

Statement by H.E. Ambassador V.K. Nambiar, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations on Agenda Item 85: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects at the Special Political and Decolonisation Committee of the 58th Session of the UN General Assembly on October 17, 2003

Mr. Chairman,

The Indian delegation welcomes the opportunity to speak on Agenda Item 85: "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects".

We compliment Under-Secretary-General Guehenno for the detailed and thorough briefing to the Committee on Wednesday. The interactive session that followed was particularly helpful, allowing member states to raise specific issues of concern. We are cognisant of the efforts made by Mr. Guehenno and his team in managing the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in what has turned out to be another challenging year for United Nations in this area. We congratulate him for his endeavours and the dynamism that he has brought to the job on hand.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered yesterday by South Africa on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

When the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations met in March this year, it met against the backdrop of "significant and positive developments in UN Peacekeeping Operations in 2002". No less significant have been the developments since; there are new missions in Iraq, Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia, others such as MONUC and the NATO-led ISAF are expanding, while some others, we understand, are yet in the pipeline.

Equally relevant is the changing nature and the growing complexity and scope of these operations. In the last 10 years, the principles and practices of peacekeeping have undergone a dramatic transformation, even something of a revolution. This reflects the fact that conflicts today are increasingly intra-state. There has been a basic change in the structure of PKOs from being uni-dimensional military operations to multi-

dimensional ones involving a wide spectrum of activities. The use of civilian police is increasing in these operations and the mandates themselves vary from classical UN peacekeeping operations, to UN-authorised multi-national operations and even some operations which are outside the purview of the UN.

A significant development is the UN's reliance on regional and sub-regional organisations to support and carry out missions on its behalf to be eventually followed by a UN peacekeeping force as its successor, mostly under a Chapter VII mandate. We saw such a trend most recently in Liberia.

in his latest report on the Implementation of the Millennium Declaration (A/58/323) the Secretary General has raised some of these issues. He has exhorted member states to engage in a serious debate on "robust peacekeeping" and has linked this to the fundamental question of narrowing the commitment gap. We could not agree more. This, in fact, has been the refrain of a large section of the membership of this Assembly. For many years now, we have been stating unambiguously that the burden of peacekeeping should be shared equally between the North and the South. We are heartened to note that this sentiment finds a resonance in paragraph 36 of the report. This inherent dichotomy must be removed if we are to give meaning to the Secretary General's call for "collective responses" in order to react to the new challenges in peacekeeping. We fully endorse the conclusion contained in paragraph 45 of the report that "cooperation across the globe is needed more than ever".

The Secretary General has spoken about the experience acquired by the UN in assisting war-torn societies in their transition to peace. The goal is the establishment of new and durable state structures and the provision of external assistance in a way that allows local societies to move most rapidly and effectively towards attaining sustainable peace. The challenges are immense. The Secretary General has listed two pre-requisites: firstly, coordinated efforts by the State concerned and the international community in order to succeed and secondly, the fragile nature of post-conflict environments require the international community to stay the course during the post-conflict peacekeeping phase.

This view ties in largely with our own thinking on the subject. At the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations held in March this year, we had called for greater coordination among different parts of the UN Secretariat, peacekeeping missions, funds and programmes, the specialised agencies of the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions during the peacekeeping and the post- conflict- building phase. The optimal, timely and coordinated engagement of these actors, where appropriate, would contribute facilitating also a smoother transition to post-conflict developmental and political arrangements. And, much in line with what the Secretary General has said in paragraph 42 of his report, we had cautioned against a hasty retreat, which, we had felt, could jeopardise the gains achieved by the peacekeeping operation in question. Proper planning for phased withdrawal is a *sine qua non* and must form an integral part of peacekeeping planning. We reiterate that call, recognising in this context the valuable role of integrated mission task forces, such as the kind seen in UNAMA, ensuring coordination of all aspects and phases of mission planning between relevant actors. We should like to hear more from the Secretariat on progress made in

strengthening the relationships among the Secretariat, other agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions.

