

*Check against delivery*

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**Introductory Remarks by Ms. Ameerah Haq**  
**Under-Secretary-General for Field Support**

**Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the report of the**  
**Senior Advisory Group on Rates of Reimbursement to troop contributing**  
**countries and related issues (A/67/713)**

**8 March 2013**

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

It is a great honour to be before the Fifth Committee to introduce, on behalf of the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support, the Note of the Secretary-General on the implementation report of the Senior Advisory Group (SAG) on rates of reimbursement to troop contributing countries and related issues (document A/67/749). Since it is the first time that I formally address the Fifth Committee, I would like to emphasize that I look forward to working with you closely over the coming months as you consider the financing of our peacekeeping operations and related reports.

Mr. Chairman,

The report of the Senior Advisory Group focuses on an issue that is vital to the partnership that underpins United Nations peacekeeping: the reimbursement to troop and police contributing countries. Uniformed personnel are the backbone of our operations. At the end of February 2013, we had over 93,000 uniformed personnel in the field. As peacekeeping has grown more diverse and challenging, they are required to perform a range of functions that often go beyond traditional monitoring and patrol. Our uniformed personnel are increasingly being asked to implement complex mandates, often in partnership with other regional and national actors, and in

environments that can be volatile and hostile. I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to the 111 peacekeepers who have lost their lives in 2012 in the service of peace and it is sobering to remember that 3008 peacekeepers have lost their lives since the first peacekeeping mission. We must honour and remember their sacrifice. And, we must continue to place the highest value on supporting the courageous military and police personnel who dedicate themselves to keeping and building sustainable peace.

We therefore welcome the emphasis of the Senior Advisory Group on the establishment of a “compact” to strengthen the peacekeeping partnership; that is, the relationship between the Security Council, all Member States in the General Assembly and the Secretariat. We stand ready to do our part, including in continuing to improve our systems for force generation, consultation with TCCs/PCCs and the delivery of logistics support. For the Department of Field Support, that means that the logistics support we deliver – including the rations, fuel, communications and transport facilities - must serve the needs of our uniformed personnel. Our troops and police are often widely dispersed and work in harsh terrain. It is our job to make sure they are fully supported, and we take that job very seriously. We welcome the emphasis that the Senior Advisory Group places on support and its contribution to effective mandate delivery.

Mr. Chairman,

The report of the Senior Advisory Group represents a consensus. In preparing for how we would implement the recommendations, if approved by the General Assembly, we were guided by the principles it articulates including simplicity; transparency and accountability. The Secretary-General’s Note therefore focuses on what is possible within the framework recommended by the SAG.

As stated, the goal of the SAG in making its proposals was to ensure an effective, equitable and predictable reimbursement system. This system should contribute to attracting and retaining well-trained, properly equipped and adequately supported troops and police. Both DPKO and DFS welcome the clear articulation of this goal. Along with our colleagues in the Department of Management, we stand

ready to implement the SAG recommendations, on approval by the General Assembly. We see the SAG report as an opportunity for the United Nations - both Member States and the Secretariat - to move forward on a set of proposals that recognises the importance of the reimbursement system to effective and legitimate United Nations peacekeeping. We see the SAG recommendations as an important opportunity to address an issue that has vexed this Committee for the past few years; one which offers the possibility to comprehensively address the challenges that have plagued the troop reimbursement system for too long.

Mr. Chairman,

At the core of the SAG recommendations is the recognition that, for the system of reimbursement to be sustainable, it must be based on actual data on the common and essential additional costs involved in deploying uniformed personnel to peacekeeping. As this Committee well knows, a sustainable and workable approach to gathering cost data has for the past 20 years proved elusive. The SAG has put forward an approach to gather information designed to enable the General Assembly to make a decision on the rate of reimbursement in 2014 in its second resumed sixty-eighth session.

As the report of the Group outlines, it has been many years since there has been a revision to the rate of personnel reimbursement. In that time, along with the global dynamics it responds to and influences, peacekeeping has changed dramatically. Even in the short time since the establishment of DFS in 2007, we have seen conflicts develop, regionally and across borders, placing more demands on our uniformed personnel. All parts of the peacekeeping system must develop to meet those challenges, including – as the SAG points out - the relationship between the United Nations and its peacekeepers. The reimbursement system is a crucial part of that relationship.

In preparing the Secretary-General's Note, we considered it important to recognise that the SAG recommendations are time-bound, and that there is a timing and sequence involved in their implementation. Some recommendations are immediate and have financial and budgetary implications; these include the

implementation of a revised questionnaire and the payment of a 6.75 per cent supplement to TCCs/PCCs over the period 1 April 2013 through 30 June 2014, when the results of the survey and the recommended level of troop reimbursements are decided by the General Assembly. Other measures are linked to the introduction of a new troop reimbursement level and scheme, as proposed by the SAG.

The Report of the Secretary-General before you proposes a number of steps to implement the immediate measures proposed by the SAG. I would like to briefly outline our approach on a number of these.

