



**STATEMENT BY MR. V.K. NAMBIAR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE AT
THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PEACE KEEPING OPERATIONS ON MARCH
30, 2004**

Mr. Chairman,

May I begin by congratulating you and other members of the Bureau on your re-election.

I should also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guehenno for the clear presentation yesterday morning, an apt curtain raiser to our deliberations in this important Committee.

We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Morocco on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

The past year has seen a surge in UN peacekeeping operations and the process continues in 2004. Currently, the UN has a total of 42,000 troops on ground and by the end of the year, if anticipated missions are put into place, this figure is expected to touch an all-time high. Along with growth comes many challenges and while the past year has seen progress in some areas, much more needs to be done if we are to meet these challenges. The report of the Secretary General (Document A/58/694) does well to list some of these challenges, even though it does little to address many of the ills that continue to plague UN peacekeeping. We shall now turn to a discussion of some of the areas in the report that we feel warrant particular attention.

Safety and Security of UN and associated personnel.

We accord the highest priority to the safety and security of UN peacekeepers and associated personnel and are in agreement with the Secretary General that this is one of the major challenges confronting us. While we would, as a consequence, support ongoing efforts to strengthen existing mechanisms, we do not subscribe to the position that a review of the systems and procedures for safety and security both at Headquarters and in the field should necessarily end with a request for additional bodies or large sums of money. Rather, the emphasis should be on enhancing the UN's threat assessment and information-management capacities, recommending preventive action based on those trends, both at Headquarters and in the field. The question of accountability and responsibility in the area of field security is also a key issue. Has the UN pin-pointed the cracks in the system and has responsibility been fixed upon the individual, the management or the system, as the case may be, when breaches have occurred? These questions bear serious scrutiny. The Secretary General's report on the management of the United Nations Security system is still in its draft stages. While we do not, in principle, disagree on the need for a safety and security focal point within the DPKO, we feel that it would be desirable to first take a look at the report and specific proposals contained therein, before we rush into any premature agreement in this regard. We should also like clarification of the lines of

responsibility between the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD) and DPKO and the levels of cooperation and co-ordination envisaged between the two Departments, particularly in the event of a favourable decision being taken to set up a full-time security and safety focal point within the DPKO, as requested in paragraph 10 of the Secretary General's report.

Strengthening Cooperation with TCCs:

We welcome the increased frequency in briefings by the Secretariat on specific peacekeeping operations and generic peacekeeping issues. This should continue. Regrettably, however, there has not been significant "growth" in levels of cooperation among the Security Council, the Secretariat and Troop contributing countries. Meetings under the 1353 mechanism, leave much to be desired. These meetings continue to take place, in a *pro forma* fashion, the day before the Council adopts a resolution; at that stage, the views of troop contributors can only be of academic interest sought for form's sake. It is not surprising, therefore, that these consultations do not arouse any interest, are devoid of content, and have no bearing on the Council's decision. This pattern has to change. Timing and the frequency are key elements. Meetings with the TCCs must be held *much before* the Council mandates or renews an operation, when views of TCCs can contribute to the decision-making process and on a *regular basis and with predictable periodicity* with a view to making the relationship more genuine and meaningful.

Mission Planning: Integrated Mission Task Force

We recognize the utility of *Integrated Mission Task Forces (IMTFs)*, particularly the early involvement of mission leadership, that will take on the task of mandate implementation in the field and the bringing together of the relevant UN Departments to foster coordinated and effective action. We would urge the Secretariat to share with us best practices and lessons learnt from these planning activities and constraints, if any, in this process. Para 19 of the Secretary General's report informs us that a review of the full integrated planning process has been undertaken, a draft template finalized and discussions within the Secretariat have begun on its broader application. If this is indeed the case, we would request the Secretariat to share details with TCCs.

Rapid Deployment:

The Secretary General's report mentions in paragraph 20 that full deployment in 90 days "is a difficult goal to attain". The concept that looks excellent on paper has inherent drawbacks, akin to a traveller's cheque that can only be encashed if signed upon. Regrettably, there are only very few countries willing to sign on the dotted line and we rue this lack of commitment on the part of the developed world. While India is seized of the need to deploy rapidly, it must be appreciated that democratically elected governments, answerable to electorates, cannot take decisions in an arbitrary way on participation, without going through established procedures. Besides, it has been our experience that even when TCCs are ready to deploy, capacities of local air and seaports where PKOs are launched, are usually so limited that the arrival of troops must be staggered. These systemic features must be factored in and drawbacks that continue to persist removed. Dissemination of more timely and accurate information to TCCs on upcoming missions is necessary, back-stopped by efficient management of the administrative and financial aspects, if deployments are to become truly effective and rapid.

