



**Statement by
Under-Secretary-General for Field Support
Ameerah Haq
to the Fourth Committee
28 October 2013**

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

It is a pleasure for me to be here today together with Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous. Thank you for this opportunity to present to you highlights in the work of the Department of Field Support, and mission support generally, and to suggest ways to move forward, together, from here. Your deliberations provide the Department of Field Support with crucial insights and direction as we seek to deliver the highest standard of support to our field operations; accordingly, I look forward to our continued engagement.

At the outset of my statement, I join Hervé in remembering the 78 peacekeepers who lost their lives in the past year while serving in the field. These tragic incidents bring home the reality of the high stakes involved in our shared endeavor. It is with this backdrop - of sacrifice - that I will speak today to the importance of doing everything we can - all that is within our collective ability - to support our uniformed personnel and our civilian colleagues in the field. We must help them achieve their mandates with peace of mind, with clarity of purpose, and with the confidence that they have what they need to get the job done.

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Since my appointment as Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, I have devoted considerable time to various reforms launched by DFS, DPKO, and the Organization as a whole. It is my firm belief that it is incumbent upon every one of us in this room to push the envelope in improving mission support, to refine the systems that shape the pace and parameters of life at mission level, and to maximize both the productivity and the efficiency of mandate implementation. All of these reform efforts aim to enhance the quality, speed and cost-effectiveness of our support to UN peacekeepers. All derive from a genuine commitment to the shared goals that unite us today. And all point to a conviction that the campaign to solidify peace and bring a better life to those caught up in war is worth taking a risk - even if that risk entails the ultimate sacrifice experienced by our troops.

But this pursuit is not always an easy one. The past year has brought forth an uninterrupted sequence of new challenges and new operational demands. New missions have been set up in complex operating environments. Existing operations have themselves undergone profound, historic change.

Over the past 18 months, DFS has supported six newly authorized missions including three peacekeeping operations in Abyei, Syria and Mali as well as three political missions in Libya, Somalia and the Great Lakes. Most recently, DFS has worked closely with the OPCW in the establishment of the Joint Mission in Syria. To discuss MINUSMA in Mali, UNSOM in Somalia, and the OPCW-UN Joint Mission in Syria, all in the same breath is to underscore the extraordinary complexity and operating versatility of the security challenges being addressed by the UN today.

Of course, partnership is fundamental to all of this. Without those of you in this room convening in a spirit of genuine partnership, UN peacekeeping is deprived of the critical lifeblood that allows it to take on new challenges on the basis of a shared vision. Partnership involves all actors – not only contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat here in New York, but also national authorities.

The past year has highlighted in particular the tremendous value of our partnership with regional organizations. Our collaboration with the African Union in particular continues to reflect a complementarity that allows the international community to make progress in bringing peace to war-torn countries.

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The overall budget of UN peacekeeping for 2013-2014 stands at approximately US\$7.5 billion; per capita costs for peacekeeping are expected to be more than 15 per cent lower in 2013/14 than in 2008/09 when measured in terms of the number of deployed uniformed personnel. Had the Security Council not authorized new missions in this last year, the UN would have achieved an overall reduction of 5 per cent, amounting to US\$320 million, in the peacekeeping budget.

While we prioritize responsible stewardship of our limited resources, the overarching priority must be to ensure safe and secure conditions for peacekeeping personnel. As we deploy to more volatile environments, the costs associated with higher tempo operations and enhanced safety and security measures will likely rise.

I now turn to an update of the Global Field Support Strategy or GFSS, now in its fourth year of implementation. In the upcoming report of the Secretary-General on the GFSS, we will set out the end-state vision for each of the four pillars of the strategy, namely: shared services; supply chain management and modularization; human resources; and finance. Now is the time to ensure that established systems to improve service delivery are sustained for years to come.

The Regional Service Centre in Entebbe has continued to support our operations in East Africa. The RSCE reflects a commitment to shared services including the regional coordination of air assets and support to troop and police deployments and rotations – particularly through the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre (or TMICC). The wide-body aircraft introduced last year has proved to be a more direct, convenient and comfortable mode of transport within, and with, the African region. In

the coming year, we plan to consolidate our success and identify the most appropriate arrangements for expanding the benefits of shared services to all peacekeeping missions.

In the remaining 20 months until the end of the GFSS implementation period, we must ensure that all our planning and deployment procedures for new missions draw explicitly on the tools of the GFSS as well as on other identified best practices.

In addition to the GFSS, we are rolling out the International Public Sector Accounting Standards – better known as IPSAS. We also anticipate benefits from the launch of Umoja, which will take place in four days on 1 November to all peacekeeping missions; this will be a major milestone in our efforts to streamline and improve the quality of support to and within missions.

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A key challenge to enhancing our impact in the field is that of **Securing Enabling Capacities**. With each startup, it is becoming increasingly self-evident that the planning of peacekeeping missions must go hand in glove with the identification and provision of enablers and force multipliers. On too many occasions during the past year, optimistic timetables for the start-up of difficult missions in difficult operating environments have clashed with the stark reality that we simply do not have the necessary enablers in time.

Air assets are especially critical. In Mali, the combination of limited military air assets and a shortage of engineering teams to build and maintain runways have proven to be the proverbial bottleneck despite the best of intentions. These capabilities and assets are also needed to provide timely CASEVAC and MEDEVAC services and support land operations. They are critical to supporting your personnel in the field.

In terms of medical support, I am pleased to report to you that significant revisions have been made to the Medical Support Manual. This manual serves as the comprehensive framework for medical field personnel as well as troop and police contributing countries - it is a critical influence on the welfare of all field personnel.

