

35. The Meeting recognized that the paper prepared by UNDP entitled "Special measures for locally recruited staff in situations of evacuation of international staff" had provided an important contribution to the discussion; however, care needed to be exercised to prevent the measures from promoting the voluntary evacuation of large numbers of local staff instead of facilitating their well-being in their countries of origin during the crisis.

36. Due note was also taken of the decision by CCAQ to recommend the system-wide adoption of similar measures for the local staff of all agencies, programmes and funds (see ACC/PER/1995/19, paras. 95-100).

37. The Meeting also requested that care be taken to ensure that instructions issued by one agency, programme or fund providing assistance to its own staff (such as UNDP's special measures) were not provided to staff of other organizations unless that had been authorized by the agency, programme or fund concerned, to avoid problems for the latter.

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I. Security for women

38. In the light of an increasing number of incidents of sexual assault and rape, the Meeting agreed that security of women had become a concern. To address that issue a paper entitled "Security guidelines for women" had been prepared by UNSECOORD and included in the security operations manual (see para. 50 below).

39. The Meeting took note of UNDP's interest in security measures for women living alone in the field, and requested additional information on financial considerations as well as information regarding how the measures proposed would be implemented.

40. The Meeting recommended that the matter also be considered by CCAQ.

J. Security reporting

41. The Meeting noted that the periodic issuance by UNSECOORD of reports on security incidents, such as the daily security summary, was a very useful management tool in the area of security.

42. In order to ensure that UNSECOORD received reports of all security-related incidents, it was requested that agencies, programmes and funds instruct their representatives at the country level to share any security-related information with the designated official in the context of the security management team; in addition, agencies, programmes and funds were requested to ensure that their representatives at the country level participated fully in the activities of the security management team.

K. Security training

43. The issue of security training was discussed extensively during a working group meeting on 7 May 1996 and again during the Meeting.

44. The Meeting agreed that there was a need to implement a standardized system-wide security training programme as soon as possible. The security training packages developed jointly by UNSECOORD and UNHCR would be the basis for the training, which would provide a minimum level of security awareness for all staff and an in-depth extensive level of training for security managers and professional security staff.

45. The Meeting also agreed that there were a number of options available for training the different target groups. It was strongly recommended that advantage be taken of all forums, such as training programmes provided by the Staff College at Turin and the Disaster Management Training Programme, to expand security training. It was also suggested that the options of using computer-assisted training be explored.

46. There was extensive discussion on the need for resources to be committed to security training. The representative of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs

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of the United Nations Secretariat indicated that seed money was available to fund an inter-agency train the trainer programme. UNSECOORD was requested to develop the desired profile for security trainers, while UNICEF and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) indicated that they were prepared to assist in the area of stress management training.

47. Participants were of the view that methods of monitoring and evaluating officials responsible for security was essential. UNSECOORD was requested to develop those methods in the context of security training.

L. Safety of air travel

48. The Meeting recognized that there were security-related implications for United Nations staff who were obliged to fly in aircraft the safety standards of which might be unacceptable; it requested ICAO to explore the area further and cooperate with UNSECOORD to see how the issue could best be addressed.

49. UNHCR agreed to share with interested agencies, programmes and funds the information on its agreements with ICRC on the question of identifying adequate air transportation services in the areas concerned.

M. Security operations manual

50. Participants were provided with a series of documents that comprised the security operations manual, which had been prepared in response to a request from the 1994 Meeting and was to be read in conjunction with the United Nations field security handbook.

N. Next Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security

51. The Meeting held an extensive discussion on the frequency of its meetings. Participants were of the view that given the security situation prevailing at many duty stations meetings should be held more frequently. The Meeting accordingly recommended that its meetings be held once a year; the dates of each meeting would be determined by UNSECOORD.

Annex I

AGENDA

1. Adoption of agenda and organization of work.
2. Report of the United Nations Security Coordinator on security developments.
3. Issues raised by the World Food Programme related to field security coordination.
4. Policy issues regarding inter-agency security coordination:
 - (a) Financing of inter-organizational security measures;
 - (b) Field security officers;
 - (c) Review of the malicious acts insurance policy;
 - (d) Cooperation between the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations regarding security;
 - (e) Security and independence of the international civil service, including hostage crisis management;
 - (f) Review of residential security measures;
 - (g) Use of armed guards;
 - (h) Local staff;
 - (i) Security for women;
 - (j) Security reporting.
5. Training.
6. Other matters.

