

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 29 December 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations (see annex), containing an account of the Working Group's activities from 1 January to 31 December 2015.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex would be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Mahamat Zene **Cherif**  
Chair

Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations



**Annex to the letter dated 29 December 2015 from the Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

**Report on the activities of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations for the period 1 January to 31 December 2015**

**I. Introduction**

1. The Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations was established pursuant to the statement by the President of the Security Council adopted on 31 January 2001 (S/PRST/2001/3).
2. The Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Chad to the United Nations, Mr. Mahamat Zene Cherif, was appointed Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations for the period ending 31 December 2015 (see S/2015/2/Rev.1).
3. The present report highlights the structure and substance of the meetings of the Working Group from 1 January to 31 December 2015. In accordance with its mandate, the Working Group considered a number of peacekeeping issues relevant to the responsibilities of the Security Council as well as aspects of individual peacekeeping operations, without prejudice to the competence of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. The programme of meetings reflected the current activities of the Security Council and the priorities of its members, and strove to focus the Working Group on issues raised under its previous Chairs, as well as highly relevant new issues.

**II. Meetings of the Working Group between 1 January and 31 December 2015**

4. Between 1 January and 31 December 2015, the Working Group continued to promote the triangular cooperation among the Security Council, the troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat, seeking, in particular, to improve coordination within the peacekeeping architecture and to address important thematic issues related to peacekeeping. It held nine meetings with troop- and police-contributing countries and heard briefings by senior officials from the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission as well as Permanent Representatives and Observers to the United Nations (see table in annex to the present report).
5. In 2015, the Working Group discussed the themes below:
  - (a) Traditional peacekeeping versus peace enforcement;
  - (b) Safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers: Asymmetric threats;
  - (c) The African Union Mission in Somalia: Lessons learned;
  - (d) The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali: A “peacekeeping operation” within a counter-terrorism setting;

- (e) Bilateral and multilateral capacity-building for troop- and police-contributing countries;
- (f) MONUSCO Intervention Brigade: Lessons learned;
- (g) Partnerships: Importance of regional peacekeeping initiatives;
- (h) Towards a strategic dialogue between the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat.

The Working Group also held a special meeting with the High-level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations.

## **A. Traditional peacekeeping versus peace enforcement**

6. On 20 February, the Working Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Mangaral Banté, Deputy Permanent Representative of Chad to the United Nations. In his opening remarks, he set the context and described the evolution of peacekeeping from its traditional form to “robust” peacekeeping and then peace enforcement as new threats emerged. Peacekeepers have to deal with intra-State conflicts, terrorist threats and transnational organized crime, and that means it is important to adapt peacekeeping strategies to constantly changing environments, he said. In the light of those threats, and in the context of the comprehensive review of United Nations peace operations led by Mr. José Ramos-Horta, it is essential to examine and review the Organization’s approach to peacekeeping in a world that has changed profoundly since the deployment of the first peacekeeping mission to the Middle East in 1948. Chad’s firm belief that peacekeeping should be a dynamic, rather than a static activity, hence the importance of missions adapting to conditions and of mandates being tailored as closely as possible to the specific situation in each environment. He noted several positive developments in that regard, including the establishment of the Intervention Brigade within the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), which proved to be effective against armed groups in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. He drew attention to the concept note (see S/2015/1034) distributed prior to the meeting, which contained several recommendations intended to inform the discussions.

7. The group then heard briefings by Mr. Richard Nduhura, Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations, and Lieutenant-General Maqsood Ahmed, Military Adviser for Peacekeeping Operations at the United Nations.

