

Introductory remarks to the Fifth Committee: Mr. Hervé Ladsous

Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations

Report of the Secretary-General on the results of the revised survey to establish the standard rate of reimbursement, as approved by General Assembly resolution 67/261, on the report of the Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop contributing countries (A/68/813)

9 May 2014

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates,

Thank you for this opportunity to offer introductory remarks, along with Under-Secretary-General Ameerah Haq, on the Secretary-General's "*Report on the results of the revised survey to establish the standard rate of reimbursement, as approved by General Assembly resolution 67/261, on the report of the Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop contributing countries*". Set out in document A/68/813, this Report presents the results of the troop cost survey conducted over the period November 2013 through March 2014, in accordance with the methodology approved by General Assembly in its resolution 67/261 of April 2013.

Mr. Chairman,

Uniformed personnel are the backbone of our operations. As peacekeeping has grown more diverse, uniformed personnel are required to perform a range of functions that often go beyond traditional monitoring and patrolling. They are increasingly charged with implementing complex mandates; frequently in partnership with other regional and national actors, and in environments that are often volatile and hostile.

The Senior Advisory Group (SAG) on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries and other related issues recognised this complexity and diversity. And, by its resolution 67/261 adopted by consensus on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee, the General Assembly set in motion a series of concrete measures to address a number of systemic issues related to reimbursement and put in place a new framework for reimbursing troop- and

police-contributing countries for their uniformed personnel. The Report of the Secretary-General before you this morning documents the main actions taken by the Secretariat to implement General Assembly resolution 67/261 and seeks to enable the Assembly to take further action – and a decision – on the rate of reimbursement to troop- and police-contributing countries and related issues.

Mr. Chairman,

Troop- and police-contributing countries are expected to meet Organizational standards set for many of our areas of work. These include the United Nations Infantry Battalion (UNIMBAM), the soon to be issued revised medical standards and pre-deployment training requirements. As always, UN peacekeeping will continue to evolve, in response to the changing global dynamics and patterns of conflict, and we will continue to count on our troop- and police-contributing countries to respond and adapt to these changes.

The new survey methodology approved by the General Assembly therefore recognizes that troop- and police-contributing countries have had to invest to meet these expectations and standards. The methodology also reflects that the composition of our troops has also evolved to address the nature and impact of conflict, in particular on women and children, with increasing requirements for specialization and for female troops. The report on the survey therefore includes information on specific costs related to deploying female personnel recognising the wider efforts to increase the participation of women in all peace and security activities.

As also noted in the Secretary-General's Report before you, we are mindful that member states voluntarily contribute their troops and police to UN peacekeeping. There may be many different reasons for contributing uniformed personnel - some of which may be unique to each contributing country. The survey report also notes, therefore, the positive benefits associated with UN peacekeeping service. But, when countries put their vital national resources – their men and women - in the service of the United Nations, they are making a contribution to multinational international peace and security; without these contributions, there would be no peacekeeping.

Mr. Chairman,

The report before you today is a technical one, reporting on the application of the SAG-recommended methodology mandated by General Assembly resolution 67/261. The data it presents also reflect some of the shifting dynamics and changes I have outlined above; including, for the first time, specific data on pre-deployment training and female uniformed personnel.

While the main focus of the report is on the results of the survey, I would like to briefly mention additional points about how we are implementing the new reimbursement framework approved by the General Assembly.

Firstly, a number of points about the processes and considerations for awarding the new premium payments:

On the so-called “risk” premium, it is very clear that the award of this premium should not in any way be related to *taking* risks. This premium is effectively intended to recognize excellent and exceptional performance by units that “acquit themselves well” in spite of challenging circumstances. It will be awarded on an exceptional basis, and the financial award will be very modest. As stipulated, the “risk premium” will not be paid to any unit operating with caveats or restrictions. Before any award can be given, a rigorous and transparent review supported by documented evidence will be conducted at four levels, both in the field and at headquarters.

In developing these processes, we were reminded by our military and police colleagues that, for our uniformed personnel, bravery is not rewarded financially. Thus, in addition to the payment of a monetary premium, units awarded the risk premium will also receive a special clasp to be worn on the UN medal and a letter of commendation.