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Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

	<u>Conference room papers</u>
Provisional agenda	1
Security operations manual	2
Malicious acts insurance policy	3
Inclusion of international staff of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in United Nations security arrangements	4
Use of armed guards by organizations of the United Nations system	5
United Nations policy with regard to hostage-taking	6
Inter-organizational security training	7
Field security officers: towards an improved management system	8
Security training for field staff	9
Status of the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security	10

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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. Osama Rajkhan Mr. Lance Clark Ms. Nahla Haidar Mr. Roland De Stickere
United Nations Children's Fund	Mr. Marc Powe Mr. Peter McDermott
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Ms. May Saliba
United Nations Development Programme	Mr. Eduardo Gutierrez Mr. Julio Grieco
United Nations Volunteers	Mr. Thomas Markuszewski
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Ms. Mary Murphy Mr. Anthony O'Connell Mr. Jim Vale Mr. Duncan Barclay Ms. Elise More
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Mr. Austin McGill
United Nations Environment Programme	Mr. Patrick Fox
World Food Programme	Mr. Bronek Szynalski Mr. Ramiro Lopez da Silva Ms. Judith Works Mr. William Macmeikan Mr. Pierre Bourgeois
International Trade Centre	Mr. George Papazafiropoulos Ms. Rose Gonzales

Specialized agencies and International Atomic Energy Agency

International Atomic Energy Agency	Mr. Alberto Salas-Barahona
International Labour Organization	Mr. Jacques Boisard

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International Civil Aviation Organization	Mr. William Withee Mr. Joseph Brunswig
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Ms. Nina Brandstrup
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Mr. P. L. Malhotra
World Health Organization	Mr. Andrew Asamoah Mr. Joseph Hazbun
International Monetary Fund	Ms. Inger Prebensen Mr. David Cook
International Telecommunication Union	Ms. Marie-France Fosanelli
World Meteorological Organization	Mr. Eric Renlund
World Bank	Mr. Neil Creeden Mr. Gordon McIntosh
<u>Observers</u>	
Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat	Mr. Vladimir Golitsyn
Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations	Ms. Jeanne Boisclair Mr. Nasr Ishak Ms. Margherita Amodeo
Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions	Ms. Mary Jane Peters
International Labour Organization Training Centre	Ms. Maggie Simon
International Committee of the Red Cross	Mr. Philippe Dind

Annex IV

REPORT OF AN INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON SECURITY
OF THE AD HOC INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON SECURITY

(New York, 5-7 June 1996)

INTRODUCTION

1. During the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security, held in Geneva on 8 and 9 May 1996, it was decided to convene an informal working group to review some elements of the existing unified inter-agency security system with a view to further strengthening it and increasing its flexibility, taking into account the experience gained in the most recent situations. It was also decided that the recommendations of the working group would be sent to all organizations for comment and that final recommendations would be sent to ACC for approval.
2. The working group met in New York from 5 to 7 June 1996 under the chairmanship of UNSECOORD. A list of participants is contained in appendix I.
3. Following review by participants at the Meeting, the recommendations set out below are forwarded to ACC for approval.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP

A. Security coordination at headquarters and in the field

4. The working group recommended that:
 - (a) Greater dialogue and consultation take place between agencies, programmes and funds on the one hand and UNSECOORD on the other to enhance the effectiveness of the current system. The working group endorsed the proposal made at the 1996 Meeting that the Meeting be convened on an annual basis (see para. 8);
 - (b) Between sessions of the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security, an informal working group be convened on a regular basis to:
 - (i) Serve as a forum with UNSECOORD for discussing policy matters;
 - (ii) Assist UNSECOORD, as required, in communicating persuasively its requests to the agencies, programmes and funds for their support, including requests for enhanced financial support for security;
 - (iii) Assist UNSECOORD in preparing and coordinating issues to be discussed by the Meeting;
 - (c) Should there be a requirement for an inter-agency discussion on a specific issue, UNSECOORD, at the request of the organizations concerned,

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convene an informal technical working group or organize a teleconference to address the particular issue (see paras. 9 and 10);

(d) ACC have a standing item on its agenda regarding staff security. However, no issue should be referred to ACC unless it had first been discussed by the Meeting (see para. 11);

(e) Senior staff of peacekeeping missions be briefed and sensitized to the security needs of humanitarian and developmental organizations, and UNSECOORD explore the possibility of establishing guidelines on how to operate in areas in which both humanitarian and development organizations and a peacekeeping mission were present (see paras. 12 and 13).

