



Buan-Ionad na hÉireann
chun na Náisiún Aontaithe

Permanent Mission of Ireland
to the United Nations

Concept Note

UN Command and Control Arrangements: Progress, Challenges, Opportunities

Thursday, July 3, 2014

11:00am – 12:30pm

UN HQ Conference Room 1 (CB)

I. Rationale and Objectives

With the authorisation of ever more complex and ambitious mandates for peacekeeping operations deploying to increasingly demanding environments, clear and decisive command and control (C2) arrangements are more important than ever. This panel discussion, which is being hosted by the Permanent Mission of Ireland, will assess progress made in recent years and identify outstanding challenges at the strategic level. Specific topics to be addressed include:

- Progress made and experiences of C2 from recent UN operations
- How to ensure decisive leadership at the mission level
- Steps to improve accountability; and
- Measures to strengthen the C2-related mission planning process.

II. Background

The effective planning and conduct of UN peacekeeping operations rests on clear C2 arrangements within HQ, between HQ and the field, within the mission itself and the rest of the UN system on the ground. Such arrangements should allow for the efficient implementation of mandates and strengthen the mission's preparedness to handle crisis situations.

The Security Council provides the legal authority, high-level strategic direction and political guidance for all UN peacekeeping operations. The Council vests the operational authority for directing these operations in the Secretary-General, who in turn delegates authority to the Chief of Mission (Special Representative or Force Commander), with light backstopping at HQ (including provision of a policy framework). This decentralised command structure, also known as Mission Command, lends itself to flexible and more autonomous decision-making as compared with other organisations.

In 2012 DPKO undertook an evaluation of its C2 arrangements to help guide existing UN policy and accountability frameworks, particularly with regard to risk management and the delegation of authority. The general conclusion was that the framework was sound and appropriate for the UN peacekeeping context and sufficient for ensuring overall strategic, operational and tactical direction of operations in the field. Recognising, however, that a number of challenges remain, the evaluation made a number of recommendations addressing the following external factors:

- Strengthened planning at both HQ and mission levels to ensure proper translation of mandates into strategic direction;
- Stronger leadership at all levels, and
- Strengthened accountability frameworks.

III. Participation and Format

The event will bring together the perspectives of UN HQ, former senior practitioners, troop contributors and civil society. Panel presentations to be followed by an interactive and engaging questions and answers session.

Moderator:

Mr. Adam Smith, Senior Fellow and Head of the IPI Center for Peace Operations

Panellists:

Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General, UN Dept. of Peacekeeping Operations

Lt.Gen. (ret) Joseph Owonibi, former Force Commander, UNMIL Liberia

H.E. Mr. Eugène-Richard Gasana, Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the UN

H.E. Mr. Masood Khan, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN

H.E. Mr. David Donoghue, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN