

**Observations and recommendations on cross-cutting issues  
related to United Nations peacekeeping operations**

**Statement by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on  
Administrative and Budgetary Questions**

13 May 2014

*Report of the Advisory Committee: A/68/782*

*Reports of the Secretary-General: A/68/731, A/68/756, A/68/637*

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report on cross-cutting issues relating to peacekeeping operations (A/68/782). The report also includes observations and recommendations on separate reports submitted by the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (A/68/756) and implementation of the global field support strategy (A/68/637).

*Cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations*

Mr. Chairman,

The Advisory Committee's report covers the full range of administrative and budgetary issues arising in the 15 active peacekeeping missions. Let me touch upon some of the main issues addressed.

The demand for UN peacekeeping operations continues to grow with two new missions approved in the last year. Overall, the Secretary-General's projects resource requirements of \$7.4 billion for the 2014/15 period. However, the Committee notes that the figures include a projection of only six-months for UNMISS. In addition, amounts requested for the newly established mission in the Central African Republic, MINUSCA, are not included. The Committee concludes that a twelve month extrapolation for the UNMISS resource requirements as well as the forecasted requirements for MINUSCA

will result in an overall increase in the projected level of expenditure for all peacekeeping operations as compared to the 2013/14 period. The Committee recommends that updated information on the overall projected requirements for 2014/15 be provided to the General Assembly during the current session.

As regards missions that are reducing in size, as a matter of general practice, the Advisory Committee notes that there can be a lag between the time of a Security Council decision to reduce the authorized strength for uniformed mission personnel and the adjustments to the resource requirements and the related assessed contributions of Member States. This may lead to over-budgeting and to the prolonged retention of assessed contributions in certain instances. The Committee recommends therefore that when the Security Council decides on such adjustments, where there is a projected reduction of at least five per cent or \$10 million of the mission's resource requirements, the Secretary-General should make a proposal for an immediate downward revision to the related estimates. The Secretary-General should also set out the modalities for implementing this new provision for the consideration of the General Assembly either at the time of the next related Security Council decision in this regard or during the main part of the sixty-ninth session, whichever comes first.

Mr. Chairman,

Concerning cooperation between missions, the Advisory Committee notes an increasing tendency towards regional mission cooperation and accompanying arrangements for common or shared services. In recent years, the Security Council has also endorsed specific cases of inter-mission cooperation as a tool to maximize the utility of existing assets and resources deployed by missions in nearby countries. Most recently, in response to the unfolding crisis in South Sudan in late 2013, the Council authorized the appropriate transfer of troops, force enablers and multipliers to UNMISS from other missions. The Secretary-General indicates that this was a first trial for the UN to meet large-scale, immediate surge requirements in infantry battalions, Formed Police Units and air assets through inter-mission cooperation.

The Advisory Committee recalls that borrowing from active missions is not permitted under General Assembly resolutions. All inter-mission cooperation arrangements must respect this fundamental principle and as such, all services, assets and personnel must be funded where the activity takes place. In the view of the Committee, therefore, related costs should be charged to the receiving mission from the date of transfer. The Committee also recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to provide clear, transparent and timely reporting. In addition, the Committee makes related comments and recommendations concerning the existing arrangements for the use of temporary duty assignments for personnel which it considers to amount to cross-mission subsidization as well as a costly means of filling temporary staffing gaps.

Mr. Chairman,

Concerning the budget performance in peacekeeping missions, the Committee is of the view that a more detailed explanation of variances between planned and actual expenditures for major expenditure lines would assist in measuring budgetary precision and financial discipline. The Committee also recalls its view that the presentation of efficiency targets for past, present and future periods could be improved, with cross-cutting targets distinguished from mission-specific targets as well as those changes attributable to mandate changes being separated from those that are not.

On matters concerning civilian staffing, among the issues discussed by the Advisory Committee, is the need to re-justify or propose for abolishment posts that have long been vacant in missions. The Committee also notes relatively static number of posts at the higher levels in peacekeeping missions. Concerning Government-provided personnel, the Committee stresses again its belief that greater clarity is required in terms of the functions for which Government-provided personnel may be considered appropriate and recommends that a comprehensive review be undertaken for the General Assembly's consideration.