B. Security management and security preparedness

1. Personnel issues

5. The working group recommended that:

(a) UNSECOORD put forward a training proposal to agencies, programmes and funds; the working group endorsed the options contained in conference room paper 7, entitled "Inter-organizational security training", which had been discussed at the Meeting, as a basis for the proposal (see paras. 14 and 15);

(b) Organizations make the necessary financial commitment to fund such training (see paras. 14 and 15);

(c) The availability of a French-speaking stress management counsellor be ensured, inter alia, by funding on a cost-shared basis the position of a French-speaking stress management counsellor in Brazzaville (see para. 16);

(d) Each organization establish a specific rotation system for staff and ensure that staff members were properly trained to confront the various security situations (see para. 17);

(e) In the context of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ), human resources managers be sensitized to the issues related to adequate pre-departure briefing, security training and stress management (see para. 17);

(f) UNSECOORD prepare guidelines for distribution to designated officials on what actions were expected of them in the event of a hostage incident, and that the matter be included in the security training programme (see para. 18).

2. Security management issues

6. The working group recommended that:

(a) Security management teams be required to address systematically the issue of locally recruited staff. The working group reiterated the existing

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provisions of the field security handbook on the relocation/evacuation of locally recruited staff (see para. 19);

(b) UNSECOORD develop a list of best practices within the system concerning locally recruited staff and the matter be kept under review (see para. 20);

(c) Since existing policies on the use of armed guards did not adequately reflect the special needs of humanitarian organizations in countries in which competent security services did not exist, and since it was a very complex issue for which there was no apparent solution based on the existing rules and regulations of the United Nations, that issue should be raised as a serious concern to ACC with a description of the problem, existing practices and the implications thereof for United Nations programmes (see paras. 21 and 22);

(d) UNSECOORD maintain a list of duty stations most at risk, based, inter alia, on information provided by both the designated officials and the headquarters of agencies, programmes and funds with a view to ensuring that all necessary steps had been taken in regard to security preparedness. The working group requested UNICEF to prepare both a proposed method for determining which duty stations were most at risk and a proposed checklist to be used by UNSECOORD and agencies, programmes and funds in monitoring compliance with security instructions (see para. 23);

(e) UNSECOORD be included as part of any inter-agency contingency planning exercise at duty stations deemed to be at risk (see para. 23);

(f) There be strict compliance with and implementation of the provisions of paragraph 8 of the field security handbook, which stated that the Secretary-General would consult with the executive heads of other organizations on the designation of one senior official to be titled designated official (see para. 24);

(g) Without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 10 of the field security handbook, at each duty station a deputy designated official or alternate designated official should be selected collectively by the security management team, in consultation with UNSECOORD, with preference to be given to representatives of agencies, programmes and funds that had substantial programme activities in the country (see para. 24);

(h) UNSECOORD'S proposal that, in the short term, all duty stations be provided with instructions on the functioning of the security management teams, and in the long term, training be provided to the teams at each duty station, be endorsed. The working group requested UNICEF to draft proposed guidelines for the teams (see para. 25);

(i) UNSECOORD's proposal that each duty station be required to submit immediately information on the status of the security plan, quarterly incident reports, lists of staff and minutes of the security management team meetings be endorsed, and failure to respond to that request should result in a notification to agency headquarters of that shortcoming (see para. 25);

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(j) In order to ensure that the security plan was fully inclusive and capable of being put into operation, it be drawn up and tested by the security management team as a whole before being approved by UNSECOORD (see para. 25);

(k) Security management teams be provided with the appropriate level of training, preferably using the Staff Training Centre at Turin and special training teams to travel to a number of duty stations each year, as determined by the Meeting (see para. 26);

(l) Steps be taken to make the process for assigning and changing security phases more transparent and consultative (see para. 26);

(m) A change in phase three be made to include an option that would enable the spouse of a staff member to voluntarily remain at the duty station (see para. 26);

(n) In view of the need to rationalize the relationship between humanitarian assistance operational needs and security constraints in phase four situations, security procedures be put in place by the security management teams that would determine conditions for the continued provision of humanitarian and emergency assistance once phase four had been declared (see para. 27);

(o) Upon declaration of phase four, a field security officer be assigned to the duty station, unless one was already present (see para. 27);

(p) The determination of which staff were considered essential be left to the heads of organizations concerned at the field level. In cases where a numerical quota had been established, if the security management team could not reach a consensus locally on the distribution of slots, the matter would be referred to UNSECOORD for decision by the organizations or departments concerned (see para. 28);

