



**United  
Nations**

Department  
of Safety  
and Security

# **DO AND SMT HANDBOOK**

**A GUIDE FOR DESIGNATED  
OFFICIALS FOR SECURITY AND  
SECURITY MANAGEMENT TEAMS**

*New Edition*

# VISION

Security for the United Nations, for a better world.

# MISSION

To enable United Nations system operations through  
trusted security leadership and solutions.

# **DO AND SMT HANDBOOK**

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This handbook will be revised and updated on a regular basis. Feedback and comments are therefore welcome, and should be sent to [undss.policy@un.org](mailto:undss.policy@un.org).



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# ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ASC</b>	Area Security Coordinator
<b>ASMT</b>	Area Security Management Team
<b>BOI</b>	Board of Inquiry
<b>CATSU</b>	Commercial Air Travel Safety Unit (of UNDSS)
<b>CBRN</b>	Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear
<b>CISMU</b>	Critical Incident Stress Management Unit (of UNDSS)
<b>CMT</b>	Crisis Management Team
<b>CMWG</b>	Crisis Management Working Group
<b>CSA</b>	Chief Security Adviser
<b>DO</b>	Designated Official
<b>DOS</b>	Department of Operational Support
<b>DPO</b>	Department of Peace Operations
<b>DPPA</b>	Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
<b>DRO</b>	Division of Regional Operations (of UNDSS)
<b>HLCM</b>	High Level Committee on Management
<b>IASMN</b>	Inter-Agency Security Management Network
<b>ICSC</b>	International Civil Service Commission
<b>IIH</b>	Integrated Information Hub
<b>JFA</b>	Jointly Financed Activities
<b>JOC</b>	Joint Operations Centre
<b>LCSSB</b>	Locally Cost-Shared Security Budget
<b>OCB</b>	Operations Coordination Body
<b>OSH</b>	Occupational Safety and Health
<b>P/C/SA</b>	Senior UNDSS representative (either a PSA, CSA or SA)
<b>PC</b>	Programme Criticality
<b>PSA</b>	Principal Security Adviser
<b>SA</b>	Security Adviser
<b>SFP</b>	Security Focal Point
<b>SIOC</b>	Security Information and Operations Centre
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedure
<b>SMT</b>	Security Management Team
<b>SRM</b>	Security Risk Management
<b>SSAFE</b>	Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments (training)
<b>TRIP</b>	Travel Request Information Process
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNSMIN</b>	United Nations Security Management Information Network
<b>UNSMS</b>	United Nations Security Management System

# FOREWORD



**W**elcome to the DO and SMT Handbook: A Guide for Designated Officials for Security and Security Management Teams. This Handbook is a convenient reference to the policy and security management framework provided by the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS).

As Designated Officials for Security and members of Security Management Teams (SMTs), your roles are critical to the effective management of the UNSMS. We rely on your leadership to enable the safe and secure delivery of programmes for all UNSMS entities in your Designated Area. We also depend on your judgement and understanding to make critical decisions, often under pressure and in sharply evolving contexts. To help you in this role, you will be guided by your security experts in-country and at headquarters, and through specialized trainings and products such as this one. I am also ready to assist you in this crucial role and welcome the chance to hear your concerns and challenges.

As the work of the United Nations has become increasingly fraught, with personnel and operations an enduring target of violence, we must work together to ensure we are prepared to meet safety and security challenges head on. Through collaboration, communication and an orientation towards practical solutions, we will strive to enable the delivery of United Nations mandates and programmes. UNDSS, and the wider UNSMS, stand ready to guide and support you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Michaud', written in a cursive style.

**Mr. Gilles Michaud**  
*Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security*  
September 2020

# INTRODUCTION

**T**his Handbook covers the main policies and procedures that govern the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS). These policies are contained in the UNSMS Security Policy Manual (“blue book”) and are complemented by detailed guidelines compiled in the Security Management Operations Manual (“red book”) and other specialized manuals. These are made available through the United Nations Security Management Information Network (UNSMIN) at [www.unsmin.org](http://www.unsmin.org), via the library tab (sign-in credentials are obtained through UNDSS.)

UNSMS security professionals in the Designated Area will serve as the best resource to support your security management functions. UNDSS Headquarters offers further support through its specialized functions. Finally, the USG UNDSS, as the principal adviser on safety and security to the Secretary-General, stands ready to provide leadership support and advice.



## **UNSMS & IASMN Members**

**ADB** Asian Development Bank **CTBTO** Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization **DESA** Department of Economic and Social Affairs **DOS** Department of Operational Support **DPO** Department of Peace Operations **DPPA** Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs **EBRD** European Bank for Reconstruction and Development **FAO** Food and Agriculture Organization **IAEA** International Atomic Energy Agency **ICAO** International Civil Aviation Organization **ICC** International Criminal Court **ICJ** International Court of Justice **IFAD** International Fund for Agricultural Development **ILO** International Labour Organization **IMF** International Monetary Fund **IMO** International Maritime Organization **IOM** International Organization for Migration **IRMCT** International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals **ISA** International Seabed Authority **ITC** International Trade Centre **ITU** International Telecommunication Union **OCHA** Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs **OHCHR** Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights **OPCW** Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons **PAHO** Pan American Health Organization **UNAIDS** Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS **UNCTAD** United Nations Conference on Trade and Development **UNDP** United Nations Development Programme **UNDSS** United Nations Department of Safety and Security **UNEP** United Nations Environment Programme **UNESCO** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization **UNFPA** United Nations Population Fund **UN-Habitat** United Nations Human Settlements Programme **UNHCR** Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees **UNICC** United Nations International Computing Center **UNICEF** United Nations Children's Fund **UNIDO** United Nations Industrial Development Organization **UNOCT** United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism **UNODC** United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime **UNOPS** United Nations Office for Project Services **UNRWA** United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East **UNU** United Nations University **UNV** United Nations Volunteers **UN Women** United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women **UNWTO** United Nations World Tourism Organization **UPU** Universal Postal Union **WBG** World Bank Group **WFP** World Food Programme **WHO** World Health Organization **WIPO** World Intellectual Property Organization **WMO** World Meteorological Organization **WTO** World Trade Organization

**1**

# **LEGAL & POLICY FRAMEWORK**

In the discharge of your security management duties, there are a number of legal and policy documents with which you must be familiar. These provide the framework to guide key decisions impacting the safety and security of United Nations personnel.

## THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The UNSMS is composed of all United Nations system organizations and other international organizations that have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the UNSMS for the purposes of safety and security. The UNSMS has over 50 member organizations and is led by UNDSS under the executive authority of the USG UNDSS.

There are currently four international organizations that have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations for the purposes of safety and security: Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Criminal Court and the International Organization for Migration.

### Safety and Security Roles and Responsibilities in HQ



#### Secretary-General

- Overall safety and security of UN personnel in HQ and field
- Accountable to Member States



#### USG UNDSS

- Executive direction
- Overall responsibility for safety and security of UN personnel at HQ and field
- Accountable to the Secretary-General
- Chairs the IASMN



#### Executive Heads of UN Organizations

- Accountable to the Secretary-General
- Ensure the goals of UNSMS are met within their organization



## Establishment of UNDSS

UNDSS was established on 1 January 2005 pursuant to General Assembly resolution A/RES/59/276, with a view to unifying the disparate security components of the existing Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator (known as UNSECOORD) and the Security and Safety Services, including those in the regional commissions.

UNDSS manages a network of security advisers, analysts, officers and coordinators in more than 100 countries in support of around 180,000 United Nations personnel, 400,000 dependants and 4,500 United Nations premises worldwide.

There are **four** essential policies with which any security decision maker in the United Nations system should be familiar.

**1. The Framework of Accountability for the UNSMS** stipulates that the DO is accountable to the Secretary-General, through the USG UNDSS, and is responsible for the safety and security of United Nations personnel, premises and assets in the Designated Area. The Secretary-General delegates to the DO the requisite authority to take decisions, subject to review of the USG UNDSS. The SMT, chaired by the DO, advises the DO on all security-related matters. These responsibilities are addressed in more detail in the following chapters.

**2. The Policy on Applicability for the UNSMS** identifies which individuals fall under the scope of the UNSMS and are therefore covered by United Nations security arrangements. They include internationally and locally recruited personnel and their eligible family members, interns, United Nations Volunteers and, generally, consultants for United Nations entities. In practical terms, this means that any individual who has signed a direct contractual agreement with one of the UNSMS organizations falls under the UNSMS.

In missions led by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) or the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), police and military personnel who are deployed individually all fall under the UNSMS (i.e., contingent members are excluded), although their family members are excluded.

Individuals recruited locally **and** paid by the hour are excluded from this policy.

**3. The Policy on Security Risk Management (SRM)** outlines the concept and principles which guide all decisions related to security within the UNSMS. The SRM process is a structured and risk-based decision-making tool. It guides the process to enable programme delivery through the identification and assessment of the threats to United Nations personnel, assets and operations in a Designated Area, and assists in the identification of security measures and procedures to reduce vulnerability and the level of associated risk. This process supports the difficult risk decisions the DO must take, in collaboration with the SMT, in regards to the safety and security of United Nations personnel, including what risks are deemed acceptable. The SRM is explained in detail on page 27.

**4. The Programme Criticality Framework** is a system-wide policy endorsed by the High-Level Committee on Management and the Secretary-General's Policy Executive Committee. The aim of the Programme Criticality Framework is to assess programmatic priorities in changing or volatile security situations to allow decisions on acceptable risk. This decision is made by balancing the "residual risk" of a programme against its assessed criticality. The responsibility for Programme Criticality assessments lies with the senior United Nations representative in-country (i.e., the Resident Coordinator or Special Representative of the Secretary-General). Its application is mandatory in environments of high or very high security risk. However, assessments are also recommended as preparatory measures in those countries with unpredictable or rapidly changing security environments: such proactive assessments can facilitate rapid decision-making if the security risks are suddenly elevated. (Please see [www.programmecriticality.org](http://www.programmecriticality.org) for more information.)

