



**71st Session of the General Assembly
Fifth Committee**

Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

By

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149. Administrative and budgetary aspects of financing UN PKOs:

Cross-cutting issues - Overview

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- As delivered -

Mr. Vice Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*¹, Montenegro* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, I wish to take this opportunity to welcome Mr. Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support and thank him, as well as Ms. Maria Costa, Director of the Peacekeeping Financing Division, for introducing the reports of the Secretary General. I would also like to thank Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing the reports of ACABQ.

The Member States of the European Union attach great importance to peacekeeping – a core task of the Organisation and the UN's flagship activity. We are strong supporters of peacekeeping and are committed to ensuring that UN peacekeeping is as effective as possible in order to serve the need of maintaining peace and security. We are actively engaged as participants in UN-mandated peacekeeping operations and other relevant activities, contributing with troops, civilian police and other personnel. We are also important contributors financially.

We would like to take this opportunity to commend once again the hard work and commitment of all UN personnel involved in peacekeeping. Let me also pay tribute again to all those who have lost their lives in the pursuit of peace. It is with their sacrifice in mind that we are reminded of the practical significance of our deliberations.

We welcome the reform initiatives launched by Secretary General Antonio Guterres and his proactive attitude towards improving the effectiveness of the UN, in particular in the field of peace and security. We believe the UN should indeed "bolster capacities to support effective political solutions" and in that regard the 5th committee has an important role to play. We think the 5th committee should be up to the task and focus on results, outcome and output. The GA's approach to reform will send a clear message to the SG and his team about our commitment to the organization and its effectiveness. And we should facilitate, not impede the SG's vision.

Mr. Vice Chair,

The Secretary-General's Overview Report highlights key developments, policy changes and management challenges facing UN peacekeeping- this year it clearly sets the context of the SG's new vision for the organization on peace and security. We are determined to engage in a constructive discussion on all aspects of the report. Our goal must remain to give strategic guidance to the Secretary-General- rather than micromanage his organization - and we believe UN peacekeeping should adopt the highest standards in terms of management. We must ensure that resources are used in the most effective, efficient and transparent way. Strict financial

¹ *The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

discipline is a key element of good management. Peacekeeping is going through a period of mandated change and we believe this should be reflected in the administrative and budgetary handling of each specific mission, based on its unique circumstance, in particular through the scalability of all support functions. We are open to using all the tools at our disposal to ensure that budgets reflect changing circumstances.

1. We believe that uniformed personnel form the backbone of peacekeeping and we commend all troop contributing countries for their dedication to peacekeeping. We attach great importance to the capabilities of the troops deployed, and we attach great importance to fully operational equipment as agreed to by the TCCs and the Secretariat in the MOUs. We also recall that TCCs and the UN have differing but complementary responsibilities in terms of training and providing medical support to their uniformed personnel.

2. We see the rightsizing of the civilian staff component in each mission as an ongoing exercise - matching resources to needs in a flexible way - and believe that civilian staffing reviews are a permanent task and not a one-off event. We believe the staffing of missions should be smart and strategic so the missions can effectively discharge their often complex and multidimensional mandates. We also think that whenever possible, the Secretary General should hire national staff instead of international staff, especially in the support components of the missions. The nationalisation of posts should be a priority for the Secretariat.

3. We note the move towards and increase in the programmatic activities of many missions, and recall that these should not overlap with the activities of the UN Country Teams- and we expect the same levels of transparency and accountability of all money spent by Missions. Civilian-military cooperation is crucial to a Mission's success. We think missions and UNCT's should develop strong operational links and exchanges on the ground if we want to be successful in creating a continuum between peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development. In that regard, the use of Quick Impact Projects should always be maintained within its original purpose as a confidence building tool, since Quick Impact Projects cannot be expected to replace more structural initiatives.

4. We will carefully look into all important cost drivers and we believe the UN should budget for categories of expenditure like travel, transportation, fuel, training, ICT and the use of consultants with utmost care. We continue to encourage the secretariat to find efficiency gains through projects like supply chain management, and of course the ERP project itself. We believe the procurement of the UN should always take into account the highest standards of sustainability.

5. The horizontal component of the management of peacekeeping operations is now more important than ever. The ERP system and other transformational projects have changed the interactions between UN headquarters, individual missions and the existing support centres, or any other location the SG deems fit to use to support peacekeeping. Scalability is key. We believe the General Assembly should not fall into the trap of micro-management on this issue.

6. We believe that ensuring effective environmental management in peacekeeping operations is key to a responsible and sustainable presence of the UN on the field. For this reason we welcome the attention the Secretariat has devoted to this important domain through recent initiatives.

7. UN Peacekeeping should always make use of the newest technology available not only to enhance effectiveness, but also to improve the security and safety of the troops and reduce the environmental footprint of the missions.

As always, the Member States of the European Union stand ready to engage constructively on this important agenda item during the course of negotiations.

Thank you, Mr. Vice Chair.