(q) UNSECOORD prepare guidelines for comment by organizations on the procedures to be implemented when staff were authorized to return to a duty station that had been in phase five status (see para. 29);

(r) In order to ensure a unified chain of command, in cases where there was a single-agency field security officer, the officer would report concurrently to the designated official and the agency representative (see para. 30);

(s) Irrespective of the source of funding, field security officers should support the security management team and adhere to its decisions. In the case of cost-shared officers, they should be required to spend an appropriate portion of their time with each organization represented at the duty station (see paras. 30 and 31);

(t) Inter-agency guidelines for the use of protective security equipment by United Nations staff be established (see para. 32);

(u) Telecommunications be included on the proposed security readiness checklist to be prepared by UNICEF to ensure that those duty stations that were

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deemed to be at risk were adequately prepared to address the issue (see para. 33);

(v) A telecommunications officer be provided to assist the security management team in those duty stations deemed to be at risk (see para. 33).

C. Provision of adequate resources

7. The working group recommended that:

(a) ACC reiterate its acceptance of the principle that agencies, programmes and funds abide by the provisions and contents of the field security handbook (see para. 34);

(b) Executive heads recognize the need for resources to be committed for security as a cost of doing business, and to seek ways to obtain such resources through governing bodies, donors and other sources to ensure that there were adequate means available to provide security (see paras. 34 and 35);

(c) Consideration be given to the feasibility of establishing a revolving fund for air operations in emergency situations (see para. 36);

(d) Each organization establish a dedicated account code to be used for security expenditures (see para. 36).

II. DISCUSSIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP

8. Participants in the working group were unanimous on the need to strengthen the existing inter-agency security system by improving some of the procedures in place to make them more responsive to the new operational realities and to protect staff members in the field. There was general agreement on the value of close consultation throughout the security management system, especially since that would build confidence among all the actors. During its deliberations, the working group considered an informal working paper that had been prepared jointly by UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP. Although the discussions proceeded on an issue-by-issue basis, as outlined in the working paper, for purposes of the present report the issues have been grouped in three broad areas:

(a) Security coordination at headquarters and in the field;

(b) Security management and security preparedness;

(c) Provision of adequate resources for security.

A. Security coordination at headquarters and in the field

9. The view was expressed by some organizations that the recent proliferation and complexity of security situations had led to a need for greater dialogue and further consultation between United Nations agencies, programmes and funds, on

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the one hand, and UNSECOORD on the other, in order to enhance the effectiveness of the current inter-agency security management system. During the discussions, participants were of the view that more frequent sessions of the Meeting (which had been recommended during the 1996 session), would go a long way to enhancing the process of consultation. However, it was also felt that there was a requirement for an informal working group that could meet on a regular basis to address any policy issues that might arise between sessions of the Meeting. The working group would also be able to assist UNSECOORD, as required, in communicating persuasively its requests to the agencies, programmes and funds for support, including requests for enhanced financial support for security, as well as in the preparation and coordination of issues to be discussed at the Meeting. Any recommendations made by the working group would be within the purview of the field security handbook.

10. Concern was expressed that that mechanism would not be workable when rapid decision-making was required. The working group was of the view that, in such cases, UNSECOORD should, if time permitted, convene an informal technical meeting or organize a teleconference to address the particular issue.

11. The working group was also of the view that security of staff should be a standing issue on the agenda of ACC. It was agreed, however, that no issue should be referred to ACC unless it had first been discussed by the Meeting.

12. The issue of security coordination at those duty stations where there were both humanitarian and development operations and peacekeeping missions was discussed at length by the working group. Concern was expressed that the relative roles of UNSECOORD and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat on field security matters was unclear, with the result that the risk to humanitarian and development operations was sometimes increased by the lack of coordination and cooperation. In addition, participants expressed concern that, in countries where there was a peacekeeping force present, the modalities for consultation and coordination of field security matters had not been formalized. Participants noted that an effort was required from both sides to ensure liaison at the field level. The working group emphasized that senior staff of peacekeeping and special missions were frequently unaware of the special security requirements of humanitarian and development organizations, and expressed the hope that, through a process of briefing and sensitization, ways could be found to improve the coordination between the two groups. The working group also believed that the preparation of guidelines or protocols outlining the respective responsibilities of the two groups would contribute to an improvement in the situation.

