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Programme questions: evaluation

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session on the evaluation of peacekeeping operations: termination phase

Note by the Secretary-General

In conformity with paragraph 5 (e) (i) of General Assembly resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the attached report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services entitled “Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session on the evaluation of peacekeeping operations: termination phase”, dated 8 April 1999. The report has been reviewed by the relevant departments and offices. The Secretary-General takes note of the findings of the report.

* E/AC.51/1999/1.

**Triennial review of the implementation of the
recommendations made by the Committee for Programme
and Coordination at its thirty-sixth session on the evaluation of
peacekeeping operations: termination phase**

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its twenty-second session to review the implementation of its recommendations three years after taking decisions on an in-depth evaluation.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has made a concerted effort to follow through on the recommendations of the Committee. Significant progress is reported in connection with learning lessons of experience, the collaboration between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Public Information on the information aspects of peacekeeping missions, and the liquidation of missions. Little progress has been made in the establishment of an indexed archive of standard operating procedures developed in completed missions.

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I. Introduction

1. A progress report on the start-up phase of peacekeeping operations (E/AC.51/1994/3 and Corr.1) was submitted to the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) in 1994. The final report on the start-up phase of peacekeeping operations (E/AC.51/1995/2 and Corr.1) was reviewed by the Committee in 1995. Reviews of progress in implementing prior recommendations on the start-up phase were included in that report and, a year later, in the evaluation report on the termination phase (E/AC.51/1996/3 and Corr.1, recommendations 1–5, paras. 5–12). The triennial review of the in-depth evaluation of the start-up phase (E/AC.51/1998/4) concluded with seven follow-up recommendations, all of which were endorsed by CPC (A/53/16,¹ part I, para. 252) on the understanding that the Lessons Learned Unit did not have the mandate to modify existing policies and procedures that require intergovernmental concurrence. Recommendation 7 proposed that:

A review of the implementation of the above [six] recommendations should be included in the triennial review of the in-depth evaluation of the termination phase of peacekeeping operations, to be submitted to the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-ninth session, in 1999.

Section II below deals with the implementation of these six recommendations on the start-up phase.

2. At its thirty-sixth session, CPC considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the termination phase of peacekeeping operations (E/AC.51/1996/3). The Committee's decisions on recommendations 7–16, on the termination phase, (see A/51/16,² part I, paras. 89–94) were as follows:

The Committee expressed appreciation for the report and agreed with the emphasis in the report on learning from experience.

The Committee endorsed recommendations 12, 14 (a) and (b) and 15 (b).

There was no agreement in the Committee on recommendations 7, 9, 11 and 16. The Committee therefore recommended that they be examined further by the relevant intergovernmental bodies. ...

The Committee endorsed recommendations 14 (c) and 15 (a) with ... modifications. ...

The Committee took note of recommendations 8, 10 and 13, on the understanding that any actions on those recommendations should be based on decisions of the relevant intergovernmental bodies.

The Committee requested that the report, together with the conclusions and the recommendations of the Committee on it, be transmitted to the Informal Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on An Agenda for Peace, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and other intergovernmental bodies addressing the questions raised in the report, for consideration and appropriate action.

3. Since the emphasis of the Committee in its conclusions and recommendations was on learning from experience, the present report examines the implementation of recommendations endorsed by the Committee mainly from this perspective. Those recommendations endorsed by the Committee with modifications are reproduced below as modified; for those endorsed with understandings, these understandings are cited in the appropriate places. Recommendations not endorsed by the Committee are indicated by their short titles only.

4. The report on the in-depth evaluation of the termination phase of peacekeeping operations was part of the documentation of the Committee on Peacekeeping Operations at its 1996 session, and was introduced by the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services.

5. The present triennial review was conducted by the Central Evaluation Unit of the Office of Internal Oversight Services to determine the extent to which the Committee's recommendations had been implemented, and is based on an examination of the relevant documentation and consultations by the Central Evaluation Unit for clarification and verification with staff in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department Management and the Department of Public Information.

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 16.*

² *Ibid., Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 16.*

II. Findings

A. Start-up phase

1. Learning from experience

Recommendation 1. Department of Peacekeeping Operations Resource Centre.

