

Statement of the Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

7 December 2012

Civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict
(ACABQ report A/67/583)

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report (A/67/583) on the report of the Secretary-General on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict (A/67/312-S/2012/645), which deals with efforts aimed at improving United Nations support to capacity-building in countries emerging from conflict.

I would first like to point out the Committee's observation that the Secretary-General's report is directed to multiple audiences and will be considered in different intergovernmental fora as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 66/255. The Committee therefore offers only preliminary advice only on the administrative and budgetary implications of this initiative. It also notes that the different elements described in the Secretary-general's report remain largely conceptual in nature and do not outline precise programmatic, administrative or budgetary implications at this stage.

Mr. Chairman,

As an overall observation, the Committee is of the view that the initiative needs a more precise articulation of the desired end-state, along with a clearer set of timelines, activities and deliverables and identification of those entities to be held responsible and accountable for delivering expected outcomes. The Secretary-General does not clearly define the scope of the initiative nor does he make clear linkages with actions or aspects that are already underway within other existing work-streams or other reform initiatives. In this connection, the Committee recommends that careful attention be given as to whether achievement of the initiative's longer term goals will require the enhancement of existing organizational structures or additional resources. The Committee points out the need to avoid overlap or duplication of existing Secretariat or common system structures in this regard.

The Committee makes comments on the three main elements of the initiative, as described by the Secretary-General – namely, national ownership, partnerships and expertise; and financial and managerial agility. I will limit my comments to the latter two elements.

Specifically on partnerships, the Secretary-General describes efforts to date to develop an online platform, CAPMATCH, with the purpose of better matching the demand and supply of specialized civilian capacities in five critical areas. The Advisory Committee points out that it has some concerns with the limited nature of the current vetting procedures for organizations participating in CAPMATCH and looks forward to receiving specific proposals on how

exposure to risks could be appropriately mitigated through the application of suitable controls. In addition, it believes a full-fledged proposal on CAPMATCH's servicing and resource requirements along with performance and development benchmarks is needed.

On the Secretary-General's proposals to improve the financial flexibility for its field missions, the Committee emphasizes the importance of striking an appropriate balance between the authority currently provided to heads of UN missions and requisite budgetary discipline and control. Concerning the intention of the Secretary-General to make further use of Government-provided personnel for time-limited, specialized functions not readily available within the Secretariat, the General Assembly has already sought greater clarity concerning the applicable criteria for determining the use of such personnel. The Committee is of the view that the guidance currently under development should specify how such personnel differ from type II gratis personnel and other sources of civilian capacity. Finally, the Committee notes that a proposed emergency staff deployment facility is currently at a conceptual stage of development and requires detailed elaboration before it can comment on the proposal put forward.

Thank you Mr. Chairman