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Special Political and Decolonization Committee
(Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 13th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 31 October 2007, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Mohamad . . . . (Sudan)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 34: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

1.   **The Chairman** invited the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Officer-in-Charge of the Department for Field Support to report on developments in the area of peacekeeping. The Under-Secretary-General and the Officer-in-Charge would be available at the close of the meeting for an informal interactive exchange with the members of the Committee.

2.   **Mr. Guéhenno** (Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations) said that peacekeeping currently faced three broad challenges: delivering full support to the 18 current operations and ensuring that the two new operations in Darfur and Chad/Central African Republic (CAR) were planned, equipped and deployed on time; implementing the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and Department of Field Support (DFS) as approved by the General Assembly; and implementing broader reforms and strengthening of United Nations peacekeeping, as set out in his Department's vision of the "Peace Operations 2010" reform programme.

3.   United Nations peacekeeping operations continued to increase in scope, complexity and size. His Department was currently in the midst of establishing two new, highly unique and complex operations, in Darfur and Chad/CAR, which entailed deployment almost to the centre of Africa, over extended supply lines and in inhospitable terrain. Moreover, without a viable ceasefire and political process, there was a real risk that hostilities could continue, endangering the lives of peacekeepers and the civilian populations they were tasked to protect.

4.   In Darfur, his Department was now fully engaged in establishing the initial operating capabilities of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), so as to establish the mission by 1 January 2008. The new multidimensional presence in Chad/CAR, namely the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), was also to be deployed by the end of 2007, in close concert with the European Union. Both operations called for intensive collaboration with partner organizations, and required considerable time, attention and fine tuning in order to ensure that those partnerships were effective and complementary.

5.   Alongside those new missions, United Nations peacekeeping operations continued to carry out a huge variety of mandated tasks, in volatile and uncertain environments, providing advice and support to political transitions, humanitarian response, the beginnings of economic recovery, strengthening rule-of-law institutions, disarmament and demobilization, security-sector reform, human rights, and linking with a range of other actors providing various forms of assistance. The troops and police provided critical security-related support which underpinned a host of interdependent strategies and complex programmes.

6.   In the Sudan, the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) was providing political and security support for the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. In Afghanistan, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was helping to coordinate international donors and support local political dialogue. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the United Nations Mission (MONUC) was assisting the newly installed Government to extend State authority, including through robust peacekeeping in the eastern DRC. In Kosovo, his Department was closely collaborating with all stakeholders to prepare for a successful transition process following the eventual determination of Kosovo's future status. In Lebanon, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was working to provide stability, in the absence of clear political progress. In Timor-Leste, the United Nations Integrated Mission (UNMIT) had the task of helping to consolidate the new institutions of State and supporting security-sector reform.

7.   In West Africa, great strides had been made by two peace operations. In Liberia, the progress of the United Nations Mission (UNMIL) in implementing its mandate and, in particular, supporting the political process and transition had led to the beginning of a gradual drawdown of the Mission's troop strength. Sierra Leone had recently concluded free and credible elections and a peaceful hand-over of power to a new government, with minimal support provided by the United Nations Integrated Office (UNIOSIL), constituting a milestone both for Sierra Leone and the continuance of UNIOSIL's exit strategy.

8. Those new and ongoing challenges continued to underscore the need for the machinery of peacekeeping to run ever more effectively and efficiently. His Department was proceeding vigorously to strengthen United Nations peacekeeping and implement the "Peace Operations 2010" reform programme launched in 2005. The restructuring package adopted in the summer of 2007 was a major step towards that goal, strengthening capacities and structure to implement the vision of that programme.

9. Such restructuring must result in a real difference on the ground for both peacekeeping personnel and the people they were deployed to serve. While it was being undertaken with all deliberate speed, the restructuring would require significant investments of time, effort and resources. Full restructuring of Headquarters peacekeeping capacities would be effective as of June 2008, one year after the decision of the Member States to restructure, with significant elements progressively put in place.

10. Turning to the specifics of the restructuring, he recalled that seven Integrated Operational Teams, or IOTs, designed to ensure integrated support to United Nations peace operations, had originally been proposed, with six specialist officers (two military, two police and two support officers) in each team. The General Assembly had approved 25 out of the 42 requested specialist officers. Given the subsequent authorization of UNAMID, and in view of the lower number of posts approved, it had been decided that six IOTs, of mixed composition, were the minimum required to effectively implement that key pillar of the restructuring package and ensure that all of the four current Office of Operations' regional divisions had IOT capacity, though not all would enjoy the full capacity of specialist resources. To provide even that minimal coverage, some additional specialist-officer positions were required, and some additional posts had been requested to support Darfur in the UNAMID budget, while the remaining additional positions would be sought in the context of the next Support Account budget proposal. In the meantime, the new specialist and political affairs officer posts, also included in the budget submission, had been advertised on the Galaxy website or circulated to Member States.