Equally, Mr. Chairman, we share the emphasis being placed by the Secretariat on Rule of Law issues within the context of post-conflict peace building undertaken by UN peacekeeping. In line with the recommendations of the ECPS Task Force convened last year, we agree on the need to coordinate and consult with both internal and external partners to support Rule of Law aspects of peacekeeping operations. We understand that a strong Rule of Law component has been set up right from the outset in the case of Liberia, and we look forward to lessons learned and best practices being followed in future peacekeeping missions.

The Secretariat has set up a separate Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Unit (CLJAU) within the Civilian Police Division, creating posts of a Corrections and Judicial Officer each. This is both timely and appropriate and should allow for a more focussed approach to the issue.

Mr. Chairman,

On the triangular relationship among the Security Council, the Secretariat and the troop contributing countries, Resolution 1353 and letter dated January 14, 2002 to the President of the Security Council were milestones. much, however, needs to be done in order to make these consultations both meaningful and real. This, to us, constitutes the core in terms of the success or failure of a peacekeeping operation and here, we would very much like to second the proposals contained in paragraph 52 of the Report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (Document A/57/767 of March 2003).

On the strategic deployment stocks, we are heartened to note that the system is fully functional and that some equipment has already been transported to Liberia as part of mission start-up. We are, however, interested in hearing more from the Secretariat on the possibility of utilising a percentage of these stocks to assist troop contributing countries facing difficulties in the area of self-sustainment. We look forward to further discussions on the subject.

The issue of safety and security of UN personnel has come to the fore dramatically and so tragically, in Iraq, Congo and elsewhere. We deplore the killings of the two Military Observers in Congo in May this year, even as we express our deep sense of outrage and shock at the senseless terrorist attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad which killed 19 people. In August this year, a peacekeeper from India, Satish Chandra Menon, laid down his life while serving in the UN Mission in Kosovo. We solemnly salute this brave officer as also others before him who have made the supreme sacrifice under the UN flag.

We continue to see training as an important input in UN peacekeeping. We commend the Secretariat for the recent emphasis on pre-deployment or "just-in-time" training targeted at those who are about to deploy on mission. We would like to know

whether the Secretariat would be formalising this arrangement and whether this is going to be a regular feature in future peacekeeping operations.

On new training skills, we place emphasis on training of Mission Senior Leadership and would like to hear more on this from the Secretariat in the coming months. This aspect is particularly relevant, given the increasing complexity of peacekeeping operations and the need for all, both at Headquarters and in the field, to respond to the new challenges.

And while on training I would be remiss if I did not make a mention of the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) at New Delhi. Since its inception some three years ago, the Centre has attained stature and has evolved into a well-recognised institution. It has hosted seminars – national and international –, held training capsules and provides research data and case studies on all facets of UN peacekeeping operations. The Centre is currently co-hosting, along with the UN, a training capsule for emerging troop contributing countries. It is registered as a member of the International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC) and is one amongst the 20 partners in the Standard Generic Training Module (SGTM) Project of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

We wish to register our appreciation for recent efforts made by the Secretariat in terms of processing claims of troop contributing countries, both for troops supplied and contingent owned equipment; a backlog, however, still remains and we urge the Secretariat to process these expeditiously. In this context, we would draw the Secretariat's attention to the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination for 2003 (A/58/16) under which it has been stated that the objective should be to make reimbursements for troop costs and COE within four months from when they are due. We are hopeful that in future, we should be able to adhere to this time-line.

Mr. Chairman,

We have commented only on *some* of the issues that this complex subject encompasses. We shall continue this debate during the course of 2004, and I assure you of my delegation's fullest cooperation in this regard. India is wholly committed to refining further and forging better the instrument of United Nations peacekeeping to serve better and more effectively the cause of international peace and humanity.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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