13. During the discussions, participants noted that the Secretary-General had proposed that, at its next session, ACC consider ways of enhancing inter-agency coordination in situations where a peacemaking or peacekeeping effort was to proceed in parallel with efforts to move forward from emergency relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and the resumption of economic and social development. Participants were of the view that input should be provided by UNSECOORD to the report that would be provided to ACC on that matter.

B. Security management and preparedness

1. Personnel issues

(a) Training

14. The focus of the working group on the need for security training was sharpened by the recent deaths of three International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) staff members and concern for the safety of United Nations staff in Burundi. Of particular concern was the realization that, at present, the majority of United Nations system staff were unprepared and untrained to handle the security situations that they sometimes faced. The working group noted that although much work had been done over the past few years to develop an inter-agency approach to security training, there was no inter-agency commitment to provide the resources required to implement a security training programme for staff. Both UNHCR and UNSECOORD had, however, developed security training modules to address the needs of a variety of target groups of staff members; what was required was implementation of the training programme. In documents that had been considered by the Meeting (conference room papers 7 and 9), a number of options had been put forward by UNSECOORD and UNHCR to provide security training for different groups of staff, as follows:

(a) Security managers: staff members, irrespective of level, who had a functional responsibility for security, ranging from the designated official and members of the security management team to area coordinators, wardens and operations managers. Six options were available for their training:

- (i) Professional development courses provided by organizations;
- (ii) Specific security training courses to be organized at the Staff College at Turin;
- (iii) Security training to be presented as part of a broader inter-agency training programme, such as the those organized by the Staff College at Turin;
- (iv) Security training to be presented as a component of regional or subregional meetings organized by organizations;
- (v) Special regional security training programmes;
- (vi) Duty station-specific security training;

(b) Security specialists: staff members who had direct and daily responsibility for security, and who functionally required regular updates in security training, such as field security officers and chiefs of security. Such individuals should receive specialist training every 18 to 24 months. The working group was of the view that the cost of such training should be built into the field security officers budget at each duty station;

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(c) Train the trainers: by selecting and training a cadre of security training officers, it would be possible to increase the number of staff who received training;

(d) All other staff: personal security awareness training, as well as pre-assignment refresher training, should be provided to all staff members. Two options were proposed:

(i) Personal security awareness could be conducted at all headquarters locations on a regular basis;

(ii) Personal security training could be provided at the duty station;

(e) Dependants: it was recommended that, as and when resources became available, security awareness training be provided to dependants.

15. Following discussions, the working group endorsed the above options and requested UNSECOORD to put forward a proposal to agencies, programmes and funds, for implementing the training proposal (the recommendations of the working group are contained in paragraph 8 above).

(b) Stress management

16. Recognizing the crucial importance of stress counselling to staff in the field, the working group discussed the requirement to provide staff members with both a stress management training programme and post-incidence support. Participants discussed the difficulties encountered in obtaining on short notice stress management counsellors with the appropriate language qualifications to debrief staff members after critical incidents. UNICEF had hired an English-speaking stress management counsellor who was based in Nairobi. UNICEF indicated that the services of that counsellor would be available to any organization requesting assistance on a reimbursable basis. While welcoming that offer, participants agreed that there was also a requirement to have available a French-speaking stress management counsellor. The working group believed that the issue could be addressed if organizations funded the position of a French-speaking stress management counsellor on a cost-shared basis. Such an individual would be based at the WHO Regional Office in Brazzaville, which would be administratively responsible for the person.

17. The working group discussed concerns that United Nations staff members were not all equally suited to serve under dangerous conditions. Participants emphasized that that issue related strictly to personnel management and fell within the purview of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel Questions) CCAQ (PER). However, much could be done on an agency-by-agency basis to ensure that adequate pre-departure briefing and procedures for security training and stress management were in place. In addition, each organization should ensure that there was a specific rotation system in place so that staff members were not exposed to constant situations of danger.

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(c) Hostage crisis management

18. The working group discussed the issue of hostage crisis management. It was noted that the Secretary-General had already approved a policy on that matter. Participants were concerned, however, about ensuring that designated officials were informed of what was expected of them. The working group believed that the provision of specific guidelines to be drafted by UNSECOORD would be beneficial until such time as adequate training was provided in that area.

