



Introductory Remarks to the Fifth Committee

Mr. Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support

**Agenda Item 148. Administrative & budgetary aspects of financing United Nations
peacekeeping operations**

Fifth Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the Global Field Support Strategy

6 May 2015

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

This is the first occasion for me to address you as Under-Secretary-General for Field Support. I look forward to working with the membership in pursuit of the objectives that unite us in our shared endeavor.

I am also honoured to be here today with esteemed officials from the Office of Internal Oversight Services, Under-Secretary-General Carman Lapointe, and the Department of Management, including the Controller, Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, whom I thank for her introduction of the reports under Agenda Item 148, and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, Ms. Carole Wainaina. DFS' partnership with these departments, and of course, with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, provides the foundation for all that we do. Together, our efforts must focus on the needs in the field and the results that underpin our deliberations, our decisions, and our procedures. In this regard, we must endeavor to realize a vision of mission support that has four primary characteristics: rapidity, effectiveness, efficiency, and working within applicable rules and regulations.

In addressing you today, I would like to introduce the Fifth Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the Global Field Support Strategy (GFSS) (A/69/651), and Annexes I and II to the Overview Report (A/69/751). Along with my colleagues, I remain at your disposal to respond to questions on the documents before you.

Mr. Chairman,

When the GFSS was launched in 2010, it was designed to unify the mission support community behind a set of shared objectives and increase our capacity to manage a burgeoning portfolio. New missions in Darfur, Chad and Somalia had caused a surge in field operations and created new challenges in mandate implementation, resourcing, and deployment. Since the launch of the GFSS in 2010, a constant stream of new demands on UN peacekeeping has continued to highlight the importance of rapid, effective and efficient mission support:

- For example, twelve new field missions have been launched – including innovative entities like the Joint OPCW-UN mission to counter chemical weapons in Syria and the regional mission in response to Ebola – UNMEER;
- Major crises have struck in Haiti, Eastern DRC, Mali, the Central African Republic and South Sudan and have led to significant mission reconfigurations;
- The number of authorized personnel has increased 14 percent between 2009/10 and 2014/15; and,
- Security conditions for our peacekeepers have deteriorated. Today, many of our peacekeepers contend with the reality that they are actively and deliberately targeted by hostile armed elements. Just as an example: in the last 48 hours, in Beni, DRC, a UN helicopter was shot at and two peacekeepers sacrificed their lives in a separate incident; an IED attack took place on an AMISOM patrol near Mogadishu; and, our camp in Kidal in northern Mali, where I was just a week ago came under sustained mortar and rocket fire.

Indeed, my first field visits with DFS took place in recent weeks to Mali and Somalia, where I witnessed first-hand the difficulties posed by today's prevailing insecurity, with immense implications for not only personal safety, but also for logistics, communications, and ultimately, financial requirements.

Mr. Chairman,

While progress has not been even, today's field support operations are broadly more cost-efficient, leaner and faster than they were five years ago:

- *Start-up budget planning and delivery has improved.* For missions set up between 2011 and 2013, only 1.6 percent of budgeted funds went unspent during the first 2 years, compared to 7.3 percent for missions established between 2007 and 2009.
- *Field support is leaner.* Following the abolishment of 3,000 posts, the ratio of support and security staff to total personnel had dropped by 10 percent between 2010/11 and 2013/14.
- *Field support is more cost-efficient.* Since 2008/09, the cost per peacekeeper - understood as total cost measured against the number of deployed uniformed personnel - has declined by 17 percent when adjusted for inflation.
- *Vacancy and turn-over rates have fallen.* Since January 2010, the vacancy rate among civilian staff has fallen by a quarter from 20 percent to 15 percent as of December 2014.
- *A stronger field service delivery model is in place.* In 2014/15, about 70 percent of authorized personnel will receive some form of shared service.
- *Client satisfaction is measured more systematically.* In August 2014, 61 percent of personnel were satisfied with our services, whereas only 21 percent expressed dissatisfaction.

Mr. Chairman,

The GFSS has brought about many changes and some of these efforts are still underway. Allow me to briefly discuss some of the ongoing initiatives.

Supply Chain Management

In 2012, we identified the need to strengthen the management of our supply chains to ensure a more efficient end-to-end approach to sourcing, distribution and oversight across all missions. We have now identified four concrete projects that will allow us to pilot a series of tangible short-term

improvements. Full implementation of our supply chain management strategy will be a multi-year effort.

Standard Funding Model

This methodology for budgeting start-up missions was used both for UNMISS and MINUSMA. Let me clarify that the model is a merely an approach to developing budgets. In no way does it limit or abrogate the authority of oversight bodies in budget review and approval. Accordingly, and in line with the observations of the Board of Auditors, we are asking the General Assembly for authorization to use of the standard funding model for future mission start-ups.