Similarly, in developing the process for awarding the premium for key enabling capabilities, we noted that, during each peacekeeping operation start-up, it is becoming increasingly self-evident that the planning of peacekeeping missions must go “hand in glove” with the early identification and rapid deployment of enablers and force multipliers. On too many occasions, optimistic timetables for the start-up of difficult missions in austere operating environments have run up against the stark reality that we simply do not have the necessary

enablers in time. Offering an additional incentive through the reimbursement framework for being ready to deploy rapidly presents an opportunity to address some of these systemic challenges.

Both of these premiums involve new approaches and processes. We will therefore keep their application under close review and assess their impact very carefully - both financially and operationally.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to close by recalling that, in approving the SAG recommendations, the General Assembly did not request the Secretary-General to make a recommendation on the actual rate of reimbursement. The data before you in the report are presented to assist the General Assembly to make that decision. While the 10 sample countries collectively account for over 57 per cent of all contributions from the period 2010 through 2012, each troop-contributing country is – by definition - unique. We deeply value the trust and openness demonstrated by each of the 10 participating troop-contributing countries, which enabled the Secretariat to capture and understand the cost data presented by them. The Secretariat has done everything in its power to maintain the confidentiality of this process and the data, and will continue to do throughout your deliberations. We are confident that the data gives a credible snapshot of the costs incurred by each of these 10 troop-contributing countries during the month of March 2013 and the application of the revised survey methodology has yielded more detailed information on the costs incurred by contributing countries than the General Assembly has had before it for over 14 years.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

When the last survey reported to the General Assembly was conducted in 1996, there was no Organizational policy on protection of civilians in UN peacekeeping; nor were there any Formed Police Units. Both are now fundamental to the effectiveness of our operations. In 1996, the number of uniformed personnel serving in peacekeeping operations totalled 25,000; today, they number over 97,000. As the Senior Advisory Group pointed out in its Report, the system for reimbursing our uniformed personnel has not fundamentally changed since 1974. While recognising that this change to the reimbursement system may involve some

challenges, it can also serve as an opportunity to be seized to enhance the peacekeeping partnership and improve the effectiveness of our peacekeeping operations.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the importance of your work over the coming weeks. Consensus agreement on the budgets before you, as well as the related administrative and budgetary policies related to peacekeeping, sends a strong signal of confidence in UN peacekeeping and its unique multilateral legitimacy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates.

Introductory remarks to the Fifth Committee: Ms Ameerah Haq
Under-Secretary-General for Field Support

Report of the Secretary-General on the results of the revised survey to establish the standard rate of reimbursement, as approved by General Assembly resolution 67/261, on the report of the Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop contributing countries (A/68/813)

9 May 2014

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates,

I am grateful for this opportunity to join Under-Secretary-General Hervé Ladsous in offering a few introductory remarks on the *“Report of the Secretary-General on the results of the revised survey to establish the standard rate of reimbursement, as approved by General Assembly resolution 67/261, on the report of the Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop contributing countries”* (A/68/813). In addition to the historical and operational context that he has offered, I would like to make some additional points related to the reimbursement framework.

Mr Chairman,

Over a year ago, when I introduced to this Committee the Secretary-General’s Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group (SAG) on rates of reimbursement to troop contributing countries and related issues (A/67/713), I highlighted that the SAG recommendations provided an important opportunity to address an issue that has vexed the General Assembly for the past few years.

A key aspect of the revised methodology is its design to address the lack of predictability of the current personnel reimbursement framework. The absence of a predictable system - and the length of time between reviews - have had negative consequences: personnel reimbursement does not reflect the changing demands of peacekeeping or the changing composition and structure of troop and police contributions; it cannot adjust to changing

financial realities and economic shifts that include inflation, economic growth and the relative strength of different economies.

The implementation of the revised methodology, in less than 12 months, indicates that the SAG's adjustments to the approach to surveying personnel costs can – and indeed has yielded results: this is the first report to the General Assembly on a survey of personnel costs since 2000.

Mr Chairman,

The General Assembly's consensus approval of the SAG recommendations – with some provisions – by its resolution 67/261 signified recognition of the importance of the reimbursement framework to the many different aspects of peacekeeping of concern to all Member States.

