



UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement by Mr. Stephen Lieberman,
Minister-Counsellor for United Nations Management and Reform
on the organization of work for the second part of the resumed 68th session**

Before the Fifth (Administrative and Budgetary) Committee

5 May 2014

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me begin by joining all other delegations in expressing our deepest sorrow at the tragic and premature loss of a great friend and colleague, Alan Shaw. Alan's intelligence, wit, sense of fair play, dedication to doing the right thing, and warmth and humanity will be sorely missed especially in this committee.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation looks forward to working with you and other colleagues as we consider substantial and consequential issues related to peacekeeping this session.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to take this opportunity to provide some preliminary comments regarding the issues that this Committee will consider in the weeks ahead. The demands for peacekeeping have increased substantially in the past year, both from the creation of new peacekeeping missions and expansion of some already existing missions. The costs of these increasing demands along with potential changes in reimbursement rates for troop- and police-contributing countries come with significant financial implications. These additional pressures all come in a time of continuing austerity.

In reviewing the budget requests that are available, my delegation notes that the Secretary-General has identified some savings and we commend his continued efforts to find efficiencies. Other cost reductions are driven by decisions of the Security Council, particularly with respect to missions that are downsizing. However, all of these savings are offset by increased requirements in Mali and Somalia. Moreover, the substantial requirements associated with the situation in South Sudan and the authorization of a new mission in the Central African Republic which will take over responsibilities from MISCA in September are not included in the Secretary-General's budget request. While the Secretary-General's requests reflects an overall

decrease of \$400 million from the prior year to \$7.4 billion, the actual peacekeeping requirements for the coming year will, for the first time ever, exceed the \$8 billion mark.

As such, my delegation stresses the importance of this Committee exercising its responsibility to closely scrutinize the requests of the Secretary-General to ensure that the budgets reflect actual requirements, are driven by realistic planning assumptions, incorporate prudent management initiatives, and reflect real resource constraints.

Mr. Chairman, in regards to the troop reimbursement rate, while we will have more to say when this item is introduced, I want to share some initial thoughts on this issue. We recognize and understand the concerns that have been expressed by many TCCs. At the same time, we hope that all delegations recognize and understand the fiscal realities that we face. We look forward to engaging constructively with all colleagues to achieve a fair and sustainable agreement on this important and highly emotive question.

In addition to the resource issues we will consider, my delegation emphasizes the need to continue improving the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, including through the implementation of reforms such as the Global Field Support Strategy and the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group as well as ensuring the highest standards of performance. Performance is critical to maintaining support and credibility of UN peace operations and to give the people we serve confidence that their best interests and protection are paramount. We continue to support stronger measures in combating sexual exploitation and abuse and will press for further accountability on these issues. We also support strengthened oversight to prevent and detect corruption, fraud and abuse. We look forward to working closely with all delegations to reach consensus for 2014/15 budgets and policy measures that will allow missions to fully deliver on their mandates while maximizing their efficiency and effectiveness.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to also voice our concern regarding the late issuance of documents, particularly reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. With such a heavy session ahead of us, as we highlighted earlier, time really is of the essence. We therefore hope that the availability of documentation will improve soon to allow us to devote adequate time to consider all of the reports on our agenda this session.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.