As regards the on-call lists, both military and police, our impression is that these are being somewhat under-utilised and we would urge the Secretariat to make more liberal and effective use of them. Proper maintenance, updating and utilisation of these lists would help reduce the lead time for deploying core mission personnel to future operations. I would be remiss if I did not add here that *India* is one of the few countries that have committed personnel to both lists.

The concept of *Strategic Deployment Stocks (SDS)* is a vital link for rapid deployment. SDS have proved to be beneficial, both in increasing the speed of deployment and in helping to reduce the equipment bottlenecks that hampered rapid and effective deployment of past operations. Paragraph 28 of the Secretary General's report mentions that work is underway to develop a funding mechanism that will enable rapid replenishment of the stocks earmarked for or issued to a mission. We hope to hear more from the Secretariat in the coming months on SDS replenishment strategy, which ideally should have been promulgated in 2003 itself when the concept was at its nascent stage, thereby obviating the procedural snags that we are facing now.

Civilian Police:

The role of civilian police in peacekeeping operations has expanded and intensified. We understand that police deployment today is around 4,600. Given this heightened profile, and consequent need for CIVPOL to be involved in planning from the initial stages of a mission, we presume that the UN is already inducting the civil-military component together while assessing needs of a new mission. This coordination between the Military and Police Division should be an integral part of the multi-disciplinary assessment teams that visit mission areas.

As regards the operational issues, we feel that there is room for improvement. The instance of the Selection Assistance Teams (SATs) that help choose personnel for a particular mission is a case in point. SATs could cover several missions at one time, because even though each operation has its own special needs, the broad quality of CIVPOL needed remains the same. This would obviate the need for the Secretariat to field separate teams for each mission and member states would not have to repeatedly arrange rosters for them to interview. There would be considerable savings for both.

Training:

We take note of the continuing progress achieved this past year in the area of training, in particular development of the *Standardised Training Generic Modules (SGTMs)*. While we support the concept of specialized training which the SGTMs entail, we do not subscribe to the theory of "*training for training's sake*" and training on routine skills. It is presumed that the UN takes on board officials versed in the basic skills. We have also taken note of paragraph 59 of the report which mentions that the DPKO is developing an evaluation methodology and monitoring system to enhance peacekeeping training and effectiveness. Now that there is a training standard, it stands to logic that mechanisms should be put in place to monitor progress. What we would, however, like to know is how close the Secretariat is to its goal of standardising training among TCCs and the extent to which best practices and lessons learnt have been incorporated into training.

Paragraph 61 of the Secretary General's report mentions that a "new focus has been placed on mission training, particularly on pre-deployment training". Training is also being conducted for contingents, at the specific request of TCCs. This is useful, particularly for those countries that may not have the requisite infrastructure or wherewithal. As far as *India* is concerned, we should like to inform the Committee that we conduct a rigorous six-week pre-induction training package both for MILOBs and contingents, at the *Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK), New Delhi*. The course content includes, inter alia, general awareness of the UN, mandate, ROE, safety measures, human rights, HIV/AIDS awareness and language skills. Considerable resources and efforts go into this training package which we see as an investment in more effective peacekeeping operations.

Quick Impact Projects:

We support the emphasis on small-scale and rapidly-disbursed *Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)*, quick and ready solutions to sustain confidence and support for peacekeeping operations.

The Indian Army has a sterling reputation across the board in all missions of having contributed material from its own resources for the furtherance of QIPs. We believe that each mission's budget should include, from the beginning and upto two years a budget line for such projects; projects should as far as possible be quickly implemented and funds should be used for defined purposes.

Lessons Learnt and Implementation of Best Practices:

The Peacekeeping Best Practices Unit (PBPU) became operational in 2003 and expectations were that the Unit would serve as a nerve center within the DPKO for research and evaluation of peacekeeping issues and for the development of improved procedures and practices based on those studies. While we would like to register our appreciation for the recently printed "*Handbook on Multi-dimensional Peacekeeping Operations*", the same unfortunately cannot be said for best practices and lessons learnt from a peacekeeping operation. We have not seen evidence so far of *any* sharing of information on lessons learnt from a peacekeeping mission with either the TCCs or with other ongoing peacekeeping missions. We hope that the Secretariat will be forthcoming in this regard and look forward to hearing from them on lessons learnt and best practices being followed, in the coming months.