An archive should be created in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Resource Centre containing all mission-specific standard operating procedures (SOPs) and related materials. The archive should be organized by major substantive and support tasks, including monitoring ceasefires and buffer zones, protecting humanitarian convoys, disarming and demobilizing ex-combatants, reforming military establishments, defining and establishing police forces, organizing or monitoring elections, monitoring human rights, promoting electoral and judicial reform, promoting aspects of civil administration and coordinating economic rehabilitation. These holdings should be indexed, and made available to missions on a Department of Peacekeeping Operations Intranet site by 30 September 1998. The regular updating of this archive, and the encouragement of its use by field missions, should be considered a priority of the Department since it is the core of its institutional memory of practical experience in peacekeeping. Further development of the holdings and capacities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Resource Centre should be primarily determined by the needs of field missions and other official users as indicated by their requests for information.

6. In a memorandum to the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) referring to this recommendation dated 12 February 1999, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations stated that the 30 September 1999 deadline could not be met because of a shortage of personnel. All efforts are being made to implement the recommendation. A staff member seconded from the Dag Hammarskjöld Library is assisting in the establishment and indexing of the archive. The Field Administration and Logistics Division maintains a library of mission SOPs (currently from nine missions) in hard copy format for internal reference purposes.

Recommendation 2. Designation of responsibility centres.

The Secretary-General should, by 30 September 1998, designate responsibility centres,

with the functions listed in annex II of the progress report (E/AC.51/1994/3), for the development of a ready capacity to act for all major substantive and support tasks in peacekeeping operations. Such designations do not imply that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has responsibility for any functions beyond those in its mandate. Revised bulletins of the Secretary-General and Secretariat for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and all other affected departments and offices should reflect the functions implied by these designations.

7. Responsibility centres have been designated for all major functions examined in the evaluation reports on the start-up phase except human rights — information, electoral assistance, repatriation, civilian police, military, planning, financing, staffing, logistics, procurement and training. The relevant bulletins of the Secretary-General and Secretariat reflect in broad terms the required functions. A review of the relationship between the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and of the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Management in the provision of administrative support to peacekeeping missions is presented in the Secretary-General's report on the support account (see A/53/854/Add.1, paras. 23–33).

8. Recommendation 5 of the progress report on the start-up phase proposed that the then Centre for Human Rights should be designated the responsibility centre for the human rights component of peacekeeping missions (see E/AC.51/1994/3 and Corr. 1). At its thirty-eighth session, after examining the Triennial review of the start-up phase (E/AC.51/1998/4), the CPC reiterated its conclusion arrived at at its thirty-fifth session that the recommendation needed to be examined further by the relevant intergovernmental bodies (A/53/16, part I, para. 253).

Recommendation 3. Translating the lessons of experience into practice.

For each of the major substantive tasks of peacekeeping missions, the Lessons Learned Unit, together with the responsibility centre associated with the component or task, should: (a) review the relevant mission SOPs and related material, Department of Peacekeeping Operations handbooks, manuals and training materials, end-of-mission assessments and lessons learned documents, and derive from them policies and procedures for these tasks, or modify existing

policies and procedures; (b) present a report on these activities to the 1999 session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

9. Lessons learned reports on the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) and the United Nations Angola Verification Missions (UNAVEM I, II, and III), prepared by the Lessons Learned Unit, were reviewed to determine how the lessons learned from these operations were implemented in the United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES). The review concluded that most of the lessons were applied in UNTAES. A comprehensive report on UNTAES has been published by the Lessons Learned Unit in 1998. A report on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in peacekeeping and peace support operations has been circulated for comments. The report includes principles and mechanisms to enhance cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations and arrangements involved in peacekeeping and peace support, based on experiences gathered from six peacekeeping missions. Another report, dealing with disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in a peacekeeping environment, is scheduled for publication in 1999.

10. During the 1999 session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the Chief of the Lessons Learned Unit presented to the Working Group of the Special Committee an oral report supplemented by an informal written report on translating the lessons of experience into practice. The written report was reviewed by OIOS.

2. Other issues

Recommendation 4. Information component.

A. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Communication and Public Information should engage in an active process of search for appropriate candidates to place on the roster of potential public information personnel for mission assignment; the roster should be systematically updated.

B. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Communication and Public Information should continue to develop standards for the public information component of peacekeeping operations. The standards already agreed on should be put into practice in the

execution of information strategies of current and future missions.

C. The Office of Communication and Public Information should be involved from the outset in planning the information component of new or expanded missions; an information expert should participate in all technical surveys or reconnaissance missions.

D. Start-up kits for the information component should be developed.

E. All Department of Peacekeeping Operations field operations should be linked to each other and to Headquarters, including the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Resource Centre, through a Department of Peacekeeping Operations Intranet site, by 30 September 1998.

11. The Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations consult regularly on anticipated requirements and vacancies to be filled in information components in the field, and on potential candidates for appointment or for inclusion in the roster. The roster currently has 180 names, although the ad hoc and unpredictable nature of field requirements in the information field have made it impractical to initiate general systematic searches. More than many disciplines, field work in public information involves special requirements regarding linguistic ability, technical skills (in such fields as broadcasting) and familiarity with the political, cultural and media environment of mission areas.

12. The standard provisional guidelines for public information components in United Nations peacekeeping and other field missions, circulated to the field in 1997, were published as part of the series of handbooks issued by the Training Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The guidelines have been disseminated to peacekeeping missions. The Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations have encouraged special representatives of the Secretary-General, force commanders and chiefs of mission to review the guidelines with a view to applying them in their own mission areas, as appropriate. The Department of Public Information, has also contributed to lessons learned exercises on UNTAES and on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in peacekeeping and peace support operations.

13. Despite some progress, survey missions to examine public information requirements in peacekeeping operations and inclusion of a public information strategy in the overall

concept of operations for new and evolving missions have not yet become universal practices.

14. During 1998, a Department of Public Information survey of television editing equipment stored at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (UNLB) was conducted in cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with a view to determining the availability of television production equipment for start-up kits and a plan for its maintenance/disposal. The Department of Public Information has previously cooperated with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in establishing lists of equipment and materials needed by public information components in the field during the start-up phase. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has referred to this information in deciding on the retention and inclusion of items in start-up kits being assembled at UNLB.

15. Not all peacekeeping missions are equipped with static Internet addresses (as opposed to dial-up services) necessary for them to access the United Nations Internet.

Recommendation 5. Military component.

The guideline standard operating procedures (SOPs) for peacekeeping operations should be updated by the end of 1998.

16. The guideline standard operating procedures had not been updated as of the end of March 1999. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations intends to complete this task by the end of 1999.

Recommendation 6. Analytical budgeting system for peacekeeping.

A prototype analytical budgeting system for peacekeeping should be tested by the end of 1998.

17. A fourth version of the standard cost manual was in process as of the end of March 1999. The development of an analytical budgeting system for peacekeeping is no longer being actively pursued. In commenting on a draft of this report, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations stated that *the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee have recommended revisions to the format of peacekeeping budgets, which were introduced into the peacekeeping mission budget submissions for fiscal year 1999/00. Budget reports will continue to be improved in accordance with the views expressed by these committees. An updated standard cost manual will be finalized by mid-1999, with the data therein to be utilized for the budgets commencing 1 July 2000. The manual is updated on an annual basis.*

B. Termination phase

1. Peace-building during the mission

18. There was no agreement in CPC on recommendation 6 on peace-building aspects of missions, or recommendation 7 on learning from experience in peace-building aspects of missions.³ However, with respect to recommendation 7, the Committee did not intend by that action to prohibit the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations from assessing experience with any mandated activities of completed peacekeeping missions (A/51/16, part I, para. 91).

19. There are sections on peace-building in the lessons learned reports on UNAMIR (December 1996) and UNTAES (July 1998).

2. A protracted termination phase

Recommendation 8. Learning from experience in the termination aspects of missions.

All end-of-mission and lessons learned assessments should review activities during the termination phase of a mission aimed at establishing proper conditions for the transfer of responsibility to successor arrangements. An attempt should be made to draw lessons concerning the nature of conditions that would make durable success likely and so reduce the danger of losing what had been achieved.