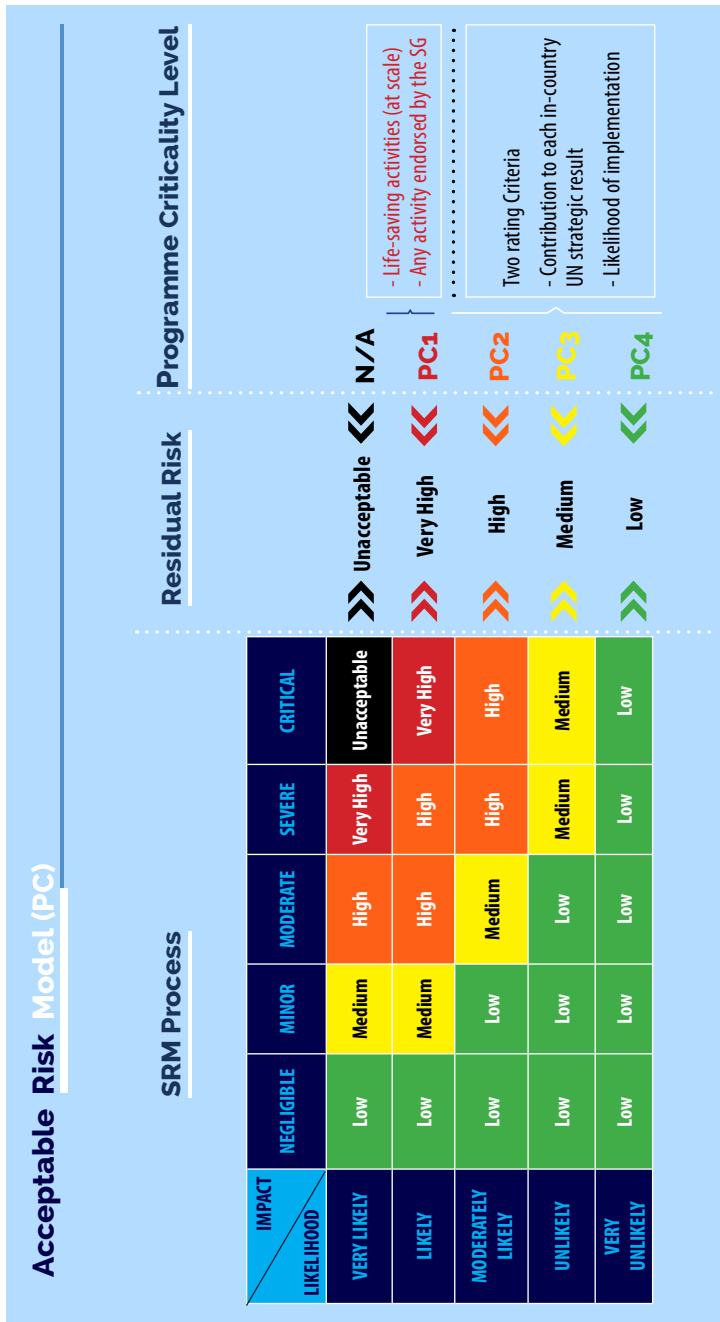


Fig. 1: The UNSMS Acceptable Risk Model compares Residual Risk and Programme Criticality levels.



## UNSMS Policy-Making & the IASMN

Security management policies within the UNSMS are initiated, developed and reviewed by the Inter-Agency Security Management Network (IASMN), a specialized network chaired by the USG UNDSS and composed of the senior security managers of all UNSMS organizations. The IASMN meets twice a year and is supported by a Steering Group and thematic working groups. The IASMN falls under the auspices of the High-Level Committee on Management, one of three pillars of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination chaired by the Secretary-General. Security policies are promulgated following endorsement by the HLCM. Therefore, these are not “UNDSS policies”; they are system-wide policies endorsed at the highest level of the United Nations system. We usually refer to these policies as “UNSMS policies”. The graphic below shows how the work of each group on policy fits together.

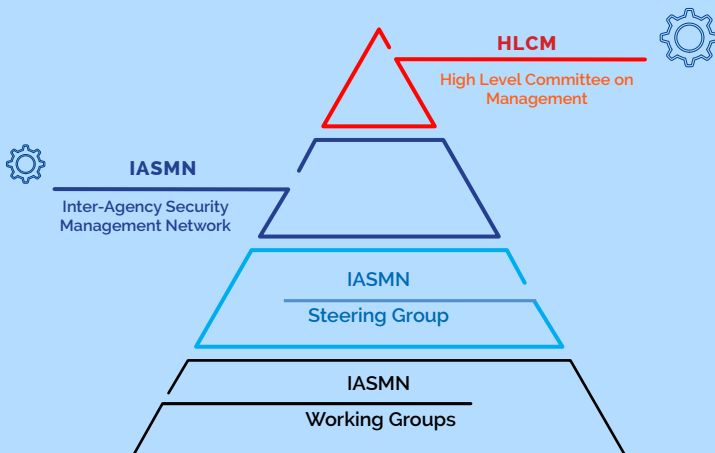


Fig. 2: A representation of the UNSMS policy-making process. UNSMS policies approved by the HLCM are generally drafted by IASMN working groups.

# SECURITY POLICY FRAMEWORK

All UNSMS policy materials are subordinate to, and consistent with, the legislative issuances of the inter-governmental bodies, United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules and system-wide policies of the Secretary-General. UNSMS policy material is endorsed at the highest level of the United Nations system and is applicable system-wide.

**Policy:** commits UNSMS organizations and personnel to a set of global principles and objectives. Compliance is mandatory.

**Guidelines:** offer additional practicalities of how to implement a policy and may include good practices.

**Manual:** provides detailed technical instructions on how to carry out specific tasks related to a security policy or guidelines.

**Handbook:** gives information on a policy area or assists a particular audience in performing their role(s).

**Aide-Memoire:** offers a summary or outline of important policy guidance. In some instances, this may be a template or another document that should be updated for a Designated Area.

**UNDSS Communiqué:** used by USG UNDSS to send communications across the UNSMS. Policies and Guidelines are always initially promulgated through a UNDSS Communiqué. Communiqués are also used to disseminate a variety of UNSMS operational messages such as evacuation instructions, threat warnings or distribution of new equipment standards.





**Q. Do security policies vary between UN agencies? If so, who is responsible for which security measures are taken to protect personnel in the field?**

A. UN agencies, funds and programmes are members of the UNSMS. As such, they participate in and contribute to the development of all security policies and are bound by them. There is only one set of approved UN security policies. Where policies allow for flexibility in implementation, agencies, funds and programmes may have variances, but the mandatory policy aspects must be adhered to by all.

## UNITED NATIONS CONVENTIONS AND FRAMEWORK

The UNSMS policy on “Relations with Host Countries on Security Issues” outlines the need for the DO, the SMT and United Nations security professionals to review the host Government’s capacity to carry out its responsibilities for protecting the United Nations, and to identify, reinforce and supplement any shortfalls in this capacity. The policy also identifies key aspects of collaboration with the host Government on security related issues. It is an essential part of the responsibility of the DO to ensure that the UNDSS security team establishes and maintains a dialogue and collaboration with the local authorities. Another important aspect of the DO’s responsibility is to pursue with the host Government that the perpetrators of crimes against United Nations personnel are brought to justice by the host Government, in accordance with relevant legal instruments.



## Legal and Policy Framework

1. United Nations Charter – articles 104 and 105
2. Conventions on Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (1946 and 1947)
3. Convention on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Associated Personnel (1994), and its Optional Protocol (2005)
4. UNSMS Security Policy Manual (updated regularly with new and revised policies)
5. Annual Resolutions of the General Assembly on the “Safety and Security of Humanitarian Personnel and Protection of United Nations Personnel”



## Compliance with Security Policies and Procedures

To ensure that its policies remain robust, the UNSMS has established a policy feedback loop that includes the monitoring of compliance status. Compliance monitoring consists of general and specific techniques that may include self-assessment, peer reviews, continuous document reviews and compliance audits. The DO should report cases of non-compliance to the applicable UNSMS organization, so that the organization can take corrective actions, and inform USG UNDSS to facilitate follow-up at the headquarters level.

**2**

# **OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE**

Chapter 1 of this handbook outlined the legal and policy frameworks for the day-to-day roles of DOs and SMTs. This chapter explains the broad security architecture in-country and provides an in-depth overview of the SRM process that guides security decision-making.

## SECURITY ARCHITECTURE IN-COUNTRY

The Framework of Accountability provides guidance on the roles and responsibilities of all security actors in the UNSMS. DOs are accountable to the Secretary-General, through the USG UNDSS, for the safety and security of all individuals covered by the UNSMS in their Designated Area.

The DO is required to nominate at least three persons that could serve as DO a.i. Such nominees shall be heads of UNSMS organizations at the Designated Area, members of the SMT and accredited to the host Government. All nominated DOs a.i. shall obtain clearance from their respective parent organizations before accepting the DO's nomination. Prior to any absence from the Designated Area, DOs shall ensure that one of the appointed DOs a.i. remains in the Area.

In this regard, the DO will be supported by a range of United Nations security professionals and the SMT, as well as the USG UNDSS.

### Security Management Team

The SMT provides advice and support to the DO on all security-related matters and comprises the heads of all UNSMS entities/organizations with presence in the Designated Area. These representatives are accountable to the Secretary-General, through their Executive Directors, for the safety and security of all individuals of their organization.

The role of SMT members is to advise the DO on the particular concerns of their organizations regarding security and ensure that activities of their organizations are conducted in compliance with the applicable decisions. They also ensure that safety and security considerations are a core component of



### Who is part of the SMT?

The SMT comprises the head of each UNSMS organization present in the Designated Area. In peace operations, where the Head of Mission serves as the DO, the SMT may also include heads of components, or offices, as specified by the DO. Heads of military and police components of peacekeeping missions are always members of the SMT.

their programmes and are adequately funded at the local level, and that their personnel comply with all related instructions and requirements.

It is important that the DO provide effective leadership to the SMT and chair the meeting in-person. Though decisions are normally made in a consultative manner reflecting the views and recommendations of SMT members, the DO is responsible and accountable for making the final decision on security-related issues. In the event that a rapid decision is required to avoid loss of life or to resolve an impasse at the SMT level, the USG UNDSS may convene the Executive Group on Security, comprised of Executive Heads of a number of UNSMS organizations, to advise and assist in rapidly resolving a security impasse. An Executive Group on Security meeting may also be called should the DO request the USG UNDSS to do so.

It is also important that the DO convene regular meetings of the SMT, at a frequency determined by the SRM, and at least once a year. Minutes of each SMT meeting must be prepared, shared with SMT members for review and, when finalized, forwarded to UNDSS Headquarters. All members must receive SMT training prior to participating in the meetings.



## **Training for DOs & the SMT** **Area Security Coordinators and Area SMTs**

It is mandatory for DOs a.i., all members of SMTs and Area Security Coordinators to complete training specific to their security roles. At a minimum, the online SMT training module must be completed, and a record of certification maintained. DOs a.i. are also required to complete a mandatory security orientation course at either New York Headquarters or virtually, ideally prior to assuming their role in the country of assignment. This mandatory training also applies to those who have already been DOs for extended periods of time or are changing duty stations.

In addition, there may be other training requirements at the local level.

As a reminder, DOs and SMT members are accountable for ensuring that all personnel complete the requisite mandatory training BSAFE, as well as other training requirements determined for the Designated Areas as per the SRM process. Contrary to the earlier versions of the BSAFE training (Basic and Advanced Security in the Field courses), there are no limits on the course's validity and, once completed, it does not have to be retaken. Personnel may be encouraged, however, to revisit the training to refresh their knowledge.

### **Area Security Coordinator**

In a large Designated Area with locations far from the capital, the DO, in consultation with the SMT, may appoint in writing an Area Security Coordinator (ASC) for each area. The ASC is responsible for coordinating security arrangements applicable to all personnel, premises and assets in their areas of responsibility (called "Security Area").