Shared services

As I previously mentioned, shared services deliver significant efficiencies and economies of scale. The Secretary-General proposes to expand shared services to cover all field missions supported by DFS. The expansion would further reduce support costs quickly and improve service consistency, quality and control. We seek your endorsement of this approach.

Our concrete proposal has two elements. **First**, as the RSCE matures, we would like to request authorization to develop a stand-alone budget for it, rather than nesting its costs within individual mission budget. A separate budget would improve transparency, accountability and oversight. It would also increase efficiency in budget formulation and execution. With your approval, we would therefore like to present RSCE costs in a separate budget moving forward.

Second, following up on past requests from the General Assembly, we are proposing to service the remainder of field missions through one additional administrative transactional service centre. A second centre would help deliver all the benefits I just noted, while also providing a business continuity solution, given that centralizing services in one location only carries operational risks. In case the approach is endorsed, there are two options for determining the centre's location:

1. *First*, to build more rapidly on an already approved field support presence so that we can leverage existing infrastructure and expedite the expansion of shared services; and,
2. *Second*, to conduct a wider analysis of potential locations for Member State consideration.

Alignment with the Global Service Delivery Model (GSDM)

DFS is committed to realizing a well-aligned approach to the delivery of shared services across the Global Secretariat. Accordingly, we are working closely with the Department of Management to

ensure that the pioneering work of DFS and the development of a future global service delivery model are fully aligned and well-coordinated.

Mr. Chairman,

My team and I are available to elaborate on the initiatives that I have briefly touched upon this morning. All of them, I should add, derive from the momentum towards rapidity, effectiveness, and efficiency that the GFSS has exemplified throughout the past 5 years. While I am taking up this assignment at the tail-end of the GFSS campaign, I can assure you that the Department of Field Support will continue to pursue these goals throughout my tenure. It is never an easy endeavor to mobilize a large number of people behind a shared vision, particularly given the diversity in operating environments that characterize UN peace operations today. But it is my sense that the GFSS has gone far in achieving its aims, and unifying the mission support community behind a shared vision of the future. In this regard, as we near its conclusion, I take this opportunity to convey to you, the membership, our sincere thanks for your guidance and support throughout its implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

In addition to the Fifth Progress Report, you have before you the Overview Report, which the Controller, Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, has presented. Let me highlight just a few of the issues covered therein.

The first and foremost issue – or perhaps theme is a better word – is the financial aspect of UN peacekeeping. It is vital that we have adequate resources for peacekeeping missions that provide for the full budget cycle; by funding missions on the basis of partial-year timeframes, we risk limiting our ability to plan ahead and effectively realize efficiencies. We continue to commit to the preparation of credible budgets that reflect fiscal prudence – and in this context, we greatly appreciate trust-based dialogue with the membership that recognizes the need for some modicum of flexibility in unstable and volatile operating environments.

Partnership with Troop- and Police-Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) is the lifeblood of UN peace operations. The framework for reimbursement is of vital importance to peacekeeping. Significant

changes have occurred in recent years, not only in rates of reimbursement, but also in new mechanisms to link reimbursement to operational risk, rapid deployment of personnel and equipment. These changes are making a positive difference and provide needed tools for DFS and DPKO.

Conduct and discipline remains one of our highest priorities, especially in relation to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). The Secretariat and Member States share the responsibility of eliminating it. For 2014, a total of 51 SEA allegations represents the lowest figure on record since special measures were first put in place. But it remains 51 cases too many. The Secretary-General's latest report, which ASG Wainaina will introduce, makes several proposals on how we can further reduce the number, including stronger vetting mechanisms.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

Before concluding, I would like to pay tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice serving the cause of international peace and security. With the imminent conclusion of the GFSS, one chapter in our efforts to support our colleagues in the field is closing but the need to press ahead to enhance the rapidity, efficiency and effectiveness of mission support, all within applicable rules and regulations, continues. The growing numbers of those who sacrificed themselves in service each month remind us of the consequences and impact of these deliberations.

Indeed, our interface with this Committee is premised on the exigency of doing everything we can to meet the needs of those on the front lines, whose lives are at risk more so than at any time in the history of UN peacekeeping. As we move forward, we are guided by the need to balance, in a holistic, comprehensive manner, the risks that attend this noble calling: the financial risks; the administrative risks; the operational risk of failing to meet the day-to-day requirements; and, the strategic risk of overall failure to implement mandates.

This committee plays a pivotal role in ensuring a pragmatic balance of those risks. We look forward to your deliberations to guide our work for the benefit of women and men deployed in the field and the countries they serve.

Thank you.