Conduct and Disciplinary Issues:

We agree that all personnel accredited to UN Missions must function in a manner that preserves the image, credibility, impartiality and integrity of the United Nations. Acts of omission and commission by peacekeepers that detract from this image are unacceptable and we endorse the UN's stance of zero tolerance in this regard. Peacekeepers must be made fully aware of their duties and obligations and the consequences of misconduct. This aspect should form an integral part of the pre-deployment and in-mission training being conducted by the UN, of *all* peacekeeping personnel.

Where cases of alleged misconduct occur, we would emphasize that such cases be handled through cooperation between troop contributing countries concerned and the Mission leadership. The troop contributing country concerned should be involved from the very outset in an investigation into any case of alleged misconduct. Results of internal investigations/Boards of Inquiry (BOI) must be shared fully with TCCs and a copy, handed over to them, at the earliest stage possible. It is a right that troop contributors are entitled to, as much as the Secretariat is entitled to insist on details of follow up action by national authorities *after* an individual has been repatriated.

Finance and Budgetary Issues:

We wish to place on record our appreciation for the efforts made by the Secretariat this past one year to process COE claims and in the clearing of backlogs. The matter, however, continues to be linked to payments by member states of their assessed contributions and we would, in this regard, encourage them to do so in full, on time and without conditions. We also feel that it would be extremely useful to complete tasks in a time-bound fashion. In this connection, the expeditious liquidation of missions is of paramount importance. Liquidation involves not only withdrawal of troops and the civilian component from the mission area, but also speedy processing of claims, payment to TCCs and an eventual closing of the books of account. With a streamlined reimbursement process of COE and troop costs and simplified death and disability claims procedures, there is no reason why books of account should not be closed within eighteen months of the closure of a mission. Action on disposal of assets needs to be taken on a priority basis and the mission's unliquidated obligations reflected transparently in the final performance report. We should also like to draw the Secretariat's attention to unliquidated obligations pertaining to missions such as *UNTAC, UNOSOM and ONUMOZ* that were closed over a decade ago. Ongoing differences of opinion between the UN and the member states

concerned about the quantum of assessments from member states continue to delay and derail this process. There is urgent need to address the problem.

We wish also to register our serious concern over the recently concluded proceedings of the COE Working Group, which is mandated to undertake a triennial review of reimbursement rates. While the deliberations were extensive, results were disappointing. There appeared to be a total lack of appreciation of the position of TCCs and worse, a perceived mistrust of data supplied by them. New methodologies and systems, as a consequence, were sought to be introduced even before existing methodologies have run their full course. It is regrettable indeed that this spirit imbued the consultations, culminating in a total logjam and no upward revision of rates of reimbursement, both for troop costs and COE, for TCCs. We would hope that wiser counsel prevails when our Fifth Committee colleagues discuss the subject later in the year. Should, however, the situation persist to the dissatisfaction of the troop contributors, it can only be UN Peacekeeping that will suffer.

With regard to the proposal made by the Secretary General in paragraph 97 of the report, we would continue to reiterate the futility of establishing dual mechanisms to "facilitate a more regular review of the administrative aspects of the COE system". We feel that the triennial review mechanism currently in place should suffice. Should there be administrative aspects that need urgent review in the interim period, these can be taken up by member states directly with the Secretariat or discussed in the annual meetings of the C-34.

As regards review of the *United Nations Ration Scales (paragraph 98)*, while we can appreciate the need to streamline and refine procedures, we wish to reiterate that clear rationale and logic for doing so, transparency in procedures and methodologies proposed to be adopted, and close consultation with troop contributors in this process, must remain the bottom-line. The touchstone for any system of review should be to promote coherence, equity, fairness, transparency and flexibility while reducing cumbersome procedures. Anything less than that would not be acceptable to us.

Mr. Chairman,

I have touched upon only *some* of the issues that this complex subject entails, those that are of particular concern to my delegation. India has an unmatched record of having participated in almost all peacekeeping operations since the inception of peacekeeping in the 1950s. We continue to remain committed to this ideal and in refining further and forging better the instrument that has served us so well in the past, and can serve us *even better* if we cure it of some of its troubles. It is in this spirit that we hope to participate in the deliberations of this Committee and during the course of 2004.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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