The ASC is accountable to the DO for his or her security-related responsibilities. The ASC must establish an Area Security Management Team (ASMT) comprising of heads or senior personnel of all UNSMS organizations in the Security Area, as well as an Area Security Cell.

Minutes of ASMT meetings should be provided to the DO and the SMT for further review and endorsement. The ASC and the Area Security Management Team are essentially subordinate versions of the DO and SMT.

## Security Professionals



*A UNSS officer on duty during the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit./UN Photo*

Various categories of security professionals are deployed to assist the DO and the ASC in the discharge of their responsibilities:

- The Principal Security Adviser, Chief Security Adviser or Security Adviser (P/C/SA) is a UNSS staff member and senior security professional appointed to advise the DO and SMT in their respective security roles. They can have regional functions and advise DOs and SMTs in several countries. This senior UNSS representative reports directly to the DO and maintains a technical line of communication on operational matters to UNSS Headquarters in New York.

- In integrated peacekeeping or special political missions, the senior UNDSS representative also manages the security section of the mission and the operational management of security across the country. In some non-integrated peacekeeping missions where the Head of Mission is the DO for a specific Designated Area, the mission's Chief Security Officer acts as the primary security adviser to the DO in the absence of a UNDSS-appointed security professional.
- The senior UNDSS representative and Chief Security Officer directly supervise an Integrated Security Workforce (i.e. security personnel from UNDSS and from the mission) whose size varies depending on various factors including size of mission, geography and risk. These include Field Security Coordination Officers, Security Information Analysts, Security Operations Officers, Mission Security Officers and Local Security Assistants. In very complex environments, the security structure may be further reinforced by a Security Information and Operations Centre to perform analytic and coordinating functions.
- Single-Agency Security Officers of UNSMS organizations may be deployed to specific Designated Areas or with a regional coverage to advise their organization and take responsibility for security specific to their organization's activities. These Security Officers are accountable to their organization, although they do have an obligation to support the Security Cell under the coordination of the senior UNDSS representative. In the absence of a UNDSS representative, Single-Agency Security Officers can be appointed by UNDSS as the Security Adviser a.i., in consultation with their respective organization.

In Offices away from Headquarters, Regional Commissions and International Tribunals, security functions are managed by the Chief of Security and Safety Services. The Chief is responsible for the management of Security and Safety Services/Sections, including uniformed UNDSS Security Officers. In some locations, the USG UNDSS can appoint the Chief of Security and Safety Services as the Principal or Chief Security Adviser for a Designated Area.



## Security Cell

In order to ensure the efficient and effective use of resources and ascertain that all Security Officers at the Designated Area work to further the SRM process, the senior UNDSS representative establishes and chairs a Security Cell. The Security Cell includes Single-Agency Security Officers who advise on particular concerns of their organization regarding security, as well as local Security Focal Points of UNSMS entities.

In practice, and in locations where the senior UNDSS representative has established a Security Cell, security-related matters addressed at the SMT should first be addressed at the Security Cell level. With the agreement of the SMT member, Security Cell members attend the SMT as observers.

## Wardens

Wardens are not security professionals, yet they hold specific security responsibilities. They are selected among internationally and locally recruited personnel and appointed in writing by the DO, in consultation with the SMT, to assist in the implementation of the Area Security Plan. (Please see page 46 for more on the security plans). Wardens are accountable to the DO for their security-related functions, irrespective of their employing organization, and are responsible for communicating with personnel, their eligible family members and visitors in times of crisis. The Warden System can be zone-based (responsible for communicating on security with all personnel in a specific geographic area) or organization-based (responsible for communicating on security within their organization).

## United Nations Personnel

All United Nations personnel in the Designated Area have a responsibility to abide by security policies, guidelines, directives, plans and procedures of the UNSMS, in accordance with the Framework of Accountability. United Nations personnel are those covered under the Applicability Policy. The leadership

of the DO, as well as of heads of UNSMS organizations, is instrumental to cultivating a “security culture” in-country. This means leadership teams must ensure that personnel familiarize themselves with security management information relevant to their location and duty station, attend and complete the necessary security training and required briefings, and report all security incidents in a timely manner. Finally, all United Nations personnel must conduct themselves in a manner that will not endanger their own safety and security or that of others.



### Our Security Obligations

1. Familiarize ourselves with security information provided at the location
2. Obtain security clearance prior to traveling
3. Attend security briefings
4. Know our wardens and security professionals
5. Be appropriately equipped for service at the duty station
6. Comply with all UNSMS regulations and procedures, both on/off duty
7. Comport ourselves in a manner which will not endanger our safety and security or that of others
8. Report all security incidents in a timely manner
9. Complete BSAFE
10. Complete security training relevant to level and role

The DO is responsible for the provision of Area SRM processes, as well as ad-hoc SRM processes. Although the senior UNDSS representative and the UNDSS team will guide these processes, DOs are expected to be familiar with them and lead the SMT to endorse the final product. In each country, a number of SRM processes may be completed depending on the size and complexity of the country and United Nations presence.

There are nine steps to the SRM process, outlined in the following pages. The mandatory SMT training also provides further information on this process, and the DO is encouraged to consult with the senior UNDSS representative for additional expertise and advice.

# SECURITY RISK MANAGEMENT



Fig 3: The SRM process is a structured, problem-solving mechanism that consists of nine steps.

Security Risk Management is the UNSMS tool to identify, analyze and manage safety and security risks to United Nations personnel, assets and operations.

The SRM process is guided by a UNSMS policy, and supported by a manual which provides step-by-step guidance to security personnel on the process. This approach was first established in 2004 and last updated in 2019 with additional guidelines, training tools and templates.



### **Risk-Based vs Threat-Based?**

It is very important to understand that the UNSMS is risk-based, not threat-based. While threats are assessed as part of the process, decisions are taken based on the assessment of risk.

#### **Step 1** Setting the Geographical Scope and Timeframe

The initial step in the SRM process is establishing the geography and timeframe of the SRM. This comprises a Designated Area, a Security Area (usually the area of responsibility of an ASC) and any specific SRM Area. An SRM area is determined at the country level by the SMT, and is usually an area of homogenous threats for which a specific assessment is carried out (such as a conflict area). The SRM Area is the geographical scope at which the DO applies the SRM process. The timeframe for each SRM process may be determined by an event (such as an election period), or within a reasonable review period (usually 3, 6 or 12 months).

#### **Step 2** Situational Analysis

A common understanding of the security situation is vital for responsible decision makers. The situational analysis considers the political, economic, social and environmental status in each area, and examines how developments in these areas may impact the safety and security of United Nations activities. It also considers the United Nations mandate and/or strategic priorities and how these could potentially affect the security situation or United Nations personnel, assets and operations, as well as threat groups/actors.

#### **Step 3** Programme Assessment

This assessment is the process by which the goals and specific implementation activities of all UNSMS organizations in-country are formally identified and assessed for any threat-related implications. Sufficient details must be provided about the programmes to be delivered - both generally (such as within over-arching mission goals) and specific to each programme.

#### Step 4 Threat Assessment

The Threat Assessment is the assessment of those actors and actions in the SRM area that may potentially cause harm to the United Nations system. These are assessed in the following categories: Armed Conflict, Terrorism, Crime and Civil Unrest. The intent and capabilities of the relevant threat actors are identified and assessed, along with the Inhibiting Context, which acts as a “restrainer” of the threats. In locations where UNDSS Security Information Analysts are present, their assessments will form a vital part of this process. The Threat Assessment ends with event descriptions, which are essentially forecasts for how specific threats might occur in the future.

#### Step 5 Security Risk Assessment

The Security Risk Assessment is the process by which the different threats of the United Nations presence and activities in-country are assessed against the existing vulnerabilities in order to determine the likelihood of a harmful threat event occurring, and the impact this may have on United Nations personnel, assets and operations. A risk matrix is used to determine the overall risk.



#### Gender considerations in the SRM

The SRM must be gender sensitive and gender-responsive. All gender-based threats, risks and vulnerabilities should be considered in the SRM process, including during risk analysis, identifying SRM measures for gender-related security incidents, managing stress and reporting gender-related security incidents. SRM measures, including for residences, should be reviewed on a regular basis with a gender perspective.

#### Step 6 Security Risk Management Measures

This step is the process by which measures and procedures to lower the risks - called SRM measures - are decided. This then results in the residual risk. All measures identified must be

directly linked to the preceding assessment, assisting to reduce either the likelihood (prevention) or the impact (mitigation) of an event, or both. SRM measures may include information, training, briefings, specialist resources, equipment, physical improvements to premises or facilities, or procedural changes. When selecting SRM measures, it is important to consider the time, cost and potential adverse impact of any decisions taken. Each measure will have strengths and weaknesses. The final decision of the DO should take these into account.



### Acceptable Risk Decisions

#### ACCEPTABLE RISK DECISION = BALANCING RISK AGAINST CRITICALITY

- a. Do not accept unnecessary risk
- b. Accept risk when benefits outweigh costs
- c. Make risk management decisions at the right level

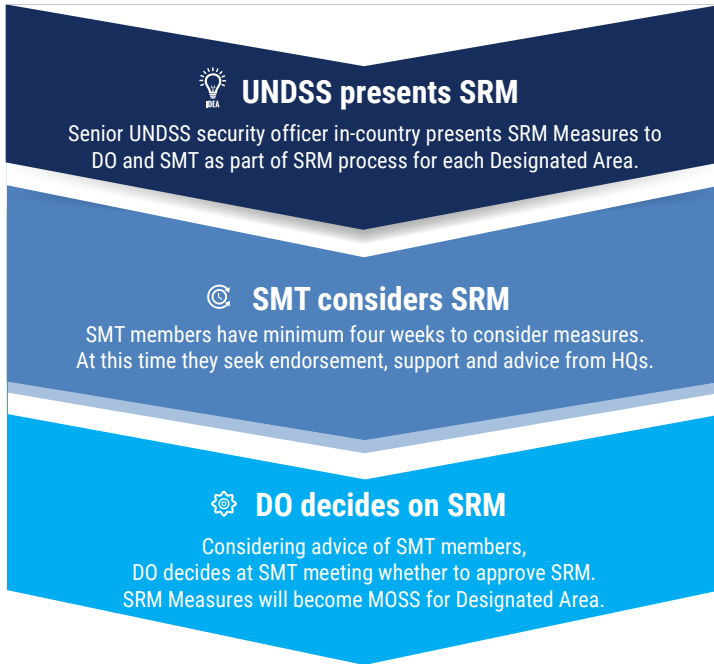
### Step 7 SRM Implementation

Once a decision is made, the SRM measures must be implemented, including through the allocation of resources where required. If the SRM measures are not implemented effectively, the SRM process fails, as risk is not being managed and reduced. The leadership of the DO and the implementation by the SMT is vital to ensuring the effective management of security risks.