11. He considered the Darfur IOT to be of highest priority, given the unprecedented scale, complexity and start-up demands of the Hybrid operation. The Darfur IOT had become operational in late October 2007

through redeployment of existing staff; new staff would follow. The other five IOTs were expected to be functional by January 2008, with recruitment for all specialist posts to be completed by the end of March. Space allocation for those IOTs was, however, a critical issue and his Department continued to coordinate with the Department of Management to identify suitable locations so that IOT staff could be co-located.

12. Following the approval to divide the Africa Division into two Divisions, recruitment for the two new regional Africa Directors was also under way.

13. The Office for Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) had already taken significant steps to provide an integrated and forward-looking approach to United Nations assistance in the area of rule of law and security entities. The establishment of that office reflected the central role that rule-of-law aspects increasingly played in peacekeeping operations, and was aimed at building longer-term sustainability in that vital sector. All relevant DPKO entities had now been brought together into the OROLSI: the Police Division; the Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Section, the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Unit, and the Mine Action Service, as well as a security-sector reform capacity. OROLSI's key task was to provide strategic advice and guidance to Missions and Headquarters in the area of rule-of-law and security institutions. In close collaboration with other members of DPKO and DFS, the pillar's units would also concentrate on the planning of field activities, doctrine development, and screening and deployment of personnel as well as identifying and disseminating lessons learned.

14. DPKO was preparing a comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on Security Sector Reform (SSR), as requested by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and also as sought by the Security Council. That represented a unique opportunity to establish a coherent approach to many current SSR activities, and to help institutionalize them across the United Nations system. While the report would focus on the United Nations role in post-conflict and peacekeeping contexts, it would also address the prevention, peacebuilding and longer-term development aspects of SSR, as well as take stock of lessons learned and highlight the reality that United Nations engagement was only one element of a broader international commitment to support States and other

national actors in undertaking SSR. He emphasized that Member States would continue to provide the bulk of support in that regard. The report would be issued by December 2007, subsequent to which DPKO would provide extensive briefings to the Special Committee and other United Nations bodies.

15. The Military Division had been formally reconstituted as the Office of Military Affairs.

16. A Policy, Evaluation and Training Division had been established, comprising the existing Peacekeeping Best Practices Section (PBPS) and the Integrated Training Service (ITS), and small new teams for evaluation and for partnerships. It provided an integrated capacity to evaluate mission progress towards mandate implementation; coordinate, develop and disseminate policy and doctrine; work with existing and new partners; and provide standardized training. The Division played a critical role in providing support to both DPKO and DFS and thus provided a common platform for policy, guidance materials, training and evaluation at Headquarters and in the field.

17. The establishment of a Public Affairs Unit in his Department's front office had created capacity to assist in telling the peacekeeping story more effectively. The newly created position of DPKO Chief of Staff had also been filled, and the Under-Secretary-General's own office had been restructured to include a Situation Centre, which served as a resource to both DFS and DPKO.

18. The restructuring package was a major step forward in the ongoing "Peace Operations 2010" reform programme, aimed at enhancing the professionalism, management and efficiency of United Nations peacekeeping. That programme was centred on five components essential to successful peace operations: personnel, doctrine, partnerships, resources and organization.

19. The personnel entrusted with carrying out his Department's mandates were its most important resource. It was essential to recruit, prepare and retain high-quality personnel, a task made more difficult by the increasingly dangerous and difficult conditions of deployment.

20. However, he emphasized that efforts to increase the number of women in peacekeeping, in particular at the senior leadership level, were being stepped up and

that results were already evident, including the recent appointments of a female Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) in Liberia, and Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) in the Sudan, Burundi and Liberia. He was particularly pleased at the appointment of a female Senior Police Adviser in Burundi, and drew attention to the composition of the new Standing Police Capacity, nearly 25 per cent of which was female. While there was still far to go in expanding the role and contribution of women in peacekeeping operations, the momentum towards achieving greater balance was nevertheless building. He called on Member States to work closely with his Department in putting forward suitably qualified female candidates ready and willing to serve in peacekeeping operations.