2. Security management issues

(a) Locally recruited staff

19. Noting the disparity between the degree of security preparedness planning of internationally recruited versus locally recruited staff, the working group considered at length the security situation of locally recruited staff. As currently formulated, United Nations policy provided that locally recruited staff members might be evacuated outside the country in which the duty station was located only in the most exceptional cases in which their security had been endangered as a direct consequence of their employment with the United Nations (see para. 73 of the field security handbook). Some participants in the working group felt that that position was inconsistent with paragraph 62 of the field security handbook, which stated that

"Situations may arise in which an individual staff member (internationally recruited or locally recruited) or eligible family member is threatened because of his/her nationality, ethnic origin or religion. In such cases, the designated official may request authorization from the United Nations Security Coordinator to temporarily relocate the staff member to an alternate location either within or outside the duty station ... in such cases DSA at the appropriate rate would be payable." (emphasis added)

The views of the working group were divided on whether the phrase highlighted should be interpreted to mean "outside the country" or "outside the duty station but within the country".

20. The working group believed that much progress could be achieved in enhancing security for locally recruited staff if the security management team were required to address systematically the issue of locally recruited staff. The working group also discussed ways and means of assisting locally recruited staff members in situations in which internationally recruited staff had been evacuated. Due note was taken of the special measures instituted by UNDP following events in Rwanda in 1994. Those measures had been applied during the April 1996 crisis in Liberia; unfortunately, they had had the effect of provoking the self-evacuation of most locally recruited staff members and their families to Sierra Leone and other neighbouring countries with the effect that United Nations organizations were hampered in their ability to operate. The working group noted that there was no agreement or any consistency in the practices of different organizations concerning locally recruited staff. Given the disparities in the assistance provided to locally recruited staff, the

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working group was of the view that it would be beneficial to develop an inventory of how the different organizations assisted their locally recruited staff. Concern was expressed by some participants that the most workable practice was the one currently being followed, under which consultations among the various programmes, agencies and funds would result in a common approach to administrative practice on a case-by-case basis. Some participants expressed the view that care needed to be taken not to legislate the system into a situation in which there would be less flexibility for managing different crises.

(b) Use of armed guards

21. The working group discussed the recently promulgated security directive 1996/1, which outlined procedures to be followed by United Nations agencies, programmes and funds when hiring armed guards. It noted that the directive allowed for the use of armed guards provided by the host Government or for contracting security service companies pursuant to local law. Some participants were of the view that the security directive did not make allowances for operations in failed States, in which neither effective government nor local law enforcement existed. In addition, the provisions were insufficient for the special operational needs of some United Nations agencies, programmes and funds. WFP cited the case of Angola, where it had hired large numbers of armed guards as casual labour to provide security for WFP warehouses; without them, the warehouses would be looted. On the other hand, concern was expressed by the Office of Legal Affairs about the liabilities that the organization might incur as a result of the unregulated use of weapons by such individuals, who had no formal weapons training or supervision as specified in security directive 1996/1.

22. The working group was unable to resolve the matter. Participants were of the view that ACC should be made aware of the problem, existing practices and the implications thereof for United Nations programmes.

(c) Security management mechanisms

23. Discussions were held on the need for all duty stations to be adequately prepared to handle any security-related situation. The working group felt that, as a first step, a system should be established, using the reporting by designated officials and headquarters of agencies, programmes and funds, to identify the state of readiness of those duty stations that were deemed to be most at risk. UNICEF undertook to prepare a proposed method for determining which duty stations were most at risk, as well as a proposed checklist that could be used by UNSECOORD and the headquarters of agencies, programmes and funds to monitor compliance with the implementation of measures so as to enhance security preparedness. Discussions also focused on the various inter-agency contingency planning exercises that took place, especially in the context of providing humanitarian or emergency assistance. The working group believed that, in order to ensure that adequate consideration was given to security, it was critical for UNSECOORD to participate and be included in any inter-agency contingency planning exercises that might take place, such as in Burundi.

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(d) Designated officials and security management teams

24. Concern was expressed that designated officials were generally selected because of the agency to which they belonged, without due attention to qualifications; in addition, they were often assigned without systematic and adequate preparation for carrying out their responsibilities. The working group recalled that, under the provisions of paragraph 8 of the field security handbook, the Secretary-General would consult with the executive heads of other organizations on the designation of one senior official to serve as designated official. In the view of the working group, the designated official system could be strengthened by the formal appointment at each duty station of a deputy or acting designated official. It was felt that that appointment should be decided upon by the security management team as a whole, and that preference should be given to the representative of the agency, programme or fund with substantial programme activities in the country. The working group noted that, in accordance with paragraph 10 of the field security handbook, for those duty stations where the designated official was the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the deputy designated official would be the resident coordinator/resident representative of UNDP.