8. Mr. Nduhura described the context in which Uganda started its peace enforcement activities in Somalia. His country’s involvement began with the adoption of the 19 January 2007 Communiqué of the African Union Peace and Security Council. Before 2009, Ugandan soldiers were frustrated because they could use force only when under attack and their assailants took advantage of that circumstance to carry out more attacks. He said that that situation prompted his Government to request a robust mandate which would make it possible to dislodge the militants from their positions. In his view, the adoption of Security Council resolution 1863 (2009), authorizing the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to take all necessary measures to provide security for key infrastructure in Somalia and to create the necessary security conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance, had been a turning point for AMISOM. He ascribed the success of the Mission to the full

cooperation and leadership of the Somali people. He also stressed the importance of strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union, as the United Nations would not be able to overcome all international peace and security challenges alone. Noting that the idea of a regional force supported by the United Nations was not new, he said that the United Nations should make the most of the comparative advantages of organizations such as the African Union, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). In his view, the African Union should carry out difficult peace enforcement tasks and then transfer responsibility to the United Nations while recommending that a detailed plan be drawn up before such a transfer of responsibilities takes place.

9. Lieutenant-General Ahmed said that peacekeeping should evolve and that traditional peacekeeping was no longer suitable in the current environment. He noted that the principles of peacekeeping, namely, consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence or defence of the mandate, are being severely tested. He called on troop- and police-contributing countries to improve their understanding of the concept of the protection of civilians and to focus on the performance of their contingents. In that connection, he said that manuals were being developed on subjects such as the protection of civilians, physical protection and aviation. In conclusion, he declared that while peacekeeping operations faced many challenges in the current environment, their absence could have catastrophic consequences for civilian populations.

10. All the delegations who spoke following the briefing statements said that they recognized that peacekeeping should evolve. Some called for the redefinition of the concepts of peacekeeping and peace enforcement. The United Nations should not take sides and the principles of peacekeeping should be preserved. They called for the enhancement of host State capacities and the safety and security of peacekeepers. Other delegations said that no single solution would suit all situations, and called for mandates to be adapted to situations, and for robust mandates and even peace enforcement to be used where necessary, especially to protect civilians or neutralize armed groups. Several delegations called for greater cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. If the United Nations is unable to enforce peace, it should provide the necessary means to regional organizations that wish to do so in spite of the risks, they insisted.

## **B. Safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers: Asymmetric threats**

11. On 23 March, the Working Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Mahamat Zene Cherif. He emphasized the deteriorating security environment in which peace operations are deployed. Two thirds of peacekeepers and 90 per cent of the personnel of special political missions are operating in environments characterized by high-intensity conflict according to United Nations University statistics. The United Nations is increasingly targeted by armed and terrorist groups using asymmetric warfare with an increased use of improvised explosive devices against peacekeepers. Improvised explosive devices cause loss of human life, make protection measures, such as training and specialized equipment, a necessity and impact the operational capacity and freedom of movement of operations. Improvised explosive devices could discourage Member States from contributing to operations, and the risks and threats

associated with such devices are already a hindrance to the implementation of peacekeeping mandates. With regard to the loss of human life, he recalled the human cost of improvised explosive devices to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). It was alarming that over the past six months, MINUSMA had suffered more casualties than all other peacekeeping operations combined. Nevertheless, Chad is convinced of the importance of United Nations initiatives to increase the capacity of peacekeeping operations to deal with asymmetric threats, including improvised explosive devices. In that regard, he recognized the significant role of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in enhancing the mobility and protection capacities of MINUSMA and AMISOM. Lastly, he drew attention to the concept note (see S/2015/1035) circulated prior to the meeting, which contained several recommendations.

12. The Working Group then heard briefings by Mr. David Pressman, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations; Mr. Dmitry Titov, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions; and Ms. Abigail Hartley, United Nations Mine Action Service, Chief of Policy, Advocacy and Public Information.

13. Mr. Pressman described the scale and cost of the threat of the improvised explosive devices in Mali and around the world. He mentioned some actions taken by his country at the domestic and multilateral levels, and particularly within the Security Council, to combat this threat. Since 2013, 24 MINUSMA peacekeepers have been killed and a further 112 injured by improvised explosive devices. Improvised explosive devices have also been used in attacks against AMISOM and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). The Mission was forced to abandon most of its observation posts. Improvised explosive devices are the weapon of choice for terrorists. With regard to MINUSMA, he stated that an assessment team from the United States military, which visited Mali, had recommended that contingents be trained in accordance with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) standards, ideally 90 days prior to their deployment, in order to reduce vulnerability and minimize the risk posed by improvised explosive devices. The United States is working to enhance United Nations capacities, including by building a strong defence against improvised explosive devices, a new threat for which many troop- and police-contributing countries are unprepared. Since improvised explosive devices posed a major threat to the safety and security of missions as well as the implementation of mandates, he recommended that Member States assist the United Nations in developing operational tactics, techniques, procedures and plans.

