



## *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*

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Department of Political Affairs - Security Council Affairs Division  
Security Council Practices and Charter Research Branch

### **United Nations peacekeeping operations**

#### **Overview**

During the period under review, the Security Council held four meetings in connection with the item entitled “United Nations peacekeeping operations”, adopting two presidential statements.<sup>1</sup> At the meetings, the Council considered several themes including the linkages between peacekeeping and peacebuilding and the question of transition and exit strategies for peacekeeping operations. The Council also twice heard briefings by Force Commanders of peacekeeping operations regarding the challenges they faced in the field.

A table lists the meetings held in consideration of this item, as well as related information, including invitees, speakers and decisions adopted.

#### **February 2010: debate on transition and exit strategies**

On 12 February 2010, with the assistance of a concept paper circulated by the President (France),<sup>2</sup> the Council held an open debate on transition and exit strategies of United Nations peacekeeping operations. In his statement to the Council, the Secretary-General noted that United Nations peacekeeping operations, which had seen a surge over the past decade, were likely in the years ahead to focus not so much on new missions but more on the consolidation of peace and stability by current missions in countries emerging from conflict. To ensure current missions and their successor presences could

<sup>1</sup> [S/PRST/2010/2](#) and [S/PRST/2011/17](#).

<sup>2</sup> [S/2010/67](#).

help to consolidate peace and support lasting stability, a good “entrance” was needed; the mandate of an operation needed to address the root causes of conflict; a solid and sustainable peace process needed to chart a path out of violence; a clear goal that could be jointly owned by national stakeholders and the international community needed to be articulated; and timely allocation of human and material resources was needed.

Furthermore, in assessing whether a peacekeeping operation should be drawn down, various factors, including the strength of national governance structures and the prospects for socio-economic recovery, needed to be taken into account.<sup>3</sup> The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations stated that beyond the basic level of security that the peacekeeping operations provided, such as the protection of civilians, the rule of law, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, missions were also charged with various additional roles including providing support for political and electoral processes, national and local reconciliation, and restoring essential government functions. A common understanding regarding the link between peacekeeping and peacebuilding was crucial in this regard, which would allow clear foundations on which to plan transitions in a coherent fashion and help countries emerging from conflict more effectively. He further outlined several initiatives being undertaken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, including the earlier initiation of transition planning, a study of transition cases in Liberia, Timor-Leste and Haiti, and the strengthening of partnerships with institutions such as the World Bank.<sup>4</sup> The Under-Secretary-General for Field Support outlined the newly completed global field support strategy, which included a proposal to service multiple operations from a regional service centre, allowing for a smoother transformation from one type of mission to another. She also pointed to several specific issues that needed to be addressed in this area, including the question of generating the necessary civilian capacity and the financing for field operations.<sup>5</sup> The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) stated that it was necessary to accept that most conflicts were not resolved through single solutions or in conformity

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<sup>3</sup> [S/PV.6270](#), pp. 2-4.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6-8.

with timetables, and therefore transition and exit strategies should not be conceived as a linear exercise with one step leading inexorably to another. He further outlined several specific initiatives being undertaken by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in carrying out its mandate, in areas such as the development of integrated strategic frameworks and the efficient use of capacity and resources.<sup>6</sup> The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) stated that mandates of missions needed to be clear in their priorities and realistic, leaving no room for ambiguity. She further outlined challenges and constraints that missions faced when implementing mandates, especially in integrated missions which were tasked not only with keeping the peace but also assisting in building national capacities to sustain peace.<sup>7</sup> The Executive Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL), noting that Sierra Leone was probably the first example of where a full transition from a large peacekeeping operation to a small integrated peacebuilding mission had been accomplished, noted that integrated peacebuilding missions provided considerable financial savings for Member States due to their significantly lower costs. He stressed that in order to succeed, peacebuilding needed to be based on a national agenda, with the United Nations system as a whole supporting it, rather than being based upon frameworks drawn up by the Peacebuilding Commission.<sup>8</sup> In the debate that followed, Council members and other speakers agreed that peacekeeping operations needed clear, achievable mandates from the outset, matched by appropriate resources, in order to achieve a successful exit or transition. Most speakers also agreed on the importance of fostering national ownership in the peacebuilding process, as well as coordinating effectively and strengthening existing partnerships between various United Nations entities. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Council adopted a statement by the president that, *inter alia*, stated its intention to undertake, whenever possible, to include in peacekeeping mandates a desired outcome of the

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-11.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

implementation of mandated tasks and a clear prioritization of tasks to achieve it, reflecting the need to create favourable conditions for sustainable peace.<sup>9</sup>

### **August 2010 and July 2011: briefings by Force Commanders of United Nations peacekeeping operations**

On 6 August 2010, the Council held an open debate under the same agenda item. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, in his briefing to the Council, reported on several recent developments related to peacekeeping, including a drawdown of the missions in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as progress being made on the “New Horizon Initiative”<sup>10</sup> and the global field support strategy.<sup>11</sup> The Council also heard briefings by the Force Commanders of UNMIL, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the Head of Mission and Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, who highlighted achievements and challenges in their respective missions.<sup>12</sup> In the debate that followed, Council members welcomed the presence of the Force Commanders and expressed appreciation for their ideas and assessments concerning their respective country situations and on broader issues related to peacekeeping. Several Council members directed questions to the Force Commanders concerning issues such as the protection of civilians and troop interoperability, which were answered by the Force Commanders of the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire and the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad.<sup>13</sup> The Military Adviser of the

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<sup>9</sup> [S/PRST/2010/2](#).

