

Norwegian statement, GA 5th committee, Cross Cutting Issues, 9 May 2012

Mr Chairman,

Thank you to the representatives of the UN Secretariat, ACABQ and the OIOS for their introductions.

Even as we are seeing a decline in resource requirements for UN Peacekeeping operations this year, it is safe to say that UN peacekeeping remains as dynamic and central as ever. New mandates established over the past year are evidence of this. We should not allow the current financial climate to strain the peacekeeping partnership. Still, we need to look for efficiencies where they can be found. Implementation of the New Horizon Initiative should be accelerated.

As the fifth committee strives to undertake our management and oversight role, we are encouraged by the Secretariat's intention to review the budget development process. We need a budgeting process and reporting formats that more actively facilitate our results based review, and that enables us as a committee to make better informed, more strategic decisions. Judging from the piles of documents before us, we do not necessarily need more information. But we do need better information.

On civilian personnel issues, Norway welcomes the reduction of vacancy rates in field missions, as well as on-going efforts to strengthen the UN's ability to recruit and retain civilian personnel. The civilian personnel roster is a valuable asset that should be fully utilized. We also welcome the recent DPKO/DFS establishment of an action group to improve the gender balance of UN Peacekeeping staff.

On training, Norway shares the view of the ACABQ of the need to better coordinate and prioritize all peacekeeping training initiatives – as well as the need for better statistical information.

Norway welcomes the efforts being made to assess current practices and formulate a renewed proactive strategy for addressing sexual exploitation and abuse by mission personnel. We support the ACABQ's call for intensified efforts by the SG to ensure full implementation of the UN zero tolerance policy. There is a need to strengthen the framework of sanctions. Reporting on punitive actions taken by TCCs/PCCs should be made mandatory.

Strengthened safety and security for mission personnel is a key concern for Norway. Implementation of the GFSS is highly relevant in that regard. We support the key objective of the global field support strategy; to improve timeliness and delivery of service and achieving greater efficiency and economies of scale. We agree on the need for better evaluation and results based reporting.

As we proceed in our deliberations, we would like to express our sincere hope that we avoid ending up in a similar situation to last year, where the majority of negotiations came to a halt over an issue: the troop cost reimbursement. We do face difficult issues this year as well, but nevertheless we must strive toward consensus, and work in a spirit of compromise that realistically takes into account the concerns of all the parties involved.