21. He continued to remain concerned about the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel deployed to the field. To date in 2007 there had been 67 fatalities, 8 of which were the result of malicious acts, including the death of 6 UNIFIL peacekeepers by a roadside bomb, and 2 UNMIS peacekeepers killed in Darfur. Partners on the ground had also been targets, such as in the recent attacks on AMIS troops in Darfur and on national deminers working under the United Nations Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan.

22. The United Nations system continued to take steps aimed at mitigating risks. The 2004 Security Management Model (SMM) developed by the Department of Safety and Security (DSS) and DPKO, and endorsed by the Interagency Security Management Network (IASMN), remained the primary system-wide tool for identifying emerging threats and determining areas of vulnerability. The SMM provided for a comprehensive assessment of operational requirements and established associated risk levels, with mitigating measures accordingly identified and implemented under the authority of the Designated Official/Head of Mission. Since its introduction, that integrated SMM process had been used at all locations where United Nations system personnel were present. Risk assessments were systematically conducted prior to the establishment of a mission, and threats and associated risks to United Nations personnel, premises and equipment were reviewed regularly.

23. Further to a request by the Special Committee, his Department had prepared, in close consultation with DSS, a draft policy outlining the particular arrangements of the United Nations Security

Management System (UNSMS) that could be made applicable to military and police officers, such as Military Observers, Police Officers, and Staff Officers deployed in an individual capacity. A final draft was expected by late 2007.

24. Development of doctrine and guidance, another pillar of "Peace Operations 2010", had progressed well over the past year. The "capstone doctrine" would set out the principles and concepts underpinning how contemporary United Nations peacekeeping operations were planned, managed and conducted.

25. He thanked the Member States for their support and for providing their insightful comments, which would allow the document to be finalized in the coming weeks. His Department saw the capstone doctrine as a "living" document that would need to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to reflect the continuing evolution of United Nations peacekeeping. He hoped to build upon that excellent example of collaboration between DFS and DPKO, Member States and the rest of the United Nations system in producing future versions of the doctrine.

26. Finalization of the capstone doctrine was just one step in the development of a common body of doctrine and policy that would govern the activities of United Nations peacekeeping, and in particular, ensure integration of effort between DFS and DPKO. Peacekeepers in the field needed clear doctrine and guidance, to help them do their jobs in line with existing mandates.

27. On occasion, political demands and expediency could lead to the mandating of joint operations, as was the case with both UNAMID and MINURCAT. While joint operations provided an opportunity to share the burden and develop knowledge and best practices, they inherently brought complexity, and at times required compromise. As such, Member States would have to weigh the benefits of joint operations against their potential impact on effectiveness, especially in complex peacekeeping operations.

28. The year 2007 had witnessed significant collaboration with the European Union. An After Action Review had been held on the 2006 EUFOR deployment to DRC, so as to develop modalities for future cooperation. The tempo of UN-EU cooperation was increasing through the planning for the multidimensional presence in Chad/CAR.

29. The United Nations close cooperation with the African Union (AU) also continued to pick up pace with the planning for the Hybrid operation in Darfur. AU military and police officers had been involved in UNAMID and an AU military liaison officer had been deployed to New York. Military staff assistance had also been provided to AU for planning its Mission to Somalia (AMISOM).

30. As part of his Department's ongoing support for the AU peacekeeping capacity-building programme, it had contributed to such initiatives as the AU rapid deployment concept, a training implementation plan in support of the African Standby Force, and phase 2 of the senior mission leadership course.

31. Over the past year, dialogue with the World Bank had been intensified and guidelines related to joint operational initiatives with the World Bank prepared. Such measures were of critical importance, as national authorities repeatedly faced challenges having not only political and security implications but also complex macroeconomic and social dimensions.

32. As part of his Department's efforts to secure the resources required to improve its operations, it had set up the Standing Police Capacity (SPC); it currently had 17 of the 27 total staff on board, with the remainder due to arrive by the end of 2007. It had commenced operations, including through technical-assessment missions and the planning of the MINURCAT mission, where the first deployment of the SPC was expected to take place. At the same time, plans continued for redeploying the SPC to UNLB Headquarters in Brindisi at the end of 2008 or early 2009.