20. There is a section on national reconciliation in the lessons learned report on UNAMIR, and sections on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and other aspects of conditions that would make durable success likely in the lessons learned report on UNTAES.

3. Successor arrangements

21. There was no agreement in CPC on recommendation 9 on project proposals for successor arrangements, or recommendation 11 on inter-agency policy on successor arrangements.

Recommendation 10. Learning from experience in the transfer of responsibility to successor arrangements.

³ As indicated in paragraph 1, recommendations 1–5 of the termination phase report concerned follow-up to the prior reports on the start-up phase.

As a matter of standard procedure, the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in cooperation with the relevant institutions, should, within one year of the termination of a mission, review experience with the transfer of responsibility to successor arrangements.

22. The lessons learned case study on cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States, dated February 1998, and the lessons learned report on UNTAES, dated July 1998, have sections on successor arrangements. The lessons learned Unit has developed a proposal for a study of successor arrangements which is awaiting funding.

4. Planning the termination phase

Recommendation 12. Learning from experience in the planning of termination.

All end-of-mission and lessons learned assessments should include reviews of experience with the planning of the termination phase.

23. Lessons of experience on planning the liquidation of a mission are found in a report entitled "Multidisciplinary peacekeeping: lessons from recent experience", dated December 1996, and the lessons learned report on UNAMIR, dated December 1996 (see also paras. 25–29 below).

Recommendation 13. Responsibility for the termination phase.

Assignments of responsibility to those in charge of components of a peacekeeping mission should include the transfer of responsibility to successor arrangements, contributions to lessons learned and end-of-mission assessments, and the formulation of proposals for adjustments to policies and procedures based on the lessons learned.

24. The standard directive for special representatives includes plans to be made in order to ensure smooth hand-over to traditional United Nations actors, who then assume responsibility, as well as requirements for end-of-assignment reports for all senior staff of the mission. With the end of the mandate of a peacekeeping operation and the departure of the substantive and political staff, the Director of Administration or Chief Administrative Officer becomes the most senior official in the mission and is in charge of all liquidation activities. The Chief Administrative Officer is required to

present an end-of-mission report to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

5. Liquidation of missions

Recommendation 14. Liquidation of missions.

A. End-of-mission and lessons learned assessments and audit and investigation reports should, where their findings point to problems of a general nature, propose suitable modifications to the provisional guidelines on the liquidation of missions.

B. A critical path analysis undertaken for the liquidation process and incorporated in the guidelines should be introduced into the field mission planning process. Software for the application of such an analysis should be made available to each mission and the appropriate training conducted.

C. Arrangements should be made where needed for troop-contributing Governments to provide some military personnel to assist in securing the assets of the mission, with the prior approval of the Security Council. The terms of reference of the civilian police component assigned to a mission should include the investigations of incidents involving United Nations personnel and thefts of United Nations property.

25. OIOS recognizes that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has made major improvements in the way that liquidations are conducted. Peacekeeping missions have been of a much shorter duration over the last few years, which has placed an additional burden on the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to rapidly liquidate these missions with little advance warning. This in turn has placed greater emphasis on the planning process and the implementation of guidelines to aid mission management with the liquidation process.

26. A recent OIOS audit found that insufficient attention had been paid to lessons learned from past liquidations. The Lessons Learned Unit in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations deals with administrative aspects of missions only to the extent they effect the substantive work of the missions. OIOS therefore believes that the Field Administration and Logistics Division should designate a focal point to deal with lessons learned and incorporate these lessons into the liquidation procedures of future missions. In commenting on a draft of the present report, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations stated that *the provisional guidelines for the*

liquidation of field missions have effectively been updated through issuance of specific instructions to all missions; however, preparation of a consolidated revised text of the guidelines document will be undertaken only as resources become available. Nevertheless, the Field Administration and Logistics Division has incorporated many of the lessons it has learned from previous mission liquidations into current liquidation activities.

27. The provisional guidelines for the liquidation of field missions advises liquidating missions to prepare a comprehensive mission liquidation plan inclusive of critical path activities. A standard critical path analysis software has been designated for use in field missions.

