



UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement by Stephen Lieberman, Minister Counselor,
on agenda item 146**

Before the Fifth (Administrative and Budgetary) Committee

During the first part of the resumed sixty-seventh session of the UN General Assembly
8 March 2013

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

At the outset, I would like to thank USG for the Department of Field Support Ameerah Haq for presenting the report of the Secretary-General and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu for presenting the related—and highly succinct—report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. I would also like to express my delegation's gratitude to Madame Louise Fréchette and the members of the Senior Advisory Group for all of their work over the last year to examine the troop reimbursement system in the broader context of the challenges confronting modern peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Chairman,

It is useful, in our consideration of this agenda item, to recall the events that led to establishing the Senior Advisory Group. During its sixty-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 63/285 establishing a new process for determining the rates of reimbursement for troop-contributing countries based on data submitted through a revised survey. This process, which was agreed by consensus, was intended to address a long-standing request by troop-contributing countries to facilitate a regular review of reimbursement rates. But many TCCs reported that the new system was cumbersome and unworkable. Even before the new system completed its first cycle we found ourselves in a situation where TCCs demanded an increase in reimbursement rates while FCCs argued that no increase was justified unless it was based on survey data. This issue became so divisive and so controversial that we nearly failed to agree to peacekeeping mission budgets during the sixty-fifth session.

To break the deadlock, in resolution 65/289 we requested the Secretary-General to establish a Senior Advisory Group to examine the rates of reimbursement and related issues. The experience of the subsequent peacekeeping budget negotiations during the sixty-sixth session, in which troop reimbursement once again emerged as an obstacle to consensus, only served to

confirm the need for a solution to this question to be generated from outside of the Fifth Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

The Senior Advisory Group has presented a set of recommendations that attempt to comprehensively address the issue of troop reimbursement, and that recognizes the linked nature of continuing transitional payments and continuing efforts to find efficiencies in peacekeeping. Not only has it recommended a more streamlined survey to determine reimbursement rates on the basis of common and essential additional costs, but it specifies a review of rates every four years. It recommends premiums for performance under exceptional levels of risk and for provision of key enabling capabilities, as well as incentives for full deployment of contingent-owned equipment. It changes the standard—but does not mandate—12-month deployments. Finally, it provides troop-contributing countries an interim supplementary payment as a transitional measure.

The Senior Advisory Group had a daunting task and its recommendations are unlikely to fully satisfy any group or member state. Not surprisingly, they do not wholly satisfy the United States. Nevertheless, my delegation believes that the recommendations are, as a whole, balanced and that considering any of the elements separately would compromise this balance. As such, adopting the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group as a package offers us an opportunity to resolve the contentious question of troop reimbursement, while improving the effectiveness of peacekeeping and providing a solid foundation for peacekeeping missions going forward. Not agreeing upon the recommendations can only perpetuate and exacerbate deadlock and acrimony over peacekeeping budgets, and put peacekeeping operations—the flagship activity of this Organization—in jeopardy.

Mr. Chairman,

The United States stands ready to work with all partners on this important agenda item, and we hope that, under your able guidance, the Committee will be able to secure a positive outcome to its deliberations in an expeditious manner, both for the good of the Organization and also in the hope that it will save us from unnecessarily arduous negotiations over the peacekeeping budgets during the second part of the resumed session in May, and for needless difficulties for TCCs in the months until then.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.