<sup>10</sup> United Nations. *A New Partnership Agenda: Charting a New Horizon for United Nations Peacekeeping*. Available from <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/newhorizon.shtml>.

<sup>11</sup> [S/PV.6370](#), pp. 2-3.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5 (Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Liberia); pp. 5-6 (Force Commander of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo); pp. 6-8 (Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan); pp. 8-9 (Head of Mission and Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization); and pp. 9-11 (Force Commander of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39 (Force Commander of the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire); and pp. 39-40 (Force Commander of United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad).

Department of Peacekeeping Operations, on behalf of the heads of the military components of all peacekeeping missions, made a closing statement to the Council.<sup>14</sup>

On 27 July 2011, the Council held an open debate under the same agenda item. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations made a statement introducing several Force Commanders to the Council members.<sup>15</sup> The Force Commanders of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, MONUSCO, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, and UNMIL briefed the Council members on the specific issues related to their respective missions.<sup>16</sup> These included the question of the protection of civilians in Darfur; the “conditionality policy”<sup>17</sup> in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and the role of military components in peacebuilding in Liberia. In the debate that followed, Council members welcomed the opportunity for dialogue with the Force Commanders and agreed on the need for strengthening cooperation with regional organizations and other partners. On the question of the conditionality policy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, some Council members recognized that it had both positive and negative impacts on operations, as noted by the Force Commander in his briefing.<sup>18</sup> The Force Commanders of MINUSTAH and UNMIS also responded to a question from the representative of France concerning the impact of reform efforts in the field, stating that such reforms have had a positive impact on the operations, for example in the standardization of personnel and equipment and the improvement of the quality of troops, and through initiatives such as the introduction of pre-deployment training and pre-induction inspection of equipment.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 41-42.

<sup>15</sup> [S/PV.6592](#), p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 2-4 (Force Commander of the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur); pp. 4-6 (Force Commander of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo); pp. 6-9 (Force Commander and Head of Mission of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon); and pp. 9-11 (Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Liberia).

<sup>17</sup> The Security Council decided in [resolution 1925 \(2010\)](#) that support by MONUSCO for military operations by the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) against the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and other armed groups, including through joint operations, must be in compliance with international humanitarian and human rights and refugee law (para. 12 (h)).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 25 (United Kingdom); and p. 26 (Portugal).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 27-28.

## **August 2011: debate on taking stock and preparing for the future of peacekeeping**

On 26 August 2011, in response to a concept paper circulated by the representative of India on taking stock and preparing for the future of peacekeeping,<sup>20</sup> the Council held an open debate under the same agenda item. In his statement to the Council, the Secretary-General noted that while the growth of peacekeeping missions had slowed in 2010, the complexity of missions remained high, and they were increasingly tasked to take on the protection of civilians. He further expressed concern that the vision for a stronger partnership, linking the resources of the Secretariat, the Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and Member States was under increasing pressure due to various factors, including the current financial climate and differing perspectives on mandated tasks.<sup>21</sup> Council members and invitees generally agreed on the need for more integration and coordination between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and the role of peacekeeping operations in undertaking an early peacebuilding role. Several speakers stressed the need for clear and achievable mandates. Many speakers also emphasized the need for adequate resources in order for peacekeeping missions to effectively carry out their mandates. During the meeting, the Council adopted a statement by the president that, inter alia, stressed the need for improved communication between the Council and police- and troop-contributing countries, as well as improving its consideration of and reflection on early peacebuilding tasks in the mandates and composition of peacekeeping operations.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Letter dated 5 August 2011 from India to the Secretary-General ([S/2011/496](#)).

<sup>21</sup> [S/PV.6603](#), pp. 2-4.

<sup>22</sup> [S/PRST/2011/17](#).

## Meetings: United Nations peacekeeping operations

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against- abstaining)</i>
6270 12 February 2010	Transition and exit strategies  Letter dated 3 February 2010 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations to the Secretary-General ( <a href="#">S/2010/67</a> )	Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Italy, Jordan, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Rwanda, Uruguay	Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia and Head of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Executive Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (Germany), Permanent Observer of the African Union, Acting Head of the Delegation of the European Union	Secretary-General, all Council members and all invitees	<a href="#">S/PRST/2010/2</a>
6370 6 August 2010		Bangladesh, Canada, India, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea	Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Military Adviser of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Force Commander of United Nation Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Force Commander of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), Head of Mission and Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), Force Commander of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Force Commander of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad	All Council members and all invitees	

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against- abstaining)</i>
6592 27 July 2011			Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Force Commander of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, Force Commander of MONUSCO, Force Commander and Head of Mission of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, Force Commander of UNMIL	All Council members and all invitees	
6603 26 August 2011	Peacekeeping: taking stock and preparing for the future  Letter dated 5 August 2011 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General ( <a href="#">S/2011/496</a> )	Argentina, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Canada, Croatia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guatemala, Hungary, Indonesia, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Serbia, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Deputy Head of Delegation and Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, Permanent Observer of the African Union	Secretary-General, all Council members and all invitees	<a href="#">S/PRST/2011/17</a>