28. OIOS has frequently reported on inadequate security arrangements in missions during the liquidation phase. In commenting on a draft of the present report, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations stated that *security is a major concern during the liquidation process, and liquidating missions are required by the Field Administration and Logistics Division to develop a security plan which will protect personnel and property during the liquidation process, with particular focus on material both during transit to and storage at the outloading point.*

29. An OIOS report on the liquidation of peacekeeping missions dealing with these and other issues will be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session.

6. Disposition of assets

Recommendation 15. Policy on disposition of assets during the liquidation of the mission.

A. The existing policy on the disposition of assets during the liquidation of a mission should be reviewed by the end of 1996 in the light of recent experience on the costs and benefits of shipment of equipment through Brindisi.

B. Subsequent to this review, detailed guidelines for working out a cost-benefit analysis of transfer of assets should be drafted, as recommended by the Board of Auditors in its liquidation audit of ONUMOZ.

30. The Field Administration and Logistics Division has established a revised policy for the transfer of liquidating mission's assets. The Secretary-General, in a report to the General Assembly (A/51/905), which was approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/1 B, stated that the guiding principle for deciding what items are to be transferred to UNLB for possible reuse will be whether it is cost-effective to retain individual items, taking into account their condition,

the cost of any necessary repairs or refurbishment and shipping cost to UNLB, as well as their remaining useful life. It is therefore proposed that the items to be shipped to UNLB in the future should have at least two years' useful life remaining, and be either serviceable or repairable at not more than 30 per cent of their depreciated value. Other qualitative factors in the decision-making process include their anticipated usefulness; the cost of purchasing new items; their physical condition; and the quantity of such assets already on hand at UNLB.

31. Recent audits have led OIOS to conclude that the Field Administration and Logistics Division should continue to review its criteria for deciding whether to dispose of major assets or to retain them. In the OIOS view, it is necessary to first establish the market value of all major assets before determining whether to retain assets or to dispose of them. This would result in a more informed decision and avoid repairing of equipment when it would be uneconomical to do so. In commenting on a draft of the present report, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations stated that *regarding the need to establish "market value" of all major assets before deciding to dispose of them, we are of the opinion that in the light of long procurement lead times, it is more important to first determine whether or not the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has a pressing operational requirement for retention of the assets for use in another operation.*

32. A major section of the OIOS report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the liquidation of missions will examine the issue of disposition of assets, including such topics as auction sales and shipments to UNLB and other missions.

7. Some termination issues in problematic missions

33. There was no agreement in CPC on recommendation 16 on peacekeeping and other field activities in countries with continuing civil strife.

III. Conclusions

34. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has made a concerted effort to implement the recommendations in OIOS evaluation reports on peacekeeping that were endorsed by CPC.

35. Lessons of experience are being formulated and applied. A noteworthy feature of the July 1998 lessons learned report on UNTAES is that the first part describes and assesses the implementation in UNTAES of lessons

learned from prior peacekeeping missions, and is explicit about lessons of past experience which were not fully implemented. Most of the issues raised in the in-depth evaluations of the start-up and termination phases are examined in recent lessons learned reports. Cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Public Information on the information aspects of missions, which was problematic at the time the first evaluation report was prepared, now appears to be functioning reasonably well. OIOS also recognizes significant progress in the manner in which missions are liquidated.

36. One area of disappointment needs to be highlighted. The most basic depository of past experience, a comprehensive indexed archive of mission SOPs, has yet to be created, and so is still not available to missions through the Department of Peacekeeping Operations Intranet. The need to create such an archive has been reiterated in several reports since the first evaluation of peacekeeping in 1994: recommendation 2 of the termination phase report established a deadline of 30 September 1996, and two years later, recommendation 1 of the triennial review of the start-up phase established a deadline of 30 September 1998. Both these deadlines were agreed to by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. OIOS hopes that the archive can be established by the end of 1999.

37. OIOS will keep under review:

(a) The establishment of an indexed archive of mission SOPs;

(b) The issuance of updated guideline SOPs.

(Signed) Karl Th. **Paschke**
Under-Secretary-General
for Internal Oversight Services