33. Development had also progressed on enhanced rapidly deployable capacities. Based on a comprehensive review of crisis-response requirements for all DPKO missions, it had been determined that five of the missions were most vulnerable, and a strategic-reinforcement needs assessment was conducted for each. Meetings of selected troop-contributing countries (TCCs) had recently been convened in order to seek commitments, in principle, to contribute operational capabilities to meet requirements for mission-specific enhanced rapidly deployable capacities. The Special Committee would be briefed in that regard and on the outcome of the TCC consultations in mid-December 2007.

34. The Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP) was at the core of a comprehensive approach to

mission integration, as it provided for a common, system-wide strategic assessment and the involvement of partners throughout the planning to ensure harmonization between the peacekeeping and broader United Nations system efforts. To date, his Department had drafted guidelines on specific areas of IMPP implementation, developed IMPP training modules for Headquarters and field personnel, and was recruiting a designated IMPP officer.

35. Regrettably, allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers continued to arise. Implementing the zero-tolerance policy required that the Secretariat, the missions and the troop- and police-contributing countries take measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse and that, if they took place, they were responded to decisively. That demanded action on many levels, but he stressed the role that managers and commanders at all levels must play in preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse. He called on Member States to help ensure that contingent commanders understood and took seriously their responsibilities and accountability in that regard.

36. It had been a momentous year for United Nations peacekeeping. His Department had initiated a major reform of the support aspects of peacekeeping, embarked upon the mounting of the largest and most complex peacekeeping operation to date, and continued to support 18 current peacekeeping operations. The continued recourse to United Nations peacekeeping underscored its central role in the United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security. Fulfilling complex operational requirements within the limited resources available required new, flexible, creative and cost-effective approaches, as well as continuously adapted peacekeeping, while always remaining cognizant of lessons learned in the field.

37. Maintaining 140,000 women and men in the field and managing a budget of nearly $7 billion required the continuous support, commitment and engagement of the Member States. He thanked the troop- and police-contributing countries for their indispensable contributions, and welcomed the return of Western troop-contributing countries to United Nations peacekeeping, as a sign of international solidarity. He looked forward to additional deployments from Western contributing countries to missions in Africa. The unprecedented growth of peacekeeping was a clear sign of the trust that the membership placed in it. He

also thanked the Member States for their trust in peacekeeping, and hoped to be able to live up to their expectations.

38. However, he cautioned that, as his Department continued to meet the surge in complex demands and new challenges loomed on the horizon, it was essential to remain aware of the risks. Even as DPKO and DFS restructured and absorbed generous new resources, the relative scale of demands in the field remained prodigious. As always, it would be important to ensure that there was a peace to keep, that mandates were achievable and that they were matched with the necessary resources. Strong political support from the Member States would remain the sine qua non for success. The risks were nowhere more apparent than in Darfur, as his Department mounted the most complex and riskiest peacekeeping operation to date.

39. Any success in the continuing effort to reform and strengthen peacekeeping depended largely upon the continued support of the Member States. To keep them fully informed of progress on implementing the restructuring package and, more broadly, of "Peace Operations 2010", informational briefings would be provided to the Special Committee as developments required. The first briefing on restructuring would take place on 8 November 2007.

40. **Ms. Lute** (Officer-in-Charge of the Department of Field Support (DFS)) said that the core mandate of the Department was to mount and sustain peacekeeping operations by providing responsive expertise and support capabilities in the areas of personnel, budget and finance, communications, information technology and logistics. Its main tasks were to rapidly deploy qualified people to the field, including through the early identification of qualified candidates to lead missions; to provide timely logistical support across the full spectrum of operations on the ground, including supplies, transportation and services such as engineering; to establish and maintain voice and data connections with all field locations; to provide comprehensive information through budgets and performance reports on resource allocation and field activities; to provide inputs for planning and decision-making; and, lastly, to keep Member States and other stakeholders informed about those activities. The keys to fulfilling those tasks were expertise and responsiveness in the deployment of three intersecting sets of capabilities: those supplied by troop- and

police-contributing countries, those provided by the United Nations and those contracted for commercially.

41. The challenges faced by DFS arose, firstly, from the sheer scope of peacekeeping, which encompassed over 103,000 peacekeepers, military police and civilians working in 18 missions across 9 time zones. Those missions used more than 200 aircraft and thousands of vehicles, consumed $1.75 million worth of fuel every day and generated enough power to supply the needs of a small city. Over the previous year, more than 100 separate financial submissions had been made to legislative bodies. Communications included 85,000 phone calls every 24 hours and 3.5 million e-mails each month, supported by 450 satellite earth stations, thousands of satellite telephones, tens of thousands of computers, hundreds of servers and tens of thousands of radios, all of which must be kept up and running every day. Some 200 video sessions were held each month with missions in the field and over 250,000 applications had been received through Galaxy.