### Which measures are mandatory?

SRM measures that have been approved by the DO, on the recommendation of the SMT, are mandatory in the SRM Area. These approved SRM measures are sometimes referred to as MOSS.



*Fig 4: The approval of SRM measures follows a multi-step process. UNDSS Headquarters Desk Officers maintain oversight throughout to provide support where required or requested.*

### **Step 8** Acceptable Risk

The Acceptable Risk Model includes the Programme Criticality Framework, as briefly introduced on pages 13 and 14. This model has three important principles to aid in the balancing of risks, highlighted in the box on page 30.

Under the Acceptable Risk Model, whether the risk of a given programme activity is acceptable will depend on the criticality of a programme (as determined by the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) through a Programme Criticality exercise), considered against the existing risk (as determined by the SRM process outlined above.) As Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator or the Special Representative of the Secretary General, the DO is responsible for ensuring the Programme Criticality process has been carried out. The DO is also responsible for ensuring that, when the risk is high or very high,

the correct approvals are sought and received for programme activity depending on the levels of risk.

### Step 9 Follow up and Review

The purpose of monitoring and evaluating the SRM process is to assess and improve the effectiveness of the SRM measures, or to remove or downgrade the measures as necessary. This process can take place through routine monitoring by the SMT, or through UNDSS internal processes such as spot checks or review by the UNDSS DRO Desk Officers.



#### Acceptance

The SRM should take into account acceptance, which can be considered in the situational analysis, the programme and threat assessments and the security risk assessment steps of the process. The SMT should encourage the implementation of measures such as communication campaigns, stakeholder/beneficiary meetings, negotiations, or other engagement with threat actors, where appropriate, in order to help secure acceptance. Acceptance can be defined as “good relations and consent as part of a security management strategy with local communities, parties to the conflict, and other relevant stakeholders and obtaining their acceptance and consent for the humanitarian organization’s presence and its work.” Its goal is to facilitate programme delivery.



# SPECIFIC SRM MEASURES

The results of the SRM may lead to any number of risk management measures that require implementation. There are four main strategies for managing risk (below).



## Main Strategies for Managing Risk

- **A**ccept the risk (no further action)
- **C**ontrol the risk (using prevention and/or mitigation measures)
- **A**void the risk (temporarily distance the target from the threat)
- **T**ransfer the risk (insurance, sub-contracts or other measures)

Of these, measures to avoid risk, including alternate work modalities and personnel and/or family restrictions, may be considered on a temporary basis. These measures have considerable physical and administrative impact to United Nations personnel and/or programmes and, as such, the DO and SMT should be familiar with the terms and the administrative implications, as highlighted below.

**Alternate Work Modalities:** These refer to measures which limit or totally remove the number of personnel or family members present during working hours at a specific location(s) with the view to limit or remove their exposure to unacceptable risk. Such measures could include: temporarily limiting the number of personnel at a United Nations premises, temporarily closing offices or establishing work-from-home arrangements.

**Personnel and/or Family Restrictions:** Temporary restrictions are placed on the presence of any or all personnel and/or eligible family members of United Nations internationally recruited personnel at a given location or area. They can include relocation or evacuation, as follows.

- **Relocation:** Relocation is the official movement of any personnel or eligible dependants from their normal place of assignment or place of work to another location within their country of assignment for the purpose of avoiding unacceptable risk. Relocation can be applied to all personnel and eligible family members. Entitlements are applicable.
- **Evacuation:** Evacuation is the official movement of international personnel and their eligible dependants from their place of assignment to a location outside of their country of assignment (safe haven country, home country or third country). It may apply to locally recruited personnel in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Secretary-General. Entitlements are applicable.

The decision to relocate and/or evacuate is submitted through the USG UNDSS to the Secretary-General on the recommendation of the DO. In the event of an evacuation, the USG UNDSS will distribute an All Agency Communiqué to advise of the details, and will notify UNSMS entities of any change or cessation of the relocation/evacuation.

In regards to the entitlements due to evacuation, individual parent organizations are responsible for all financial arrangements, including the payment of salary advances, allowances or other essential payments to their personnel as necessary. Further, individual organizations may have additional provisions and guidance for their personnel in the event of relocation or evacuation. For example, representatives of organizations participating in the UNSMS may institute Alternate Work Modalities solely for their personnel in response to agency-specific risks and inform the SMT and the senior UNDSS representative.



*Personnel Evacuated from Kitchanga, North Kivu./UN Photo*



## Evacuation of United Nations Personnel from Yemen Case Study: March 2015

The evacuation of United Nations personnel from Yemen was implemented after the intense aerial bombardment of various targets in the country on 25 March 2015. International UNSMS personnel were evacuated from Aden, Al Hudaydah and Sana'a to neighboring countries (Djibouti, Egypt and Ethiopia) in the following days. The review of the event identified lessons and best practices in relation to the **crisis response, security arrangements** and **evacuation procedures**.

1. Comprehensive and detailed **security planning** is essential in strengthening the level of preparedness. The evacuation plan should contain a detailed description of the arrangements, alternative triggers and means of evacuation to allow evacuations to be implemented in an organized and coordinated manner.
2. **Effective implementation of SRM measures** to lower the residual risk is essential for continued UN presence and continued programme operation. The purpose of authorizing a small humanitarian coordination group of international personnel to remain on the ground was to coordinate critical humanitarian activities, in line with PC1 activities. However, operations cannot be conducted if there is no investment in, and implementation of, risk management measures.
3. **Clearly defined roles and responsibilities** of personnel involved during the evacuation, including the support by security professionals of UNSMS organizations, are crucial for the efficient management of a large number of personnel at concentration points. This includes the timely appointment of the SA a.i. and the Deputy SA a.i. and the delegation of responsibility to locally recruited personnel to enable structured liaison and clear chain of accountability for security arrangements.

## TRIP: Security Clearance

It is mandatory for the DO to manage security clearance procedures for internal and external travel to the Designated Area. To assist with this responsibility, UNDSS manages a web-based system called the Travel Request Information Process (TRIP). Security clearance procedures are required so that the DO can monitor the location and number of United Nations system personnel and eligible family members, ensure they are included in the Country Security Plan and to communicate important security information in the event of a crisis or emergency. DOs may further delegate their authority to grant security clearances, generally to the senior-most security professional directly supporting them.

While this is not mandatory, personnel are encouraged to record personal travels in TRIP so that they may receive assistance in a crisis.

electronic Travel Advisory Application

**Safer • Anywhere • Anytime**



### The eTA app

In 2019, UNDSS released an application called eTA, which provides resources such as security clearance information and travel advisories for personnel of United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes. The application is available to all UN personnel. Its use is approved by the DO at the local level through the SRM process.

**3**

# **CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

The preceding chapters outlined the regular security duties and responsibilities of the DO and the SMT. This chapter lays out the practical steps to take in case of a safety and security crisis, as well as the necessary advance preparations.

The effective management of security crises is a crucial component of the leadership of the DO supported by the SMT. This responsibility includes ensuring appropriate preparation and response in the event of a security crisis impacting United Nations personnel. DOs shall make every effort to ensure that all preparedness measures for security crises are undertaken in the Designated Area in line with the level of threat and security risk.

## UN-WIDE CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Crisis management across the organization is guided by the *United Nations Crisis Management Policy* (2016, revised 2018). This policy specifies that the senior-most UN official in country is responsible and accountable for coordinating the management of the UN response to the crisis in country. Depending on the nature of the crisis, different UN entities have coordinating responsibilities. UNDSS coordinates the crisis response for major **safety and security incidents and/or hostage incidents**. Other types of crises are coordinated by different entities: humanitarian crisis situations are coordinated by the Emergency Relief Coordinator through the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; crisis in peace operations are managed by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) or the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA); the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights leads crisis in the event of grave violations of human rights; and serious health emergencies rising to the level of Public Health Emergency of International Concern are coordinated by the World Health Organization.

The United Nations Crisis Management Policy is overarching and strategic. It explains how UN actors should coordinate to respond collectively to complex situations that require a multidisciplinary approach. The Guidelines on *Management of Safety and Security Crisis Situations* are in line with the system-wide policy and provide operational guidance to the UNSMS.

Other lead entities have promulgated Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to guide crisis arrangements at HQ (SOP on Headquarters Crisis Response in Support of Peacekeeping Operations and SOP on DPA [now DPPA] Headquarters Arrangements in support of Crisis Response at the Field Level).

Effective leadership in crisis management:

- ✓ Take charge quickly and firmly, using your crisis team to best effect to provide advice and management on aspects where you lack knowledge;
- ✓ Make sure you have good situational awareness: what is happening, why it is happening and what may happen next;
- ✓ Be clear on your objectives and priorities; review them regularly to adapt to a changing situation;
- ✓ Accelerate decision-making to achieve timely, effective decisions; ensure concurrent activity to achieve rapid action;
- ✓ Give clear direction and guidance; assign clear responsibilities for tasks with deadlines;
- ✓ Focus at strategic and operational level, not detailed discussions at subordinate level;
- ✓ Instill a sense of urgency but also inspire confidence and remain calm.



**What's the difference between the UNSMS guidelines and the system-wide policy?**

The policy is strategic, while the guidelines are operational. The policy also applies to all crisis situations, while the guidelines are specific to the management of safety and security crises.



### What constitutes a “crisis”?

A crisis is defined as an incident or situation, whether natural or human-made, that due to its magnitude, complexity or gravity of potential consequence, requires a UN-wide coordinated multi-disciplinary response. Examples include natural disasters, inter/intrastate conflicts, acts of terrorism, pandemics or reputational issues, such as multiple cases of sexual exploitation and abuse.



### What differentiates a “safety\* and security crisis” from other types of crises?

Safety and security crisis is defined as an incident or situation, whether natural or human-made, that due to its magnitude, complexity or gravity of potential consequences presents an exceptional risk to the safety and security of UNSMS personnel, premises and assets. Often, safety and security crisis situations are part of broader political, military or humanitarian crises. In such complex contingencies, all United Nations crisis management pillars, including safety and security, must work together.

*\*The UNSMS covers three areas of safety: fire, road and air travel safety.*

## MANAGEMENT OF SAFETY AND SECURITY CRISES

Depending on where the crisis situation is unfolding, either the DO or ASC will function as the Crisis Manager (except for hostage incidents). The Crisis Manager has the responsibility and requisite authority to make critical decisions on the management and response to safety and security crisis situations. The DO must convene a Crisis Management Team within 24 hours following the event of a safety or security crisis, until the emergency is resolved.



The Crisis Management Team will implement and coordinate decisions made by the Crisis Manager. To coordinate specific operational aspects of the crisis response, the DO may also designate a Crisis Coordinator. In country team settings, where the Resident Coordinator or Executive Director is the designated crisis manager, the Principal/Chief or Security Adviser is designated as the Crisis Coordinator.



