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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PEACE-KEEPING
OPERATIONS

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING
OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
REPLY RECEIVED FROM A GOVERNMENT	
Thailand	2

THAILAND

[Original: English]

[10 April 1989]

Fundamental characteristics

Thailand strongly believes that United Nations Peace-keeping Operations constitute a temporary measure and are not a substitute for permanent political settlement of a dispute. All parties directly involved should, as a prerequisite, commit themselves unconditionally to co-operating with United Nations peace-keeping and to supporting negotiations as the principal means towards a comprehensive settlement of the conflict. The fundamental task of a peace-keeping operation is to help maintain or restore peace in areas of conflict.

How can the United Nations Peace-keeping Operations be effective?

Thailand concurs with the view expressed by the Secretary-General that the effectiveness of the United Nations Peace-keeping Operations depends on: the consent of the parties directly involved, the consistent support of the Security Council, a clear and practicable mandate and the readiness of Member States to volunteer troops and adequate financial arrangement.

1. The consent of the parties is a necessary prerequisite. Without it any effort would be impaired. Requests by the parties to a conflict must be given equal and impartial consideration.

2. The consistent support of the Security Council, especially of the five permanent members, is indispensable not only in financial terms, but also in political, military and logistical terms.

3. A clear and practical mandate for each peace-keeping operation is also necessary. If a peace-keeping mandate is not clear and specific, a long, controversial, and costly peace-keeping presence and attrition could likely result.

4. The readiness of Member States to volunteer troops and an adequate financial arrangement for such troops are also of vital importance. These presuppose the collective responsibility of Member States to the United Nations cause and the ability to sustain peace-keeping efforts over a period of time which may be required.

Practical problems of the United Nations Peace-keeping Operations and possible solutions

1. Financial difficulties: These problems arise from non-support, non-payment of contributions or arrearage, which may result from domestic economic difficulties, lack of political will, or from political or ideological opposition to a particular operation by Member States.

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The United Nations should therefore find possible alternative sources of finance other than mandatory assessed contributions. These, for example, could be:

- Voluntary contributions;
- Donations from the private sector;
- Special taxation on arms suppliers, as has been proposed by the Secretary-General; and
- A Working Capital Fund especially established for peace-keeping operations.

2. Shortage of troops: Existing records show that out of the 10,000 peace-keeping troops currently on duty world wide, one third are nationals of the four Nordic countries. Other countries, developing countries included, should also be encouraged to contribute troops and to consider underwriting some costs. However, the practice of United Nations reimbursement of certain costs to troop-contributing countries should be maintained.

3. Acceptability: It is very important to remember that the degree of success of the peace-keeping operations is likely to be commensurate with the degree of its acceptability by the conflicting parties. Political or ideological differences between troop-contributing and troop-receiving countries could also place additional impediment on a peace-keeping operation. Therefore it is imperative that the United Nations peace-keeping forces should have the prior approval of the parties to the conflict.

4. Emergency situations: Since there may be situations in which peace-keeping troops may be required at short notice, Thailand shares the view that Member States should be encouraged to consider setting up their own stand-by force for the United Nations to draw from. However, in order to facilitate Member States to do so, the Secretariat should consider helping prospective troop-contributing countries by providing advice and, if necessary, advisors especially to those countries which have no experience in peace-keeping operations. Countries with practical experience in peace-keeping operations could assist in these efforts.

Conflicts arising from relationship between the Peace-keeping Forces and local population:

Social, economic, cultural and religious differences between peace-keepers and local population as well as differences in the modes of operation of the different contingents often pose major obstacles. To minimize these difficulties, standardized training and operating procedures should be given to prospective peace-keeping contingents. Class-room as well as field exercises should be conducted regularly in which standardized operating procedures could be used and tested. Special training should be given to prospective commanding officers. Sharing of experiences and training programmes among troop-contributing countries are also highly important. Peace-keepers should, as a requisite, be sufficiently knowledgeable about the localities where they are to serve. They should have basic linguistic training and understanding of the socio-cultural aspects of life in such localities.