The Advisory Committee also makes a range of observations and recommendations with respect to the operational side of peacekeeping missions including environmental management, de-mining, asset management, air operations and management of construction projects. With respect to travel resources in particular, in view of persistent concerns relating to the use of travel funds in peacekeeping operations, the Committee intends to request the Board of Auditors to conduct a comprehensive audit of official travel financed from peacekeeping budgets, including missions, the UN Logistics Base and the support account.

Mr. Chairman,

The Advisory Committee discusses ICT matters at some length in its report. Regarding Umoja implementation, the Committee emphasizes the need for a transparent presentation of the full costs of the preparatory activities borne thus far by peacekeeping missions. Furthermore, in light of the upcoming roll-out of Umoja to the entire Secretariat, as well as expansion of the scope of the enterprise data centres in Brindisi and Valencia to provide services to the entire Secretariat rather than to peacekeeping operations only, the Committee stresses the need to clarify support arrangements and cost recovery mechanisms, as well as responsibility and accountability for the provision of such services.

Regarding expenditures, the Advisory Committee notes that at present, due to current reporting arrangements, there is no comprehensive view of the total cost, budget and staffing of ICT in peacekeeping. The Committee considers that such a comprehensive view is necessary for proper planning, budgeting and decision-making on ICT matters, as well as a point of reference for comparing costs over time and internally, with other Secretariat ICT units. Given the magnitude of the resources devoted to ICT, as well as the significant changes taking place in the ICT landscape of the United Nations, including Secretariat-wide use of enterprise systems and data centres, the Advisory

Committee intends to request the Board of Auditors to conduct a comprehensive audit of peacekeeping ICT expenditures and to present the outcome of that audit in its next report.

The report also provides the Committee's comments on a range of other ICT matters, including the consolidation of global geospatial capabilities, the extension of the regional approach to the provision of ICT services, the migration to a new email system and the delivery of ICT services at Headquarters.

*Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse*

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, the Advisory Committee was provided with the trends in the number of allegations that have arisen for all UN entities, including the peacekeeping missions, since 2005. This information is reflected in Table 12 of the Committee's report. The Committee recalls its view and that of the Secretary-General that one substantiated case of sexual exploitation and abuse is one case too many. With respect to the allegations reported in peacekeeping missions, the Committee remains especially concerned about the high proportion of the allegations relating to the most egregious forms of sexual exploitation and abuse as well as the persistently high number of allegations received in the same four peacekeeping missions. The Committee looks forward to receiving the proposals arising from the findings of the related panel of experts in this regard.

*Progress in the implementation of the global field support strategy*

Mr. Chairman,

Turning now to the reports on the implementation of the Global Field Support Strategy, the Advisory Committee reiterates its agreement with the broad goals of the Secretary-General to accelerate mission start-up and deployment and to improve the quality and timely delivery of service to field missions. It notes the progress made in the various reporting requirements mandated by the General Assembly. The Committee also stresses the importance of ensuring that the relevant guidance, tools and principles for the implementation of the strategy are embedded into the working practices of the Organization beyond its planned five-year implementation period.

Finally, the Committee considers that the proposed provision of global functions in the Regional Service Centre is a significant departure from the initial vision for the global field support strategy. The Committee therefore recommends against the proposed consolidation of education grant processing functions in the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe at this time. The Committee further recommends that a review of the roles of the Global and Regional Service Centres be included in the Secretary-General's final progress report, taking into account any further proposals to transition non-location-dependent support functions to shared locations.

Thank you Mr. Chairman

**Check against delivery**

**Triennial review of the rates and standards for reimbursement  
to Member States for contingent-owned equipment**

**Statement of the Chairman  
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions**

*ACABQ report: A/68/867*

*Related reports: A/68/830; A/C.5/68/22*

Mr Chairman,

The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the recommendations of the 2014 Working Group contained in the report of the Secretary-General.