At the core of the SAG recommendations is the recognition that, for the system of reimbursement to be sustainable, it needs to be based on actual data on the common and essential additional costs involved in deploying uniformed personnel to United Nations peacekeeping. The methodology approved by the General Assembly has as its primary objective to ensure that empirical data would be available to assist the Assembly review the rate.

Following the methodology approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/261, the report before you presents costs from 10 sample troop- and police-contributing countries. Collectively, they represent 57 per cent of all uniformed contributions over the period 2010 through 2012; in proportion from four national income groups: one high; two upper middle; four lower middle; and, three low income. The report does provides data on five categories of common, additional and essential costs that the sample countries incur in contributing their uniformed personnel to UN peacekeeping. It does not make a recommendation on what the rate of reimbursement to contributing countries should be. This is a decision for the General Assembly.

Through an interactive process, the survey collected data on five categories of costs specific to peacekeeping deployment: allowances; personal kit and equipment (including weaponry);

inland transportation; pre-deployment medical; and, UN-specific pre-deployment training. The report notes that three of these categories – inland transportation; pre-deployment medical and training – are not currently part of personnel reimbursement.

I would like to make a few observations about the process and the data:

- The survey underlines the need for the rate of reimbursement to have an empirical basis. The data in the Secretary-General's report is related to a specific deployment period – March 2013 - common across each sample country. The survey data provides “actual costs” and reflects a greater degree of granularity than previously captured and, thereby, allows for more precise description and analysis.
- The SAG methodology stressed the need for confidentiality in the handling and presentation of the data. The sample countries participated with the assurance that their data would be not be identified. The Secretariat values greatly the trust in us demonstrated by the participating survey countries. We have safeguarded, and will continue to safeguard, the full confidentiality of this data.

As requested by the General Assembly, the report before you presents – preserving confidentiality - the data from 10 sample contributing countries.

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates

In addition to the presentation of the survey data, the report before you also provides an update on other aspects of the new reimbursement framework. In his introductory remarks, Under-Secretary-General Ladsous spoke about the premiums. Even though the premium payments are exceptional, since they are a legislated and new financial obligation, there need to be adequate resources for the United Nations to award the premiums. To that end, we are proposing to establish a dedicated fund for these payments, within the overall financial ceiling approved by the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

I would finally like to briefly update you on how we are implementing the deduction to personnel reimbursement based on absent or non-functioning major equipment.

The General Assembly approved, with a number of provisions, a deduction to personnel reimbursement when major equipment is absent or non-functioning after two quarterly reporting periods. This measure recognises the fundamental link between personnel and equipment in enabling peacekeepers to carry out their mandated tasks.

The introduction of this measure has required us to link two different systems that currently operate independently of each other. In implementing the provisions of the resolution, we have considered carefully the impact on the ground. In operationalizing the definition of “unsatisfactory” we have tried to ensure that the measure is not arbitrary. As with our approach to implementing the premium for the deployment of key enabling capacity, the link between the deployment of personnel with their equipment is intended to meet the objective of ensuring that our personnel have the equipment to safely, securely and effectively perform their mandated tasks. A broken speedometer on one vehicle does not have the same impact on operational effectiveness as an absent APC. We will therefore continue to implement this measure with the goal of not only improving MOU compliance, but also enhancing performance and the safety and security of our uniformed personnel, through ensuring that the equipment specified in the MOU is relevant and up-to-date with the needs of the mission, and that is in good working order. In this regard, we would also hope that the recommendation contained in the report of the 2014 Contingent Owned Equipment (COE) Working Group to rotate certain categories of obsolete equipment will have a positive impact.

The Committee is scheduled to consider the report of the next COE Working Group next week. The consideration of both the equipment and the personnel framework provides an opportunity to consider the two holistically with a focus on improving the effectiveness of peacekeeping. .

Mr Chairman,

I would like to close by thanking you and this Committee for the opportunity to present to you this report. I would also like to extend our thanks to the 10 participating survey sample countries who volunteered to participate in this important and challenging exercise.

Our Departments stand ready to offer the Committee our fullest assistance and support as you consider these matters of critical importance to the peacekeeping partnership and, therefore, to the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping.

Thank you.