*One of two civilian staff members with the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) kidnapped in West Darfur arrives at El Fasher Airport. /UN Photo*

Finally, to support the Crisis Management Team and help coordinate, a Crisis Coordination Centre may also be established and equipped with adequate communications systems. As noted earlier in the chapter, UNDSS coordinates the crisis response for major safety and security incidents.

In the event a rapid decision is required to avoid loss of life or to resolve an impasse at the SMT level, the USG UNDSS may convene the Executive Group on Security to assist in decision-making.

While the above-mentioned arrangements are applicable to all types of United Nations field presence, specific crisis management field architecture may vary depending on the setting. The diagram on page 43 shows arrangements in a UN Country Team (vs. a UN peace mission) scenario.



### For Peace Operations

In countries/areas where peacekeeping operations or integrated special political missions are deployed, the mission Chief of Staff is generally designated as Crisis Coordinator.

In countries/areas where non-integrated special political missions are present, the mission Chief of Staff is normally the designated Crisis Coordinator, if the Head of Mission is the designated Crisis Manager.

The Crisis Coordinator convenes and chairs an Operations Coordination Body (OCB), also referred to as the Crisis Management Working Group (CMWG). The OCB/CMWG is a working-level, cross-component body responsible for supporting the Crisis Coordinator in all relevant tasks, such as supporting day-to-day crisis response activities, making policy recommendations and ensuring common messaging. The Crisis Coordinator acts as the link with the Crisis Manager and CMT to ensure that crisis management objectives are established and achieved. Existing coordination bodies can be designated as the OCB/CMWG during a crisis to avoid a proliferation of intra-mission coordination mechanisms.

The Crisis Manager and the Crisis Coordinator are supported by a secretariat for crisis management arrangements. In peacekeeping operations, the secretariat role is undertaken by the mission's Joint Operations Centre (JOC), where one exists, or an equivalent mission component designated by the Crisis Manager. In integrated special political missions, the secretariat role may be undertaken by the mission's Integrated Information Hub, where one exists, or an equivalent mission component designated by the Crisis Manager such as the office of the Chief of Staff or the Security Information and Operations Centre (SIOC).

In the non-integrated special political mission setting, a designated structure, for example the Integrated Information Hub (IIH) or the SIOC, serves as a 24/7 integrated information and reporting focal point and as the secretariat for the duration of the crisis. The JOC/IIH/SIOC, or a designated structure with similar functions and adequate capability, provides secretariat support for CMT and/or OCB/CMWG meetings, ensures 24/7 monitoring of and regular reporting on the crisis, acts as the integrated information centre for all crisis-related information, and keeps UNHQ updated via the UN Operations and Crisis Centre and, as required, the respective regional desk of the Regional Division in the DPPA-DPO Regional Structure.



### DO Crisis Management Response Actions

- ✓ Activate Crisis Management response and inform USG UNDSS;
- ✓ Assume role of Crisis Manager or, where appropriate, assign ASC to do so;
- ✓ Establish Crisis Management Team and designate Crisis Coordinator;
- ✓ Implement Security Plans;
- ✓ Set up crisis management reporting and information platform (Crisis Coordination Centre or equivalent).



### Information and Engagement

DOs and UNSMS organizations must include all personnel - nationally and internationally recruited - in security planning, as well as inform all of them of what assistance can be provided by the UNSMS in times of crisis.

#### CRISIS MANAGEMENT ARCHITECTURE

*Country Team setting*



Fig. 5: Crisis management architecture in a Country Team Setting

### Operational aims of crisis management and response:

- ✓ Save lives and protect UNSMS personnel
- ✓ Protect UNSMS premises and assets
- ✓ Minimize the impact of safety and security crisis on UN programmes and activities
- ✓ Ensure preparedness and recovery from impact of safety and security crisis
- ✓ Ensure return to UN programme delivery

## Activating Crisis Management Operations

Security crisis management operations are activated whenever the security situation is (or is likely to be) such that the security management requirements exceed the ability of the normal security structures, capacity, processes or procedures to manage the response effectively. They should be activated **immediately** in the aftermath of critical safety and security incidents affecting UNSMS personnel, including those resulting from natural disasters, aviation catastrophes, sudden spark of military hostilities, mass casualty or hostage incidents. They should be activated **partially** in situations with developing political, military, humanitarian crisis or civil unrests, when severe safety and security consequences to UNSMS personnel are expected or cannot be ruled out, or where the UNSMS operates in an environment of critical security incidents or threats of such incidents.

## Information Management

It is important that, during the crisis, relevant information is collected, collated and disseminated to decision-makers both in the field and at headquarters through dedicated channels.

# CRISIS PREPAREDNESS

Managing safety and security crisis situations in the field effectively depends on the level of crisis preparedness achieved through implementing UNSMS policies and guidelines. Crisis preparation should also include Saving Lives Together partners. This will enhance multi-level cooperation, security awareness and build response capacity of partners through enhanced information sharing and shared training initiatives. See page 61 for more information.



## Crisis Management in Integrated Mission Settings Case Study: South Sudan

The crisis that took place in Juba, South Sudan, from 8 to 11 July 2016, presented several key lessons which can be implemented to greatly increase effectiveness in emergency preparedness planning, respective training and coordination and implementation of plans in integrated mission settings.

**Planning** should include a dedicated focal point from national security; clarification of the command and control structure and role distribution; and, in addition, be subjected to continuous review to ensure improvement of the planning processes. Planning and preparing for large numbers of internally displaced people entering UN facilities is a critical element of crisis management planning.

Mission wide crisis management **preparedness** can be achieved through **training** exercises and **rehearsals** using scenarios and integrating all necessary UN actors. Greater security **training outreach to partners** as advocated in the Saving Lives Together framework will improve response efficiency during management of crises. Besides making specific provisions for the potential unique security risks to female personnel in a crisis, any needs assessment of training activities must also be cognizant of **security risks related to gender**. Relevant and targeted training to those identified at greater risk remains both an essential mitigation and prevention strategy. Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments (SSAFE) training is one area of training that develops preparedness for all personnel. Personnel expressly indicated the value of having received SSAFE training in advance of the 2016 crisis.

There are three central areas of preparedness:

- 1 A timely, updated SRM document identifying likely threat scenarios, determining security risks and developing and implementing SRM measures. (See chapter 2 for more on the SRM).
- 2 The security plan, which outlines planned response actions to address anticipated threat scenarios. (See section below for more information.)
- 3 Crisis management training and exercises, which should be conducted periodically (at least annually).

## Security Planning

The security plans should include security arrangements such as: updated and verified lists of internationally and locally recruited personnel and their eligible family members; an emergency communication system to provide reliable communications between the DO, the senior UNDSS official, the SMT, Wardens and relevant United Nations offices outside the country, mass casualty and medical evacuation plans; and the identification of concentration points and related means of relocation or evacuation as required.

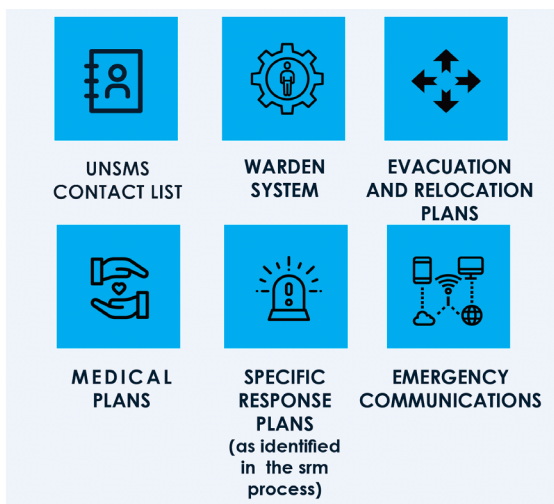


Fig. 6: The security plan consists of six key components.

**Security plans should be regularly maintained and tested, at minimum on an annual basis.** This could be done through table-top crisis management exercises, **evacuation drills** and the **activation of warden systems** and **communications trees**. Exercise scenarios should be built around events and security threats identified in the SRM process. Preparedness for a range of contingencies is necessary to ensure an effective response to crises. ASCs should also test their Area Security Plans at least as often and, in conjunction, with the country security plan.

While the senior security professional prepares, maintains and tests Security Plans in collaboration with Security Cells, the DO has a central role in security planning.

As noted earlier, DOs and UNSMS organizations must include locally recruited personnel in security planning, and inform them on what assistance the UNSMS could provide in times of crisis.

The DO:

- ✓ approves the security plans;
- ✓ ensures that personnel lists are updated;
- ✓ liaises with organizations outside the UNSMS;
- ✓ engages with the Host Government;
- ✓ approves assistance to other people (outside the UNSMS).

### Assistance to other persons

**When possible** and **to the extent feasible**, the UNSMS may lend assistance in a crisis situation for **in extremis support**. Travel or financial assistance will be provided on a **space-available** and **reimbursable basis**. This includes assistance to NGOs covered under the Saving Lives Together Framework of cooperation with the United Nations. The DO authorizes the details of this assistance.

## INCIDENTS TARGETING PERSONNEL AND PREMISES

Increasingly, United Nations personnel and premises have been targeted directly by a range of hostile threat actors resulting in injuries, fatalities, impact to programmes or damage to United Nations facilities. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, the DO may be required to manage a crisis situation, and/or respond to post-incident reviews including Boards of Inquiry. With respect to gender-based security incidents, care should be taken to respect the response and reporting wishes of the affected personnel. The UNSMS has promulgated a gender manual which provides more detailed explanations on how to address gender considerations in security management.

Where perpetrators of direct attacks against the United Nations have been identified, the DO needs to pursue further with the relevant host Government office to ensure appropriate action is taken, including police investigations and, where applicable, actions in accordance with the Convention on the Safety and Security of United Nations and Associated Personnel.





### UNSMS Board of Inquiry

A Board of Inquiry (BOI) is a mechanism to review investigation reports and record the facts of critical security incidents involving organizations of the UNSMS, including whether the occurrence took place as a result of the acts or omissions of any individual(s). A BOI is neither an investigative nor a judicial process and does not make recommendations on questions of compensation, legal liability or disciplinary action. The purpose of a BOI is to identify gaps or deficiencies in UNSMS SRM policies, procedures or operations, to strengthen SRM controls (lessons learned) and to improve accountability for security risk management. Pursuant to Security Policy Manual Chapter V, Section E, a BOI may be convened after the investigators of the affected organizations have completed their investigation of the incident in accordance with their applicable legal framework.

**Note:** The policy covering a UNSMS BOI is different from those governing BOIs specifically for peacekeeping missions and special political missions. These are triggered by specific circumstances, which are primarily concerned with cases of death, injury or kidnapping involving mission personnel, or major damage or loss of assets owned by the mission or involving mission personnel. These circumstances are outlined in the SOP for such BOIs.

# 4

## **SPECIFIC SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS**

This chapter outlines specific security considerations, including for those that should be mainstreamed, such as gender, along with several distinct situations, such as event security and arrest and detention of personnel.