- **The revised questionnaire:** The SAG recognises that the current questionnaire is technically sound. Yet, a number of issues around how it is being implemented have hampered its effectiveness in gathering reliable cost data. The SAG proposes a smaller representative sample of ten contributing countries and an interactive process for collecting data involving a survey team. It is important to stress that the proposal of the SAG builds on the content of the existing questionnaire, already approved by the General Assembly. The proposed changes relate primarily to the administration of the survey. The Group also recommends a regular four-year review. Upon approval by the General Assembly, my Department is ready to implement the revised process with a small team so that the data can be available for the General Assembly's second resumed sixty-eighth session. We cannot, however, do this without the support of troop and police contributing countries and we are ready to provide every assistance so that this process can yield results in the very tight timelines required. As the SAG recommendations make clear, individual countries should not be identified in the presentation of the data in order to address legitimate concerns about confidentiality. Time is indeed of the essence. We are looking forward to an early decision of the General Assembly in March, so that we can begin the process as soon as possible in April.
- **Immediate steps:** The SAG recommends that, in the period before the new rates determined through the revised methodology enter into effect,

**the General Assembly should continue its dual-track approach of supplemental payments to TCCs with the identification of savings in peacekeeping budgets. To this end, the SAG recommends three specific immediate measures:**

- **Supplemental payment:** The SAG recommends the continuation of a supplementary payment of 6.75 per cent of the base rate of \$1,028 per month, from 1 April 2013 to 30 June 2014.
- **Rotations:** The SAG report recommends that 12-month rotations should be standard for the deployment of uniformed personnel. The Secretary-General proposes no changes to what is within the purview of Member States to decide regarding the rotation of their own troops. We recognise the many operational benefits of longer rotations; to cite some of them: troops develop better situational awareness and a more nuanced understanding of the operational theatre; improvements are achieved in reporting and information gathering; personnel are fully operational for a longer period of time. We also recognise the concerns about the implementation of this measure, including that, for many reasons related to national priorities and in some cases legislation, some TCCs have to rotate more frequently. The SAG does give the Secretary-General some discretion to determine that operational circumstances and requirements might demand rotation frequencies other than the 12-month rotation.
- **Absent or non-functional major equipment:** The SAG also recognises the important link between personnel and equipment to enable peacekeepers to fully undertake their tasks. A unit without adequate transport cannot effectively patrol. The introduction of this measure would require the Secretariat to link two different systems that currently operate independently of each other and to apply a reduction to personnel reimbursement when major equipment is absent or non-functional. If implemented with a direct one-to-one

proportional reduction of personnel reimbursement, the measure would affect all contributing countries to some extent; this would vary considerably between missions and individual TCCs/PCCs. We would see this measure as an incentive for full compliance that, if judiciously applied, would lead to enhanced performance and efficiency. Nonetheless, as the Secretary-General's Note observes, the impact of the directly proportional reduction may be quite considerable for some contributing countries and it would be important to ensure that it does not become a barrier to increased compliance.

We are conscious that the SAG recommendations represent a departure, to some degree, from how we have managed reimbursement in the past. As with all aspects of the SAG's recommendations, we will carefully monitor the impact of their implementation after a year of operation.

As the SAG report also recognises, the structure of reimbursement could potentially better support the generation and deployment of the enabling capacities and expertise that peacekeeping needs. To this end, the Group recommends two premiums that would be introduced along with a new rate of reimbursement in July 2014. The Group's recommendation for a premium for key enablers points the way to a more capability-based approach to deployment that we welcome, in line with our efforts over the past few years to move towards a more capability-driven approach. In many of our missions, it is clear that effective mandate implementation is about more than numbers of uniforms on the ground. We need the combination of skilled, trained personnel, equipment and technology that is required to perform the kinds of tasks required for mandate delivery. The development of capabilities we require to operate is a key priority for both DPKO and DFS. We share the view of the Senior Advisory Group that the reimbursement system should support this goal.

Similarly, the SAG recommends the introduction of a premium for contingents willing to take higher risk. The Secretary-General's Note envisages a system that would apply the criteria suggested by the SAG to recognize an "exceptional and sustained level of danger to life, property and premises from hostile actions by parties to a conflict, spoilers, potential aggressors or warlords". We share the SAG's concern

to reward the extraordinary response to such risks – without any caveat – of TCCs and PCCs in the performance of their duties. As peacekeeping mandates evolve and demand more from our TCCs/PCCs, we must recognize how much more we expect of the soldiers and police who confront extraordinary danger in the service of peace.

The timing and sequencing of the SAG recommendations mean these premiums will not apply until after new data has been collected and a decision has been made about a revised rate of reimbursement in 2014. The Note before you indicates how we have begun to develop proposals to best administer the premiums, using existing processes and mechanisms.

As I mentioned earlier, we fully recognise that this is a departure from the established approach to personnel reimbursement the UN has so far followed, and so will proceed with due caution.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, we believe that, in sustaining the spirit of consensus that has characterised the work of the SAG, we can implement the Group's recommendations. The stress put by the SAG on partnership, trust and respect can only strengthen the global good that is UN peacekeeping. With a commitment to the cooperation, accountability and respect that guided the SAG's work, these proposals can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of our operations.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates. My Department and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations stand ready to provide any assistance with the Committee's consideration of the reports.