42. Two thirds of the international field staff had no peacekeeping experience and the staff-turnover rate each year was one in three. Dozens of audits had been carried out, reflecting the increasing size and complexity of peacekeeping and the greater scrutiny being exercised. In 2007, as in the previous three years, the Board of Auditors had issued an unqualified opinion on the financial state of peacekeeping.

43. Turning to the status of restructuring, which had begun four months earlier, she stated that the focus had been on creating capacity, maintaining continuity and building on synergies in the system. Vacancy announcements had been issued to fill the new posts; standard operating procedures had been changed to enhance field support; and offices had been rearranged to co-locate the integrated operating teams. Work was also being done on information technology, procurement and management to handle current and anticipated support issues.

44. With respect to the two new missions in Darfur and Chad, clear benchmarks had been set out in the mandate for UNAMID. One of them was the establishment of headquarters: key communications, personnel and functions had been deployed in El Fasher and were operational.

45. The new organizational chart for the reconfigured DPKO and DFS had been distributed to Committee

members. DFS had 394 staff members, of whom 20 per cent were from troop- and police-contributing countries and from countries that hosted peacekeeping missions. Thirty-eight per cent of personnel, and 48 per cent of senior managers, were from developing countries. Fifty-three per cent of staff members were women. The goal was to increase the number of women in the professional ranks and to broaden the geographical representation.

46. The Department of Field Support would report to DPKO and maintain close links through the integrated operating teams, which were crucial in managing the daily operations of field missions. The two departments shared important functions, including the executive office, the chief of staff, senior appointments, conduct and discipline, training, the situation centre, and Board of Inquiry and audit functions. DFS received communications directly from the field concerning issues that required technical or longer-term support in the areas of finance and budgeting, personnel, logistics, communications, information technology, field procurement, conduct and discipline, audits and general administration.

47. Unity of command had been solidified by having the Chief Administrative Officers in the field report to Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. Other initiatives were under way to ensure operational support. That included Joint Logistics Operations Centres, which were up and running in some of the more complex missions and had proven to be an effective tool. Tiger teams (on personnel) and Abacus teams (on finance and budgeting) had been deployed in the field to help meet needs. At the urging of the Member States, risk management had been explored in order to anticipate and deal with issues that might arise during missions. A business-design initiative had been undertaken to deal more effectively with staffing, budgeting and logistical support. The aim was, in particular, to improve rapid start-up through fly-away kits, to establish standard operating procedures and to ensure that staff on the ground and at Headquarters understood their roles and responsibilities.

48. It was too early to judge how the new department had improved support services. Senior leadership had become more engaged and problems were being identified and solved more quickly and effectively. Raising the profile of support functions and issues was improving standards and performance, resulting in reduced decision-making times and earlier

identification of gaps, so that operational requirements were better incorporated into planning.

49. Performance targets had been established with respect to personnel, information technology and communications, accommodations and claims reimbursement. Further improvements could be expected as a result of better planning, forecasting and resource management with the use of benchmarking, which would lead to greater responsiveness to the field and better sharing of information.

50. On the issue of senior appointments, the Department of Field Support was working on the early identification of candidates for senior appointments. Secondly, DFS was ensuring a more effective and unified approach to allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation, which were still being raised, although in declining numbers. A victims-assistance policy would be taken up by the Assembly before the end of 2007 and a policy on welfare would be presented in the resumed part of the session. In the area of procurement, she noted that out of annual United Nations procurement of over $2 billion, 84 per cent was for peacekeeping, and 50 per cent of that was carried out locally. A more responsive procurement system was required to deal with the rapidly arising needs of the field. To deal with the chronic personnel vacancy rate, better filters were required to help handle the number of job applications being received through Galaxy.

51. The involvement of Member States in peacekeeping support was crucial. She welcomed their engagement, questions and visits, and would be asking for their help on business design and recruitment. Staff members in the Department recognized that they were answerable to the General Assembly and other stakeholders for their decisions, actions and results. They must maintain high standards on timely recruitment, the equitable geographical distribution of posts at Headquarters, the effective provision of support to troop- and police-contributing countries and missions, transparent tenders, accurate budgets, the efficient use of resources, the proper conduct of troops and staff and the quality of guidance and information. Peacekeeping troops must be well supported, the people of the host country must be respected, and the aims of the United Nations and its Member States must be well served.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.