## GENDER AND INCLUSIVITY

United Nations personnel experience different risks. Ensuring that these diverse risks are included in the SRM is a key responsibility of the DO and the SMT, as outlined in the Framework of Accountability. Security operations must be gender-sensitive and gender-responsive to ensure the safety and security of its entire workforce. The UNSMS Policy on Gender Inclusion in Security Risk Management outlines requirements that must be considered at different stages of the SRM process. The aim is to ensure that specific gender-based threats or measures are identified and appropriately included in all security planning.

- All incoming security briefings must include gender-specific threats, risks and related mitigation measures in the duty country.
- Residential security measures and contingency plans must be reviewed to ensure they are gender inclusive.
- The SRM in each country must address gender at each stage of the process, ensuring appropriate and effective mitigation measures are identified and implemented.
- All UNSMS personnel must complete the 'I Know Gender' training course.
- All locations must develop an aide-memoire providing guidance to personnel on available resources in the event of a gender-based security incident.



Applying a gender lens throughout the SRM process is critical to ensuring that gender perspectives are captured and addressed.

Gender-based security incidents<sup>1</sup>, including sexual violence, may occur against internationally and locally recruited United Nations personnel in your area of responsibility. In response to these serious incidents, security personnel are guided by core principles, including, but not limited to: the identification of, and transfer to, a safe space, if requested by the affected person; provision of expert medical and psychosocial services if required; and strict confidentiality. This information should be consolidated by UNDSS and the Security Cell in the aide-memoire for responding to a gender-based security incident. Where available, gender experts in-country or regionally based can be consulted to provide input on specific gender and security-related risks, hence ensuring that these are appropriately integrated into the SRM. A Manual on Gender Considerations in Security Management, published in 2019, offers practical advice for security professionals.



Attitudes to sexuality and the expressions of gender and sexual orientation vary from one country to another. Some may be instilled from a political level; others may be based on traditions, religious, cultural and societal norms. At the United Nations, human rights apply equally to all people regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics (more commonly referred to as SOGIESC) in just the same way as they do to age, race and religion.

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<sup>1</sup> Gender refers to the attributes, opportunities and relationships associated with being male or female, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-gender and inter-sex (LGBTI) individuals.

## DISABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The SRM process should be inclusive of disability considerations, from situational analysis, specific threat assessment and security risk assessment to the identification of SRM measures. Within UN premises, the prevention and mitigation measures should respond to disability-based security risks. Security plans and movements such as duty travel or relocation should also cater to disability considerations.

## LOCALLY RECRUITED PERSONNEL

All UNSMS policies apply to all United Nations personnel, regardless of contract type. As with internationally recruited personnel, the security of locally recruited personnel is managed through the SRM process. Locally recruited personnel may be operating in areas where their ethnicity or origins require specific attention, particularly in cross-line operations. These additional risks must be considered in the SRM.

In addition, tasks cannot be randomly reassigned from one category of personnel to another without adequate justification. If tasks are assigned to locally recruited personnel because risk to internationally recruited personnel is unacceptable, the SRM process must demonstrate that risk to locally recruited personnel falls within acceptable levels. To note, locally recruited personnel and family can only be evacuated in exceptional circumstances, and by the decision of the Secretary-General. The personnel and their families may, however, choose to be internally relocated.

## ABDUCTION OF PERSONNEL

As the organizations of the UNSMS are increasingly called upon to operate in insecure areas, the UNSMS has developed a comprehensive policy, along with targeted guidelines and training, for managing hostage incidents. The UNSMS policy on hostage incident management stipulates that the Organization will not pay ransom nor make any substantial concessions to hostage takers, nor shall it intervene with Member States to make exchanges for hostages. Ransom or other concessions for the release of a hostage encourage potential hostage-takers and thus increase the danger that other personnel might face in the future.

In the event of a hostage-taking incident, the DO is responsible for establishing a team to manage the incident, securing the speedy and safe release of the hostage(s), including contacting the host Government authorities and reviewing security measures to determine if they should be enhanced. UNDSS will send trained experts in hostage incident management if there are none in your Designated Area.

The USG UNDSS will take the necessary decisions and ensure a coherent response by the United Nations. Please see the chapter on Crisis Management for more information on response during safety and security crises, which include hostage incidents.



*An international contractor from India (second from left) working with the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), is welcomed at El Fasher Airport. He had been abducted in El Fasher, North Darfur./UN Photo*

# ARREST AND DETENTION OF PERSONNEL

United Nations personnel must respect the laws and regulations of the host Government and refrain from any action or activity incompatible with the impartial and international nature of their duties<sup>2</sup>. United Nations international and locally recruited personnel may be subject to arrest and detention by government authorities due to infringement of host Government(s) laws and regulations. United Nations personnel have also been arrested or detained without due cause.

In the event of arrest of United Nations personnel, the DO is required to immediately contact the host Government Foreign Ministry or relevant government office and request information about the arrest or detention and charges concerned, and request access as soon as possible for a United Nations official and, as appropriate, a physician. The DO may also underscore the host Government's responsibilities for United Nations personnel to be treated in accordance with universally recognized standards of human rights and the principles of the Geneva Conventions of 1949. The DO must also notify the USG UNDSS.

As the organizations comprising the UNSMS are, in some cases, subject to different legal regimes governing their status, privileges and immunities, the employing organization shall determine what additional action may be required in accordance with its legal status and applicable legal instruments.

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<sup>2</sup> See Staff Rules and Regulations of the United Nations (ST/SGB/2016/1), Art. 1, Regulation 1.1(f); Art. 1, Regulation 1.2(f); Art. 1, Regulation 1.2(m); Chapter 1, Rule 1.2(b); and Chapter 1, Rule 1.2(q)

## PHYSICAL SECURITY

In response to an increase in attacks specifically against United Nations premises (buildings, offices, storage facilities), UNDSS has created a Physical Security Unit to ensure expertise on physical protection is provided to DOs and to the entire UNSMS. The core functions of the Physical Security Unit include:

- (a) Conducting physical security assessments of UNSMS premises and assisting in the implementation of physical security risk management measures in UNSMS premises;
- (b) Conducting blast vulnerability assessments and recommending security risk management measures related to blast threats at United Nations Security Management System premises;
- (c) Preparing standards and guidelines on physical security equipment, designs, knowledge management content, research material and training programmes;
- (d) Collaborating with technical experts and security focal points of UNSMS entities on physical security.

Many United Nations premises are provided by Member States or rented by UNSMS organizations and are not built primarily with security and safety considerations in mind. If so determined by the SRM process, and without abrogating the responsibility of the host Government for the security of United Nations premises, additional security measures for premises may be implemented by the UNSMS beyond those provided by host Governments.

Organizations of the UNSMS are responsible for providing adequate funding to meet their premises security needs. Organizations of the UNSMS may also implement additional SRM measures for their respective premises, as they determine appropriate. Lastly, common premises shared by UNSMS organizations are an important component of the Secretary-General's UN Reform Programme. Common premises aim to build closer ties among



UNSMS personnel and promote a more unified presence at country level in a cost-effective manner. In most cases, security management oversight of common premises is the responsibility of the senior UNDSS representative, though in some cases, a security professional of a UNSMS organization may undertake the role. Guidelines on Security Management of UN Premises have been produced to clarify roles and responsibilities on the issue.

## EVENT SECURITY



*A UNDSS officer awaits arriving delegations on the first day of the General Assembly's seventy-third general debate./UN Photo*

A UNSMS organization may hold an event or conference in your Designated Area. These events can attract large numbers of United Nations personnel and other participants in venues that are normally not under the organizational control of the UNSMS.

The UNSMS organization sponsoring or organizing an event or conference is responsible for notifying the DO in advance of any planned event in the Designated Area, including information on the expected numbers of attendees and profiles of the event and invited guests. In consultation with the SMT and UNDSS in-country and at headquarters, and based on the conclusions of an event-specific SRM process, the DO may determine whether additional security capacity and/or specialized assistance for this event is required, and provide clearance for the event to proceed.

The sponsoring United Nations organization shall make necessary arrangements and provide required financial resources to comply with the required SRM measures.

## PROTECTIVE SECURITY SERVICES

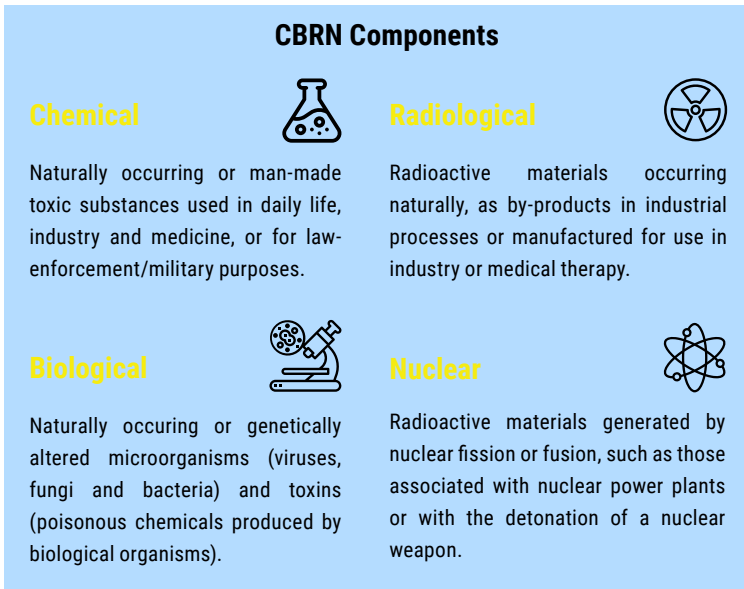
In the course of their duties, senior United Nations officials may be subject to increased threat due to their higher visibility, leadership roles in the implementation of specific mandates and programmes or prior service.

Senior United Nations officials may face additional threats in situations where they have issued statements or undertaken actions against various threat actors, or represent positions contrary to the aims of such groups. UNDSS personnel identify and assess these threats through an SRM process. Based on the outcome of this, senior United Nations officials may be provided with protective services, usually coordinated with, or provided by, the host Government. In rare situations, as the senior representative in-country, the DO may exceptionally receive protective services on the advice of UNDSS during travel in country or during periods of heightened risk. The Division of Security and Safety Services is responsible for the setting of standards and coordination of protective security services throughout the UNSMS.

## CBRN

Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) events are actions or occurrences that may lead to the release or dispersal of hazardous materials. The UNSMS CBRN policy addresses the **deliberate** release of a CBRN agent, which may be conducted by States, Non-State Armed Groups, criminal groups or individuals. It may result in hazardous conditions in the operating environment, such as contaminated air or water.

Where the risk of a CBRN event is unacceptable (very likely and critical impact or compared with programme criticality), **risk avoidance is required**. UNSMS organizations will not undertake or continue operations in an environment where CBRN attacks are occurring or have occurred. Personnel from entities with mandates to operate in environments with CBRN hazards are exempt from this, if their training and equipment lower the likelihood and/or impact, making the risk acceptable.