14. Mr. Titov described the changes in the global political and security environments and the way the nature of conflicts affected the work of the Security Council as well as the safety and security of peacekeepers. The United Nations operates in extremely dangerous environments where there is often no formal peace agreement in addition to the threats of transnational organized crime and terrorism. The usual approach to dealing with asymmetric threats is to focus on military solutions, whereas missions actually need political solutions. Protecting peacekeepers from those threats would require political and tactical measures, namely, working with host States to resolve the underlying causes of conflicts and taking steps to ensure safety and security. With regard to strategy, he noted that it was important to identify and cut off the sources of power of armed groups, taking into account the relationships between armed groups and local populations. He concluded that his department would continue to provide the specialized training and equipment needed to operate in certain environments,

while stressing the need for all peacekeepers to be trained and equipped in accordance with United Nations standards.

15. Ms. Hartley said that improvised explosive devices have an unprecedented impact on field missions and prevent peacekeepers from carrying out Security Council mandated tasks, and thus undermine the operational capacity and credibility of the United Nations. UNMAS activities now address the threat posed by improvised explosive devices. She outlined the role of UNMAS in providing operational and political support to the United Nations system and national authorities in order to minimize the threat of improvised explosive devices, and explained that UNMAS trained, advised and equipped peacekeepers at the operational level and assisted in policy development at the political level. Improvised explosive devices have caused significant damage and killed large numbers of civilians and peacekeepers, particularly in Mali, but measures have been taken to make travel along main supply routes safer and to increase the number of patrols. Given the complex, multidimensional and constantly changing nature of the threat of improvised explosive devices, she recommended that the Security Council create counter-improvised explosive devices units within missions, wherever necessary. Such units should be provided with the necessary resources and proper equipment, as well as capable experts in order to advise and train mission and host State personnel.

16. All the delegations who spoke following the briefings stressed the need to enhance the safety and security of peacekeepers operating in dangerous environments.

### **C. Special meeting with the members of the High-level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations**

17. On 6 May, the Working Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Mahamat Zene Cherif in the presence of 12 members of the High-level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations, which had been appointed by the Secretary-General on 31 October 2014 to assess the status of United Nations peace operations. In his opening remarks, the Chair said that it was essential to re-examine the United Nations approach to peacekeeping. The world has changed dramatically since 1948 when the Organization deployed its first peacekeeping mission. Peacekeeping should evolve and be adapted to new realities. Solutions should match the specific conditions in each environment. Although United Nations peacekeeping principles are still valid, he recalled resolution 2098 (2013), in which the Security Council authorized targeted offensive operations by the MONUSCO Intervention Brigade to prevent the expansion of armed groups, neutralize and disarm them in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that regard, he wondered whether those principles were still valid. It is alarming that MINUSMA has the highest mortality rate among peacekeeping missions since the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II), with a total of 28 peacekeepers killed in 2014. Over the previous seven months, MINUSMA suffered more casualties than all other operations combined.

18. Furthermore, he noted the importance of reaching a common understanding of the tasks to be performed by missions, between troop- and police-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat, during the formulation and review of mandates, as well as of strengthening the African Union-United Nations partnership, through lessons learned and use of best practices. He finally drew attention to the concept note (see S/2015/1036), circulated prior to the meeting, which

suggested four topics for discussion, namely, the use of force, asymmetric threats, triangular cooperation, and partnership with regional organizations, in particular the African Union.

19. The Working Group then heard briefings by Mr. Edmond Mulet, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Tête António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations and Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Chair of the High-level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations.