25. Concern was also expressed that UNSECOORD's oversight needed to be strengthened to ensure that designated officials, security management teams and field security officers performed their functions. In the view of the working group there was a need to emphasize and strengthen the collective responsibility of the security management team for security matters. Although the designated official was responsible for ensuring that the process was implemented, the security management teams must be required to work closely and transparently with him/her. It was agreed that UNICEF would draft proposed guidelines for security management teams. The working group also recognized that, in locations where there were large projects carried out by one organization under the aegis of another, there was a need for wider consultation to ensure that the views of organizations not represented on the security management teams were taken into consideration. The working group was of the view that, consistent with staff resources available to it, UNSECOORD should institute a more intense monitoring of the performance and activities of designated officials and security management teams in high-risk areas. UNSECOORD proposed to the working group that the issue could be addressed in the short term by providing all duty stations with instructions regarding the functioning of the security management team, and in the long term by ensuring that all officials responsible for security management were provided with the appropriate training. In addition, each duty station would be given a deadline in which to submit any outstanding security plans, quarterly incident reports, staff lists and minutes of security management team meetings. Failure to respond within the deadline would result in a notification of that failure to the appropriate headquarters of the agencies, programmes and funds. The working group would further consider potential action should a designated official be perceived as not performing his/her assigned responsibilities as outlined in paragraph 21 of the field security handbook. The working group agreed that since channels of communication had been strengthened any organization experiencing a difference of opinion with the designated official was free to bring that to the attention of UNSECOORD for resolution.

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(e) Security phases

26. The working group discussed the process that was used by designated officials to assign and change security phases at the duty station. Concern was expressed by some participants that the existing process was not consultative enough and did not provide the required degree of transparency. In the view of the working group, notwithstanding the fact that the designated official was personally accountable to the Secretary-General through the United Nations Security Coordinator, the security management team must be consulted before a recommendation was sent to UNSECOORD on a change in phase. Participants agreed that the recommendation provided by the designated official to UNSECOORD must indicate the degree of consultation that had taken place, as well as an indication of dissenting views, if any, on the recommendation. In the event of disagreement, further inter-agency consultation would take place. It was understood that UNSECOORD continued to have the final word regarding any decision to implement a change in phase. It was felt that the provisions of the field security handbook regarding the responsibilities of the security management team would need to be expanded. In discussing the different phases, the working group deliberated on the feasibility of allowing spouses to remain at duty stations in a phase three situation. Participants were of the view that such flexibility would minimize the difficulties that had been experienced in the past, when the departure of dependants had been mandated. Participants also discussed at length how to deal with instances in which a staff member did not comply with security instructions. The working group was of the opinion that it was the responsibility of the headquarters of agencies, programmes and funds to ensure appropriate compliance with security-related instructions.

27. The working group discussed at length the rationalization between the provision of humanitarian assistance in phase four duty stations and the security of staff. Participants were of the view that each situation was different and had to be managed accordingly. Therefore, it was incumbent upon the security management team to determine conditions under which humanitarian and emergency assistance would continue to be provided in a duty station once phase four had been declared. The working group emphasized the need for a forward contingency planning procedure and for heads of organizations to produce operational plans in consultation with each other in phases three and four. The working group also believed that, in situations in which security was deteriorating, if one was not already present at the duty station UNSECOORD should provide the services of a full-time field security officer to assist in management of the situation. It was also agreed that headquarters of agencies, programmes and funds should assist in ensuring that their representatives in the field would cooperate in releasing field security officers for temporary assignments.

28. Discussion was held regarding the difficulties that arose whenever it was necessary to determine which staff are to be considered essential. The working group agreed that, normally, essential staff were those individuals necessary to maintain required programme activities. The determination of who was to be considered essential should be left to the head of the agency, programme or fund concerned at the duty station. However, concern was expressed that, in cases where for security/evacuation purposes a numerical ceiling had been imposed for a particular duty station, the security management team should determine the

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number of staff to be allocated to each organization. If the security management team were unable to reach agreement, then the matter would be referred to UNSECOORD for decision among the organizations and departments concerned. The working group firmly believed that the issue should be resolved as part of the crisis management process prior to the declaration of phase four.

29. Participants discussed what procedures should be followed before staff members were authorized to return to a duty station that had been in phase five. The working group requested that UNSECOORD prepare guidelines on the matter for comment by organizations.