*Fig. 7: CBRN threats may consist of any of the above components.*

The threat of CBRN attacks is addressed through the SRM process. The primary responsibility for response rests with the host Government. However, if the host Government capacity is inadequate, the DO should request from the USG UNDSS strategic interventions at the appropriate level. If warranted, the DO should also consult with the USG UNDSS on acquiring CBRN technical expertise. Expert resources could be sought, primarily from specialised UNSMS organisations, Member States and other international organizations.



### SRM measures for CBRN threats

SRM measures for CBRN threats could include alternate work modalities, awareness programmes for personnel, and planning for the mitigation of assessed, specific CBRN risks.

## PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

The conditions under which United Nations personnel operate have changed drastically over the years. This has substantially increased the number of personnel exposed to stress, particularly critical incident stress, the Critical Incident Stress Management Unit (CISMU), coordinates with counsellors of other UNSMS organizations and provides psychosocial services and counselling to those who are at risk of experiencing stress, including critical incident stress.

CISMU, with counsellors of other UNSMS organizations, also delivers a range of supporting services including assessing psychosocial status and needs of United Nations personnel and dependents in the duty station, identifying and training local counsellors, and conducting peer helper training.

DOs and SMTs should ensure that personnel in the Designated Areas are fully aware of CISMU's services, and encourage personnel to make use of these services as appropriate, but particularly in the event of a critical security incident. DOs and SMTs are also encouraged to make use of CISMU's services as a resource to aid their own understanding of the concerns, stressors and challenges to the well-being of personnel in the Designated Area, in line with relevant confidentiality provisions.

## SECURITY OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNER NGOS

Personnel of international NGOs in Designated Areas do not fall under the scope of the UNSMS in accordance with the UNSMS Applicability Policy. However, security collaboration between the UNSMS and implementing partners is important to enable programme delivery at the country or mission level.

Saving Lives Together is a framework for security collaboration between the UNSMS and NGOs, both national and international. It provides for the convening of forums in the Designated Area for security collaboration and information-sharing as well as establishing partnerships for training, emergency responses to security situations or consolidated security related resources.

The DO and the SMT are encouraged to promote the principles of the Saving Lives Together framework and implementing measures identified in this policy, within available resources.

## SECURITY COMMUNICATIONS

Security communications have changed over the years due to advances in technology. The UNSMS has evolved its security communications approach to support the overall security needs under all circumstances, not only in emergencies. Therefore, "Emergency Communications Systems" supported by conventional radio rooms are replaced by "Security Communications Systems" supported by Security Operations Centres.

To support these changes through new standards, an inter-agency collaborative project - the "Telecommunications Security Standards" (TESS) project - commenced in 2018. In 2020, this project was converted into a continued service called "{TESS+}".

At country level, the final decision on security communications rests with the DO, supported by the SMT, and should be included in the country's SRM. As part of the security planning arrangements, the most senior security professional advises the DO in identifying the appropriate security communications systems for each operational area. This is done in consultation with the Security Cell, the SMT and the local IT Working Group and supported by the TESS team.

## SAFETY

### HARMFUL EVENTS: THREATS OR HAZARDS?

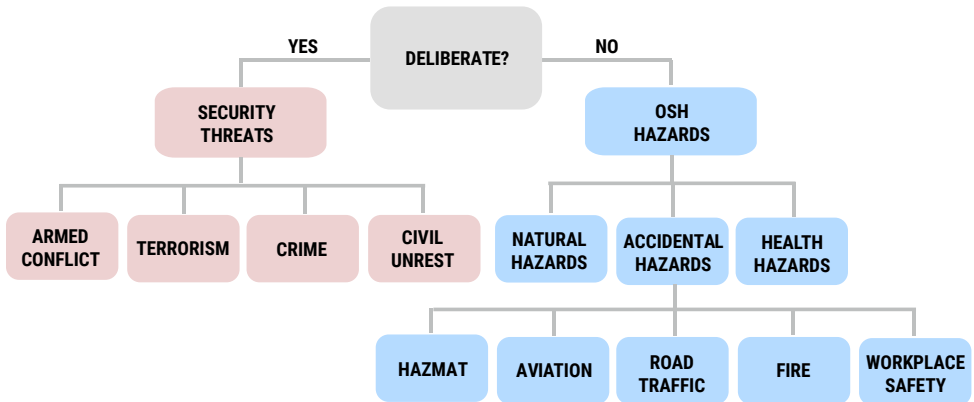


Fig. 8: Harmful events are classified into security threats or OSH hazards.

The SRM process distinguishes security from safety. Security is related to undesirable events deliberately caused by people, while safety is related to undesirable events that are not deliberate, such as natural disasters. The UNSMS has a remit for **three areas** of safety: road safety, fire safety and aviation safety. There are therefore many other areas of safety not covered by the UNSMS, including some occupational health and safety (OSH) issues such as workplace safety. The above schematic shows a simple classification of security threats versus safety (or OSH) hazards.



### OSH at the UN Secretariat

Within the UN Secretariat, a dedicated Division of Health Management and Occupational Safety & Health (known as DHMOSH) has been established. The new division, part of the Department of Operational Support, aims to integrate Secretariat safety risk management programmes and safety categories under one OSH risk management system. For more information, please see [unosh.org](http://unosh.org) or email [osh@un.org](mailto:osh@un.org).

## Road Safety



Fig. 9: The UN Road Safety Strategy has five inter-linked pillars.

Road and vehicle-related crashes are a common cause of injury and death among United Nations personnel and others. Poor road safety practices are not only a danger to drivers, passengers and other road users, but also impede the ability of the organization to implement its programmes and can adversely affect acceptance and generate resentment within the local population towards the United Nations. The UNSMS is working across its member organizations to ensure a consistent and cohesive approach to road safety is taken across the United Nations.



### **“Safer Journeys Begin with US”: The UN-Wide Road Safety Strategy**

In 2019, the UN Road Safety Strategy was launched to curb road crashes. In line with SDG 3.6, the approach aims to halve the number of UN personnel and other road users killed or seriously injured in road traffic crashes involving UN vehicles. The aim of the strategy is to provide a commitment from all United Nations organizations to a single vision and agreed set of objectives and actions that focus on: improved road safety management, safer vehicles, safer road users, improved post-crash response and safer driving environments within UN premises. The United Nations is engaged in developing a pro-active, cross-sectoral and forward-looking approach to road safety which requires instilling a safety culture in the Organization, while managing the interaction between speed, vehicles, road infrastructure and human behaviour in a holistic manner.

### **Fire Safety**

The UNSMS has established basic fire prevention principles, as well as guidance on preparation and response, in order to minimize the risk from fire to personnel, assets and operations. The DO is responsible for ensuring the establishment, implementation and annual review of all Fire Safety Plans within the Designated Area.



*A UNDSS officer instructs a staff member on the use of a fire extinguisher during a Safety and Security Week demonstration at UN Headquarters./UN Photo*



## Aviation Safety

UNDSS, through the Commercial Air Travel Safety Unit (CATSU), provides members of the UNSMS with information and guidance regarding the suitability of commercial air operators for use worldwide.

Each UNSMS entity makes decisions on the use of commercial air operators and donated flights for their personnel. To facilitate their decisions, CATSU provides a single list of recommended air operators to authorized users, as per the new Commercial Air Travel Safety Policy promulgated in 2019. UNSMS entities may request additional support from CATSU, including expanded technical reviews and/or on-the-ground assessments of air operators.

The chart below identifies the options that UN entities should consider for circumstances where there is no recommended commercial air operator available. In an emergency situation, the DO has the authority to approve the use of any air operator, to ensure safety and security of UN personnel.

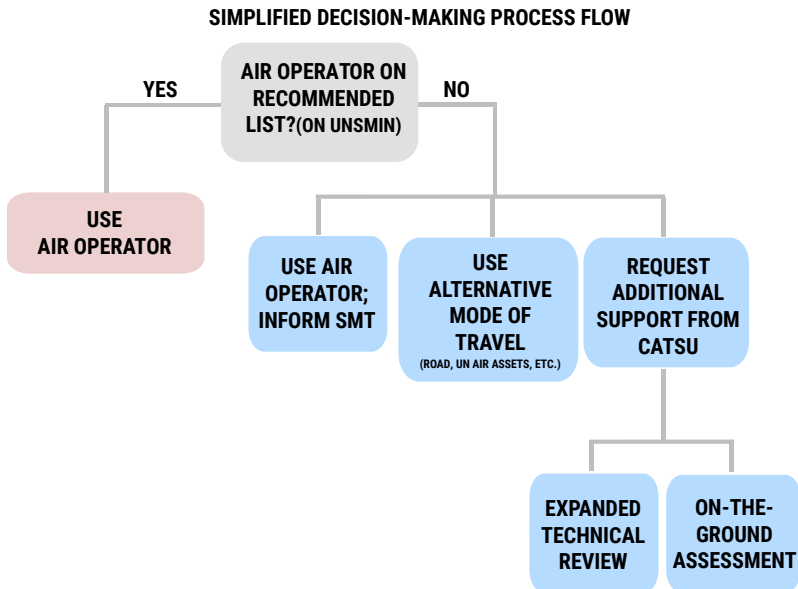


Fig. 10: The decision-making process flow for commercial air travel safety

**5**

# **SECURITY ADMINISTRATION**

This final chapter outlines some administrative guidance on security budgets, the determination of duty station classifications and the supervision of security personnel in the Designated Area.

## SECURITY BUDGETS

Budgets for security personnel, equipment and services are a necessary and important element of ensuring a sustainable and reliable security management system.

At the local level, there are different sources of funding for safety and security activities; each has a different goal and responds to different budgetary rules.

Each UNDSS field office receives an Authorized Spending Limit and field operational budget funded by Jointly Funded Activities (JFA). These cover authorized positions and General Operating Expenses. In peace missions, missions' security officers staffing, training and activities are supported by the mission's budget. In addition, extra-budgetary funding may support specific programme activities.

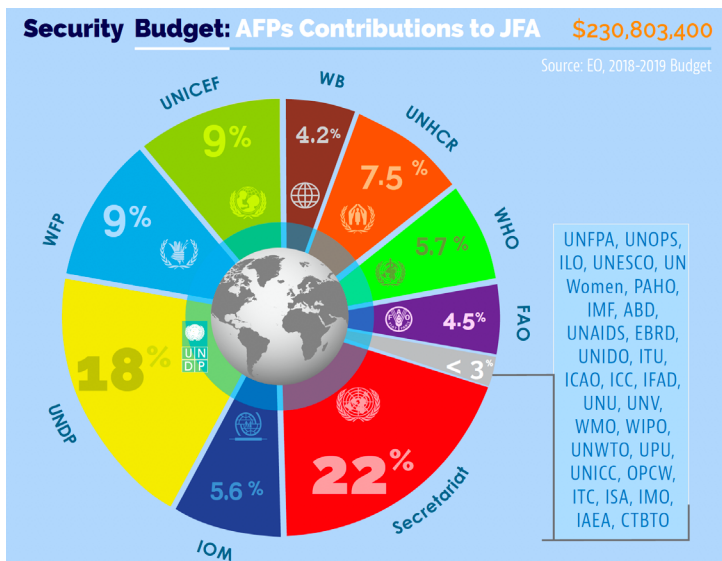


Fig. 11: JFA Security Budget for 2018-19

In addition, a Locally Cost-Shared Security Budget (LCSSB) can be established and approved by the DO, in consultation with the SMT, to cover the common local security needs.

