
Security Council Debate of SAG's Report to SG on
Civilian Capacity Review: Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri,
Acting Permanent Representative of India, May 12, 2011

Mr. President,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Peacekeeping operations mandated by this Council have been the main instrument for UN action on ground for conflict resolution. They have stood the test of time and will remain the critical pillar of UN activities for years to come.

However, with the Council adding constantly to their mandates, the imperative is for placing adequate resource at the disposal of these missions.

With many of the situations where UN peacekeeping missions are operating being those of prolonged conflict or post conflict, it is essential that the UN missions involve themselves in building local capacities for provision of basic administration and essential services.

Civilian capacities are critical in this endeavor and their presence in a significantly enhanced manner in peacekeeping missions must engage us in the UN.

We are, therefore, very appreciative of the work done by Mr. Jean-Marie Guehenno and the Senior Advisory Group in examining the issue in detail and making recommendations on how enhanced civilian capacities could be incorporated in the UN's work in post conflict situations.

We have noted that the Secretary-General has set up a Steering Committee to facilitate follow-up on this report and that his team will be led by Under-Secretary General Malcorra.

Detailed discussions on the report and the issue of enhanced civilian capacities in peacekeeping missions will have to take place in the UN. It is essential that these discussions take place in inter-governmental settings and involve the C-34 and the Fifth committee.

Significantly enhancing civilian capacities will have a major impact on the staffing, resourcing and impact of peacekeeping missions but these must neither dilute nor detract from the requirements of peacekeeping.

The "OPEN" framework and the cluster approach to identifying tasks and responsibilities in the aftermath of conflict could help in better defining peacebuilding priorities and tasks.

The concept of a lead agency has to be reconciled with the requirement of unity of command, so essential in peacekeeping, and to ensure that peacebuilding does not fall victim to turf battles.

There will also be demands for creating entities in New York to administer these enhanced civilian capacities. We need to avoid setting up large and top heavy bureaucratic structures. Our focus must remain on the field.

Mr. President,

The DPKO has been acting on provision of police capacities for many years and I am happy that India has been able to contribute both formed police units, including the first female FPU and senior police personnel to serve in management and command positions.

The report has identified several critical areas for providing core government functions, where civilian capacities are best suited. India has been included as one of the countries where capacity in several of these areas has been noted for possible tapping by the UN. In the past when called upon to provide civilian capacities for UN missions, India has responded in a prompt manner. I recall the secondment of several of our officials to the UN missions in former Yugoslavia and right now in Afghanistan.

Mr President,

The report has underscored recognition of national ownership and the importance of support to "core government functions" to ensure success in preventing relapse into conflict. It is critical that national ownership is accepted in its real sense and not only by way of lip service while actually pushing for the favoured solutions by the donors. It is also critical that civilian capacity deployments are demand driven.

My delegation believes that the recruitment model should give primacy to a partnership with governments of Member-States and involve the secondment of government officials. It is also important to ensure a gender balance.

This has a number of advantages. It gives the United Nations rapid access to the required capacities allowing rapid scaling-up and scaling-down of capacities.

Above all it provides capacities that are trained to work in and establish government structures and would mesh well with the peacekeeping personnel on the ground.

The force generation model of DPKO could be used to generate civilian capacities from member governments.

Mr President,

My delegation also believes that the capacities that are being sourced must be relevant to the conditions in post-conflict situations.

The expertise that is most relevant and actually tried on ground is in developing countries that have undertaken successful efforts in recent times in building governance structures and arranging for better delivery of basic services.

There is an international shift in many fields towards sourcing capabilities from the global South driven by sound economic and functional considerations.

United Nations efforts to source civilian capacities from developing nation would be in consonance with these broad trends.

Mr President,

The United Nations remains in the eyes of the affected, the most credible and legitimate representative of the international community.

It's peacekeeping activities have provided the bedrock of this trust. It is imperative that civilian capacities add to this credibility.

Thank you.

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