Death and disability claims continue to be a priority area for DFS in view of the risks our personnel assume upon deploying to dangerous environments. We continuously seek to improve our handling of cases and I believe the revision of medical standards is a proactive measure to minimize harm.

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Earlier this month the Security Council adopted Resolution 2122 with which it took steps to strengthen women's participation in all aspects of conflict prevention and response; the resolution also called upon Member States to support women's leadership development. There are qualified women professionals in all of our countries who are well-suited to serve as Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and in other senior-level posts.

I encourage Member States to proactively seek and nominate qualified women candidates for peacekeeping posts.

Geographic diversity also enriches the work of the United Nations. We continue to work to improve the representation of staff from troop- and police-contributing countries in both Departments, as set out in General Assembly Resolution 67/287.

I also continue to prioritize capacity development for national staff serving in our missions. National staff capacity building is directly linked to the success of mandate implementation. To this end, DFS is exploring ways to more effectively draw and build upon their skills and knowledge. With this in mind, DFS is conducting civilian staffing reviews where in addition to looking into right sizing, we are also looking into right sourcing; in this context, we are exploring opportunities for transferring responsibilities for mission tasks to locally recruited staff during the mission life cycle. We have recently completed staffing reviews in UNAMID, UNIFIL and ONUCI.

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I would like to speak to the critical issue of **Accountability** and the progress we have made to better institutionalize accountability in all areas of work.

In order to ensure a proper framework, accountability must be aligned with responsibility and authority. The UN must lead by example. In the past two years, we have introduced policies that set non-negotiable thresholds for personal conduct for those who work in the UN family and those supported by the UN. The Human Rights Due Diligence Policy and the Policy on Human Rights Screening of United Nations Personnel are distinct yet complementary to one another and serve as the cornerstone of the Organization's capacity to adhere to its foundational principles to respect and promote human rights.

Since the Secretary-General endorsed the Policy on Human Rights Screening in December 2012, significant steps have been taken to align our practices with the Policy. This will complement the primary screening responsibilities of Member States by sharing known information on senior-level candidates' human rights backgrounds. It does however remain a Member State responsibility with regard to the screening of individuals, units and other formations deployed as part of our missions.

DFS remains fully committed to preventing and addressing misconduct by personnel deployed in field operations, bearing in mind the zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. We are also fully engaged in advancing the enhanced programme of action introduced by the Secretary-General in his most recent report on Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. Hervé and I have recently issued joint statements to uniformed and non-uniformed personnel setting out the elements of a programme of action as well as raising awareness toward Organizational and personal accountability.

In this context, cooperation with Member States is indispensable, especially to ensure that those who have committed sexual exploitation, abuse and other offences are sanctioned

accordingly, including through national criminal prosecution. By remaining vigilant in this regard, the UN and Member States demonstrate genuine commitment to protecting and assisting host populations.

Vigilance is also a pre-requisite for better management of the environmental externalities of peacekeeping. For too long, we have not attached enough importance to minimizing our environmental footprint. Today, technologies are such that we can improve our environmental footprint while also reducing cost. For example, 15% of the energy requirement of our mission in south Lebanon is now produced by solar power. We have also introduced a waste water treatment and recycling project in nine missions – this is yielding improvements in environmental health and significantly reducing water exploitation.

Finally, I would like to address ongoing Member State-led processes. In its resolution 67/261, the General Assembly approved the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group (SAG) on reimbursement to troop contributing countries. This resolution has put in place a revised framework for personnel reimbursement. At the core of this framework is a new approach to understanding the actual costs incurred by troop and police contributing countries when they put a vital national resource – their military and police personnel – in the service of UN peacekeeping. Detailed and comprehensive information about what these costs entail is essential to provide the General Assembly with the information it needs – and has lacked for so long – to establish the rate of reimbursement.

The revised survey of personnel costs that we are now implementing is of a representative sample of ten troop and police contributing countries. I would specifically like to extend the gratitude of the UN to these countries for volunteering to participate in this important exercise. It is a complex and challenging undertaking but I am encouraged by the response so far and am optimistic that the process will render more reliable data on actual costs incurred and investments made by contributing countries. We are meeting with the sample countries regularly and it is a priority of my Department to provide the necessary support and assistance for this vital exercise.

In addition, resolution 67/261 approved a number of other changes to the reimbursement regime, including the introduction of two potential premium payments for enabling capacity and for units operating without caveats and who perform well in circumstances of exceptional risk. Detailed proposals for how we will implement these premiums are being developed and will be reported to the General Assembly in the spring of next year.

We are also engaging with Member States on preparations for the upcoming COE Working Group event scheduled for January 2014. To ensure that the deliberations are well-informed of the evolving demands and operational requirements for field missions, member states have prepared, or are preparing, issues papers. DPKO and DFS are also preparing issue papers to support this important endeavour.

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With the launch of the COE Working Group and the continuous implementation of the SAG process, we must recognize that 2014 marks a unique convergence of opportunities to institute long-overdue improvements in the UN's compensatory system; with these various strands of deliberation, fairness, transparency, and efficiency will become more centralized features of Member State contributions to UN peacekeeping.

When our peacekeeping partnership is provided with the necessary resources to deliver in the field, when it is empowered by its Member States to be flexible and responsive, and when it is energized by the political will to respond quickly, UN peacekeeping has proven to be a powerful resource for conflict management and peace consolidation.

I thank you and look forward to our exchange this morning.