## The LCSSB

The LCSSB aims to address common security concerns at the country/area level that are not funded through other sources. These costs are shared among UNSMS organizations based on local headcount. UNDSS is exempt of the contribution to the LCSSB as per the HLCM's decision decision.

The LCSSB submission must be based on measures identified in the SRM process. It is distinct from UNDSS activities funded by the JFA. Eight types of activities may be funded: identification programme, security operational support, communications structure, security training, crisis coordination centre, guard force, psychosocial support and vehicle requirements. Organizations outside of the UNSMS should not be contributing to the LCSSB. While an administering agency oversees the financial status of the LCSSB, the budget is prepared and overseen by the P/C/SA.



### The main principles of the LCSSB

Meant for common security needs and supports SRM measures identified through the SRM process approved by the DO/SMT. SMT members should consult with their Security Focal Points (SFPs) prior to approval.

**Consolidated at country level**  
**Includes both capital and recurring costs**  
**Cost-effective**

The process consists of ten steps, as shown on the following diagram.



Fig. 12: The LCSSB process

## Additional Resources

The DO may request additional security capacity in their Designated Area through the surge programme in the following circumstances/situations:

- Security emergencies and crisis situations
- Reinforcement of UNDSS capacity in the field or at HQs
- Temporary security coverage of additional field locations
- Security support in response to humanitarian emergencies
- Hostage takings /abductions
- Other requirements - as directed by the USG UNDSS or Director/Deputy Director DRO.

As UNDSS does not have a 'standing' capacity, the surge deployment programme uses existing resources of UNDSS, DPO, DOS or DPPA and other UNSMS organizations.

Regular surge requests that are funded from the JFA should be addressed to the respective Regional Section of DRO for review and endorsement.

Surge requests that are funded through extra-budgetary security projects are to be addressed to the DRO Operations Officer.

## DUTY STATION CLASSIFICATION

Duty station classifications are administered by non-security bodies, although the DO and the SMT should be familiar with the processes.

Most of the United Nations organizations' work is done in the field and often in duty stations where living and working conditions are difficult. This is recognized through a system whereby duty stations are accorded a classification of A to E that denotes the overall quality of life at a particular duty station, with A signifying the lowest level of hardship. Based on the hardship level, personnel may receive a hardship allowance to compensate for the difficult living conditions. The classification is determined by a working

group of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and based on the outcomes of a questionnaire issued to the UNCT. In determining the degree of hardship, consideration is given to local conditions of safety and security, health care, education, housing, climate, isolation and the availability of basic amenities. Thus, security forms one component of the overall hardship assessment.

While ICSC reviews are conducted once every three years on a regional and rotational basis, some duty stations are reviewed more frequently, such as those with a difficult or volatile security situation. (More information can be found on the ICSC website: <http://icsc.un.org>).

## DANGER PAY

Danger pay is a special allowance established for internationally and locally recruited staff who are required to work in locations where very dangerous conditions prevail. The DO may submit a request for danger pay to be introduced for a particular area to the USG UNDSS, in strict conformity with established ICSC criteria<sup>1</sup>. Submissions to the USG UNDSS must include the relevant SRM process and a thorough and detailed analysis of the prevailing security situation in the specific duty station.

Although requests are submitted through the USG UNDSS, the Chair of the ICSC, under delegated authority from the Commission, takes the final decision. The application of danger pay must be reviewed every three months following the same process.

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<sup>1</sup> The criteria are: (1) Duty stations where UNSMS personnel and premises are targeted owing to their association with, or employment by, UNSMS organizations; (2) Duty stations where UNSMS personnel are at high risk of becoming collateral damage in a war or active armed conflict; (3) Non-protected environments where medical personnel are at risk when deployed to deal with public health emergencies.

# ROLE OF SENIOR UNDSS REPRESENTATIVE

The senior UNDSS representative (P/C/SA) serves as the primary adviser to the DO on all aspects of security management, crisis readiness and preparedness in the Designated Area. It is important that the DO extends effective management and oversight of the senior UNDSS representative through the following:

- Maintain a direct communication line with the senior UNDSS representative and hold regular meetings with him/her to receive security advice on any security management issues.
- Direct and oversee the implementation of SRM by the senior UNDSS representative as well as UNSMS policies and procedures at the Designated Area.
- Ensure the senior UNDSS representative is included in UNCT management meetings, working groups and decision-making bodies, as appropriate, in order to ensure the integration of security in country-wide planning and programmes.
- Introduce the senior UNDSS representative to host Government officials to ensure security liaison and collaboration with focal points at the working level who have been designated by the senior national authorities.
- Conduct objective evaluations and provide regular feedback to UNDSS on the performance of the senior UNDSS representative.





### UN Secretariat Safety and Security Integration

UN security personnel serving in UN peacekeeping missions and Special Political Missions fall under UNDSS oversight and management. This does not apply to security personnel who are employed by other UNSMS organizations.

For more information on the various authorities related to budget, finance, recruitment, training, security management, logistics and procurement, please refer to the Secretary-General's memo dated 28 December 2016 and Security Integration Guidelines Update 2020. (The documents are available on [unsmin.org](https://unsmin.org).)

## ARMING OF SECURITY PROFESSIONALS

Under exceptional circumstances, the DO, in consultation with the SMT, may request the arming of security personnel for a limited duration in order to undertake specific protection functions. The authorization for this is provided by the USG UNDSS following a stringent approval process. Nevertheless, senior security personnel remain, above all, security advisers.



### Other Security Professionals

The DO should make sure that single-agency professionals are duly integrated in the management of security in the Designated Area and able to participate at the dedicated fora (e.g. Security Cell/working groups, coordinated by the most senior UNDSS representative), as per policy.

## UNDSS ORGANIZATION CHART

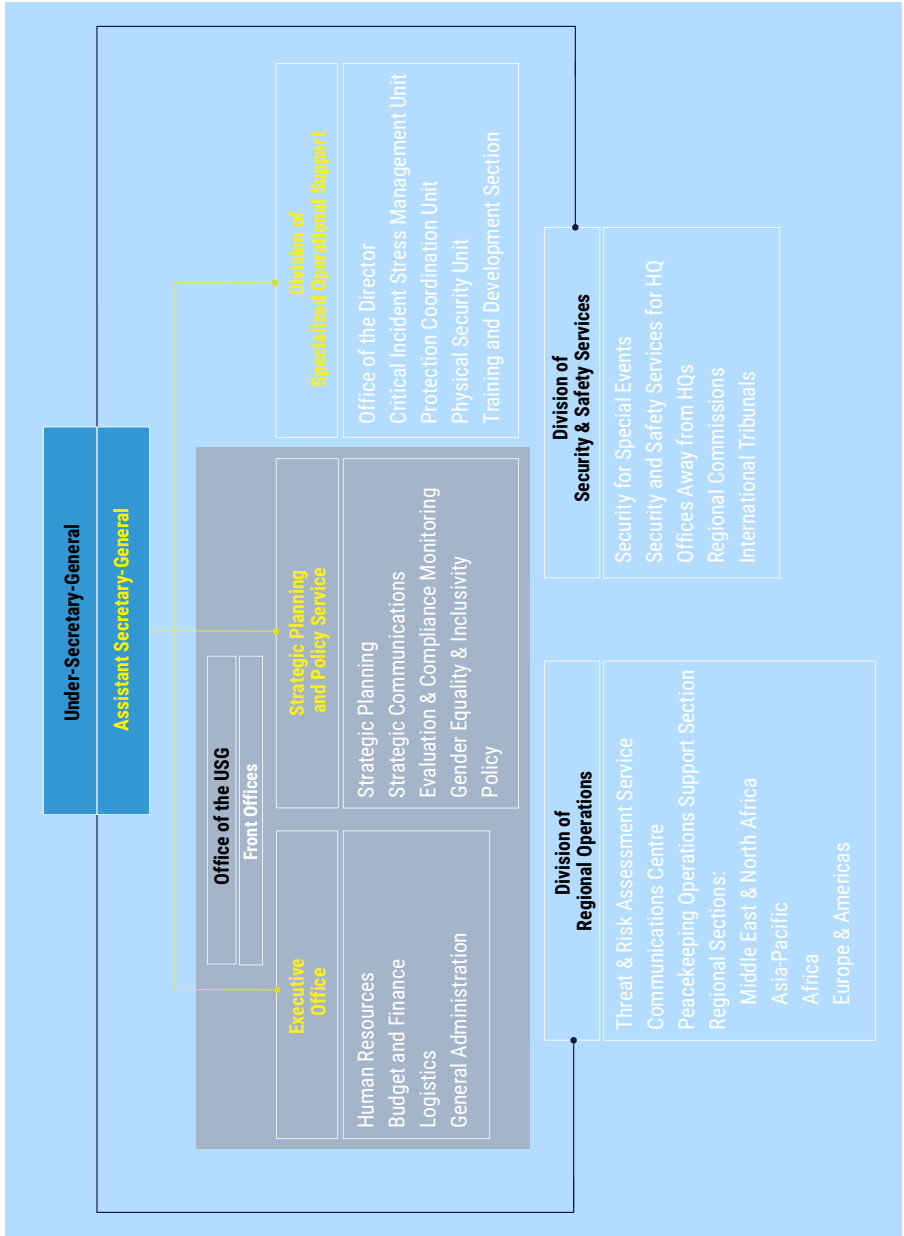


Fig. 13: UNDSS Organization Chart



*The DO and SMT Handbook: A Guide for Designated Officials for Security and Security Management Teams (New Edition)* is a handy reference to the policy and security management framework provided by the United Nations Security Management System. The handbook was updated in 2020 to reflect new policies and other recent guidance, and includes a new chapter on crisis management.

The handbook is divided into five main chapters that cover the most important aspects of these security functions.

- 1 Legal and Policy Framework** describes the United Nations and UNSMS policy framework that supports the DO and the SMT in the discharge of their duties.
- 2 Operational Guidance** focuses on the day-to-day operational roles of the DO and the SMT, particularly those responsibilities relating to the Security Risk Management process.
- 3 Crisis Management** focuses on the planning and response during a crisis situation, and includes practical guidance such as checklists.
- 4 Additional Security Considerations** addresses additional security considerations that DOs and SMTs must take into account, such as the inclusion of gender in security management, as well as specific situations like safety-related issues and arrest and detention of personnel.
- 5 Security Administration** provides guidance on administrative issues related to security, such as security budgets and the supervision of security personnel.



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