



**Permanent Mission of New Zealand  
to the United Nations**



**Permanent Mission of the Republic  
of Namibia to the United Nations**

## **PRESENTATION POINTS FOR MANDATES REVIEW INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: 27 FEBRUARY 2008**

As co-chairs we have been tasked by the PGA to take up the mandates review process, and in consultation with Member States, to devise a methodology for substantive work. We believe there is a genuine acceptance of the need for mandates review, as a means "to strengthen the UN, to update its programme of work, and to improve the effective and efficient allocation of scarce resources".

This is the first of three guiding principles for mandates review set out in the PGA's letter of 6 November. The others are that "Resources freed up from a review of development-related mandates should be reinvested into development activities; other savings should be optimally utilized, including for development" and thirdly that "Politically sensitive mandates will be approached with caution and due respect to the perspectives of those Member States whose interests are directly engaged".

Our outreach over the last months has shown that there is a renewed level of interest and commitment to make mandates review work. Across our different regions and perspectives, Member States accept that we cannot keep adding to the list of mandates with which the General Assembly tasks the UN Secretariat and agencies, with no attempt to rationalize, reprioritize or remove redundant mandates.

Then Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld was the first to recognize this in 1954, but it has taken us until 2005 to attempt a comprehensive review of mandates. This is a challenging exercise but we believe for the credibility of our Organisation, it is crucial that we find a way to do it.

While this is not a cost cutting exercise, we expect there to be resource implications.

As co-chairs we have tried our best to construct a framework for analysis and a method of working together which will allow mandates information to be presented in a digestible form, which will make it as easy as possible for delegations to assess these and which will bring us expeditiously to the point where decisions can be taken and eventually formalized.

### Purpose of first informal consultations

The purpose of this first round of informal consultations is to explain the methodology which we have developed and to present the working document which contains our initial analysis of the cluster of 279 mandates on humanitarian assistance.

After testing reactions to this, we chose to take up the humanitarian cluster first because it is of importance to us all, but at the same time it is manageable in size and scope. We propose to work with the list of nine clusters of mandates which was drawn up by previous co-chairs, and take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts that have already been made prior to our taking up our responsibilities as co-chairs. We have benefited from the experience and wisdom of our predecessors.

After a brief explanation of the *methodology*, we shall comment on the *working document*, then set out our proposals for a *work programme* and *timeline*.

It would be helpful to us as co-chairs to have your initial reactions and feedback on the format for presenting information on the mandates. We do not however expect delegations to be in a position to respond today on the substance of the mandates review information. There will be further consultations for this purpose.

Our objective as co-chairs is to be able to establish a workable system which is accepted by Member States and the Secretariat, and which can be used to work through the full list of nine cluster areas. This first cycle of analysis is based on a new approach and we may together be able to improve on this before we take up the next cluster.

### Methodology

Our aim has been to devise a methodology which is fact based, so that the same questions can be applied to all mandates. The key questions are whether the mandate reflects current need, and whether it is being delivered effectively and efficiently, without duplication.

We are also tasked, through the parameters for mandates review in the PGA's letter of 6 November, with identifying gaps as well as duplications. We believe the matrix approach which we are using will help us to organize mandates into categories for Member States to then assess.

The four categories that come out of the matrix are

- Mandates that fully reflect current need and are effectively implemented (green)

- Mandates that would benefit from consolidation or strengthening (amber)
- Mandates on which action is needed to fill a gap or to discontinue (red)
- Mandates which are already completed (grey)

We repeat that this is a preliminary analysis carried out by the co-chairs.

#### Limitations to current exercise

While the mandates review is now re-engaged, the database we are working from is the list prepared by the Secretariat in early 2006. It includes mandates that were adopted five years prior to the Outcome Document of September 2005 and were renewed since. We are in discussion with the Secretariat (Department of Management) about longer term capability for keeping the database current. We can only make a case for this if we can prove there is a genuine commitment on the part of Member States to maintain active scrutiny of mandates, to ensure that they are in future rationalized on a regular basis.

A question we have frequently been asked is whether it is possible to show the resource commitment against individual mandates. This would of course make our exercise more directly meaningful, and would indicate where there is scope to reallocate resources.

However under current accounting systems, it is not possible to provide this information.

The Secretariat has commented that it does not track funding by individual mandates. Mandates establish programmes and subprogrammes. The regular budget provides for resources by *subprogramme* and resources are approved accordingly and at the programme level. In addition, tracking resources for humanitarian related mandates is even more complicated, as the majority of funds come from extra budgetary sources and are often raised during emergency situations.

#### Working document

We have struggled to find the best format in which to present mandate information to you, as a basis for decisions to be taken after due consideration by you as Member States. To keep the document of a more manageable size, we thought of presenting only the "amber" and "red" mandates; but concluded that you would want to make your own assessment of whether you agreed with our preliminary assessment of the "green" mandates as we have categorized them.

You may also want to look through the "grey" mandates which have been completed.

Therefore, we decided to take a dual approach. We have circulated to delegations this morning a hard copy containing the preliminary analysis of the "amber" and "red" mandates. In addition, the complete document, which also include the "green" and "gray" mandates, is available in electronic format on the PGA's website, where it can also be accessed from capitals.

The comments shown in the document are based on feedback from implementing agencies and in some cases the affected country. We have drawn to the attention of directly affected countries the mandates relating to them, and invited their comments. In most cases we have yet to receive such comments and when we do, will add these to the working document.

#### Work programme and timeline

After receiving your feedback today, we shall allow a two week period for your reflection on the substance of the working document on humanitarian mandates. Then we should schedule a further round of consultations on 12 March. At this session we would receive your comments, and collate these into a final version as a basis for decisions at a subsequent session.

In the period between sessions, we remain eager to engage with delegations who wish to talk through their questions or suggestions. It would be helpful to our work process if we could receive your substantive comments just as soon as you are in a position to offer these, i.e. do not necessarily wait until the 12 March session.

As soon as we are able we would as co-chairs hope to be able to write to the PGA with a set of decisions taken by Member States. At a certain point these would need to be formalized. Indications are that this could be done by attaching a report to a resolution.

Our goal is to complete in the period of our co-chairmanship three clusters before our deadline of the end of July 2008. Such a goal would be achievable if we allow two months for each cluster. This suggests we should move quickly to identify and begin preparatory work on the next cluster to take up.

Choice of the next cluster does to some extent depend on our degree of success with applying the current methodology. As we indicated in our letter of 18 January, we would welcome your suggestions as to your preferred next cluster to be analyzed.

As on all aspects of mandates review, we would welcome your contacting us at any time with your ideas.