



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

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Statement by Mr. Sho Ono
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Agenda Item 147:

Results of the revised survey to establish the standard rate
of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries,
as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/261
on the report of the Senior Advisory Group
on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries

Fifth Committee
Second part of the resumed session of the Sixty-Eighth Session
of the United Nations General Assembly
May 9, 2014

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, my delegation would like to thank Mr. Herve Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Ms. Ameerah Haq, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for introducing their respective reports on results of the revised survey to establish the standard rate of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/261 on the report of the Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries (SAG). I wish to briefly outline my delegation's views on this issue.

First and foremost, Japan welcomes the successful conclusion of the new survey in accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/261. Japan values the fact that an interactive data-collection process from a representative sample of troop contributing countries (TCCs) has resulted in data with a one hundred percent response rate. Japan would like to express its sincere appreciation to the Secretariat's survey team and the countries that cooperated with the survey for their prompt and valuable work throughout the survey process.

Mr. Chairman,

Under this agenda item, my delegation would like to offer a general comment and three technical observations on the Secretary-General's report on this issue.

First, let me touch on the general comment. My delegation believes that the negotiation under this agenda item should be conducted as an integral part of the overall peacekeeping operations budget for 2014/15, not in isolation from it. As my delegation pointed out in our statement on the organization of work of the current session, the PKO budget for 2014/15 is likely to greatly exceed its historical high of \$8 billion. This comes at a time when many of our countries are facing extremely tight domestic financial situation. Our delegation is of the view that the UN's peacekeeping operations must be financed in a sustainable manner without compromising each mission's respective mandate. While my delegation recognizes and understands the concerns that have been expressed by many TCCs, we must strike a delicate balance with regard to what would constitute a fair reimbursement for the troops that are deployed. It would have to keep in mind the financial sustainability of the peacekeeping operations missions as a whole.

My delegation also would like to recall that the SAG report contains well-balanced recommendations, based on both reimbursements and the promotion of better conditions for troop performance. From this point of view, Japan highly values the fact that the other two elements of General Assembly resolution 67/261 – which concern troop rotation and absent or non-functional major equipment – have been successfully implemented. My delegation deems it important to continue to make progress with regard to these latter two elements mentioned in the resolution. My delegation would like to encourage all Member States to continue to respect what was agreed in that resolution.

The first technical observation my delegation would like to make is on the new survey and the validity of its data. It should be noted that the Secretary-General was not requested by the SAG report to make a recommendation on the actual rate of reimbursement, but rather merely to collect and present relevant data. In line with General Assembly resolution 67/261 and the SAG report, the Secretary-General did not present the work done on the new survey as a budgetary request. My delegation strongly believes that the General Assembly has the sole prerogative to decide on the reimbursement rate, taking into account the data collected by the new survey.

While my delegation values the survey conducted by the survey team, including its country visits and the comprehensiveness of the data, my delegation has some technical questions on the data. For example: what kind of weighting is used in the calculation of the

'weighted average'? Also, why do the data presented, especially on allowances and UN specific pre-deployment training, show high levels of variance as pointed out in the Secretary-General's report?

As the Secretary-General's report mentions, the standard rates of reimbursement historically did not fully compensate TCCs for all of the costs they incurred. It is obvious that even the results of the new survey, which is presented as "the weighted average across all five cost categories and reflecting the proportionate size of the TCC", would not cover the troop costs of most TCCs including my country. My delegation believes that the reimbursement system should be looked at from the viewpoint of to what extent the cost should be covered by each TCC as a manifestation of its contribution to the peacekeeping operation. My delegation would like to engage in discussions in a constructive manner on how the new survey, based on actual data, on the common and essential additional costs of peacekeeping could lead to an equitable, predictable, and sustainable system of reimbursing the costs for providing troops, as aimed for by the SAG.

Our second technical observation is on the administration and funding of the "risk" and "key enablers" premiums. My delegation believes that further explanation is needed on how the Secretariat intends to administer and fund these mechanisms. My delegation also has some questions on the sustainability of these funding mechanisms as proposed by the Secretary-General and would like to know whether there is any other alternative way to secure the fair, equitable, transparent and sustainable implementation of these mechanisms.

Our third technical observation is on the deduction to personnel reimbursements in relation to absent or non-functioning major equipment. While my delegation welcomes the fact that this mechanism has been steadily implemented, we also note that the Secretary-General's report refers to a 10 percent threshold providing benchmark to define performance for major equipments, and not just vehicles. My delegation would like to have further explanation on this point and to have an opportunity to discuss it with other delegations.

Mr. Chairman,

Last but not the least, I would like to assure you that my delegation will be engaged in this Committee's discussions in a positive and constructive manner, and looks forward to working with all the other delegations toward achieving a consensus agreement on this item by the scheduled end of this session.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.