(f) Field security officers

30. The working group discussed extensively the issue of field security officers, including the issue of those officers who are hired by individual organizations instead of on a cost-shared inter-agency basis. It was noted that some organizations had security requirements that could not be adequately managed by a single inter-agency field security officer who was fully occupied managing the security plan. At the same time, concern was expressed that it was impossible to maintain a unified chain of command when single-agency officers reported to someone other than the designated official. In addition, some organizations were of the view that use of the single-agency officer resulted in a disproportionate distribution of costs to other organizations. The working group agreed that, in those cases where there was a single-agency officer, that individual would report concurrently to the designated official and the agency representative. In addition, irrespective of the source of funding, the field security officers would support the security management team and adhere to its decisions.

31. As to the cost-shared inter-agency field security officers, participants noted that performance evaluations of these individuals would no longer be undertaken exclusively by UNDP but would be done by all members of the security management team and would then be reviewed by UNSECOORD. Concern was also expressed that such officers not spend all their time in the UNDP office but spend an appropriate amount of time in the offices of each organization at the duty station.

(g) Protective security equipment

32. The working group discussed at length the use of protective equipment by staff of the United Nations system. It was noted that there was great disparity in the equipment used by different organizations. The working group agreed that the required level of protection varied from duty station to duty station based on local conditions. It would therefore be necessary to determine in the field what risks existed and then to determine what degree of protection was required, using standard lists that had already been developed by NATO or other institutions. It was further agreed that the determination as to the risks at a particular duty station and the requisite level of protection would be undertaken by UNHCR, UNICEF or WFP, depending on which body had the most extensive presence at the duty station, and would be communicated to UNSECOORD for dissemination to agencies, programmes and funds, as well as to the designated officials in the countries concerned.

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(h) Telecommunications

33. The issue of standardized effective telecommunications was discussed extensively by the working group. Participants were of the view that telecommunications should be included on the proposed security readiness checklist to be prepared by UNICEF to ensure that duty stations that were deemed to be at risk were adequately prepared to handle any security contingency. Organizations would help identify duty stations at which telecommunications were not adequate so that such problems could be resolved on a priority basis. The working group also supported the efforts being undertaken on an inter-agency basis to implement a mechanism whereby a telecommunications officer would be available to address such issues in duty stations deemed most at risk.

C. Provision of adequate resources

34. Throughout its discussions, the working group noted the need for adequate resources to be made available for the provision of security. Taking into account the fact that the lack of resources constituted a serious obstacle to the provision of adequate security, the working group agreed that the cost of security was the cost of doing business. During the general discussion, UNHCR proposed that UNSECOORD be strengthened with additional staff resources to permit it to face the new challenges and to carry out many of the recommendations made by the working group. UNHCR also proposed that, given the low level of funding available for security measures, each agency, programme and fund request its governing body to create a staff security fund that could be used to co-finance such items as might be proposed by UNSECOORD, including security training and emergency security operations. Both WFP and UNICEF stated that it was critical that security and the requisite funding to implement security measures be put in place as a cost of doing business at the very beginning of an operation.

35. The working group recalled that, as indicated in paragraph 5 of the field security handbook, decisions taken by the United Nations Security Coordinator on behalf of the Secretary-General, by virtue of ACC agreement, were mandatory for all agencies, programmes and funds and for their staff members and eligible family members. In view of that statement, the working group believed that the ACC should reiterate its acceptance of the principle that agencies, programmes and funds would abide by the provisions and contents of the field security handbook. Having committed themselves to that principle, it would be necessary for executive heads to recognize that resources must be committed to security as a cost of doing business and to seek those resources through governing bodies, donors and other sources to ensure that there are adequate means available to ensure security.

36. The working group agreed to look at possibilities of providing UNSECOORD with the required human resources to carry out its mandate. In order to have an idea of the magnitude of the costs involved, the working group requested UNSECOORD to develop a work plan outlining the resources (both financial and personnel) that it required in order to do business; organizations would then endeavour to make such resources available. The working group also believed that each organization should establish a dedicated account code to be used for

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both routine and extraordinary security expenditures. That mechanism would allow for an understanding of how much was spent, and would allow for a quicker reaction to emergency situations. The working group requested UNSECOORD to prepare a report on the financial support provided by each organization to the inter-agency security system. In discussions of how emergency air operations for the purposes of evacuation had been carried out in the past, some members of the working group were of the view that consideration should be given to the feasibility of establishing a revolving fund for that purpose. Other members of the working group were of the view that that eventuality had already been taken into account in the current ACC cost-sharing of security expenditures.

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Appendix

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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United Nations Development Programme

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