



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

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Agenda Item 147: Overview and cross-cutting issues
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the Fifth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly
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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Chandru Ramanathan, His Excellency Mr. David Donoghue, Ms. Carman L. Lapointe, Mr. Anthony Banbury, Ms. Catherine Pollard, and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu for introducing their respective reports.

First and foremost, I'd like to reiterate Japan's profound appreciation for all the UN peacekeepers who serve in the field around the world. Since Japan is not only a major financial contributor but also a troop contributing country, we always take careful consideration of the working conditions of all peacekeepers while debating budgets in the committee.

As we explained in our statement on the first day of this session, we are deeply concerned that the overall picture of the 2014/15 peacekeeping budget is still not clear and that the total budget could greatly exceed its historical high of 8 billion dollars. In this context, my delegation appreciates recent developments and efforts made by the Secretary-General to make peacekeeping operations more effective and efficient. While it is important to have a focused discussion on individual mission separately because of each mission's unique situation, we would also like to emphasize that a comprehensive and cross-cutting approach is important in order to achieve more effective and efficient operations across all peacekeeping missions. My delegation would like to encourage the Resource Efficiency Group to continue their effort to find further cost savings.

We also have a concern about the possibility of double funding through the intermission cooperation arrangement. We are interested in the recommendation of the ACABQ to introduce requirements to submit a revised estimate for those missions to be downsized. We look forward to discussing these issues at the informal consultations.

We highly appreciate recent developments on the comprehensive civilian staffing review for several missions, including UNAMID, UNIFIL and UNOCI, conducted by the Secretariat according to resolution A/66/264. We understand, however, that the process is still an on-going initiative, and further review will follow to examine other missions. The comprehensive staffing review should be conducted periodically and should lead to sufficient reductions in posts.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is interested in the acquisition and contract management of long-term air charter service agreements, which could lead to greater comfort for peacekeepers as well as further efficiency gains in the field of air operations. In this context, we look forward to hearing the results of the pilot RFP project from the Secretariat.

My delegation also welcomes the Secretary-General's effort to reduce the global light passenger vehicle fleet by more than 1,000 vehicles in 2012/13. This vehicle reduction could lead to multiple cost savings, such as reduction of fuel and spare parts expenses. We would like to request the Secretary-General to continue to examine the number of vehicles and align them with the standard ratio across all missions.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation takes note with appreciation of the progress made so far through the GFSS initiative. We welcome tangible savings of nearly 400 million US dollars generated over last three budget cycles, including through the TMICC initiative, which should be examined in detail. We expect the Secretary-General to continue to make efforts to achieve further efficiency gains, which would contribute to the sustainable funding of peacekeeping operations by member states.

We also understand that the GFSS initiative is entering into the last phase of its five year project, and in this connection take note of the Secretary-General's report on the refined end-state articulations and achievements by 30 June 2015, as well as his willingness to continue to develop future approaches to strengthen the delivery of field support beyond the GFSS. My delegation, however, would like to reiterate that we should first examine the lessons learned from the experience of GFSS before embarking

on the next step, which in turn should take well into account of the member states' reflections on the lessons.

Mr. Chairman,

Regarding sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, my delegation echoes the statements of other delegations in affirming that a zero tolerance policy should be paramount and must be achieved. Sexual exploitation and abuse can NOT be tolerated under any circumstances.

In this context, my Government is taking various initiatives including collaboration with the office of SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Recently, we have provided a voluntary contribution to the UN project "E-learning programme on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse for all categories of field personnel". My delegation will continue to strive to contribute to realizing the zero tolerance policy.

Mr. Chairman,

On the Secretary-General's report on the triennial review of the rates and standards for reimbursement to member states for contingent-owned equipment, my delegation, as an active participant of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment, welcomes the agreement reached by the Working Group in January and looks forward to discussing its recommendations in this Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

Last but not the least, I would point out that my delegation was disappointed by the absence of a cross-cutting issues resolution last year. This year, member states should enhance their cooperation toward adopting a cross-cutting issues resolution. In this context, my delegation would like to encourage all delegates to submit questions, if necessary, in writing in a proper and timely manner in order to retain sufficient time for discussions among ourselves and achieve consensus agreement on this agenda item.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.