20. Mr. Mulet said that it was important to know how and when force should be used. Peacekeeping operations should resort to the legitimate use of force in self-defence and in defence of the mandate, particularly to protect civilians. They should have the flexibility to use the appropriate level of force consistent with the situation, the mandate and the capacities available. On asymmetric environments, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is taking steps to prepare peacekeepers but the Department has a major shortage in military planning capacity. In this regard, a Strategic Force Generation and Capability Planning Cell is being set up, but this would need to be capacitated by Member States. A capacity-building programme for missions operating in countries such as Mali is being developed and modern technology tools to strengthen performance and protect peacekeepers are being identified. On triangular cooperation, when contingents obeyed orders from their capitals or when units were hampered by caveats, peacekeepers could not be effective in carrying out their mandate. For peacekeeping to succeed, there should be a common understanding of what needs to be done to stabilize war-torn countries. The Security Council and troop- and police-contributing countries should have greater consultations and exchanges throughout a mission's life cycle, and the Secretariat should provide the Security Council and troop- and police-contributing countries frank assessments of the risks, opportunities and challenges of each operation.

21. Regarding partnerships, peacekeeping is currently a joint United Nations-African Union undertaking, and the African Union is the most important United Nations partner. This partnership evolved from a capacity-building model to burden-sharing and strategic convergence. The African Union has strengths such as the ability to respond rapidly to crises through its prevention and mediation roles, as well as its ability to mobilize more quickly than the United Nations, as demonstrated in Mali and Somalia. The Working Group should explore how the respective capabilities of its members could be used more effectively to respond rapidly to acute crises. Major efforts were being made to operationalize the African Standby Force. He noted that other measures could be taken to strengthen the partnership, in particular by strengthening strategic dialogue and consultation between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council. This would allow greater policy consistency, in particular for determining the crisis response role of each organization. The African Union and the United Nations should also work closely together in the planning of operations and valuable lessons had been learned from recent transitions in the Central African Republic and Mali, which should be applied in future transitions.

22. Mr. António recalled the visit by the members of the High-level Independent Panel to Addis Ababa in February 2015 to meet with the Chair of the African Union Commission, the African Union Department of Peace and Security and the African Union Peace and Security Council. According to the African Union, the United Nations peace operations review process should strengthen the United Nations-

African Union strategic partnership in the area of peace and security, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. He reiterated the African common position on United Nations peace operations adopted by the African Union Peace and Security Council on 29 April 2015, and summarized its salient points. This African common position had been shared with the members of the High-level Independent Panel and he hoped to see it duly taken into account in the report of the Panel.

23. Mr. Ramos-Horta made some observations in advance of the report that the Panel was preparing for the Secretary-General. The Panel had received more than 80 written submissions, including that of the African Union; and the Panel had visited Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Latin America, and held dozens of meetings. The Panel had met with bodies and member States in New York, officials in charge of field missions, and communities and Governments of countries hosting United Nations peace operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali and Senegal, as well as their personnel. The United Nations should strengthen its partnership with regional organizations and he welcomed the partnership with the African Union in that regard, which was sharing the burden of conflict resolution in Africa. There was a need to focus on conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes, and to be proactive in protecting civilians as well as to ensure that personnel respected standards of conduct, including zero tolerance for abuse. The signing of a peace agreement was the beginning of a peace process, to be decided by national leaders and supported by other actors who should provide the necessary support in the areas of security, justice, economic recovery and political inclusion.

24. Peacekeeping operations should build the capacity of the host State and be deployed where they are most needed; operations must enhance their performance, mobility and flexibility. Mission personnel should commit to implementing the mandate and being accountable both to the host country and to the United Nations. Mandates should be commensurate with resources, and training should enable uniformed personnel to understand peacekeeping obligations and their roles within a mission. Persons with primary responsibility for peace operations must be sought within the system as well as through the development of young talent. Furthermore, communication between missions and communities should be more proactive; the safety and security of peace operations and their personnel should be strengthened; and field support should be provided through more responsive and accountable managers. He noted some challenges, in particular rapid deployment.

25. Following the three briefings, members of the Working Group who took the floor indicated the need to determine how and when to use force to protect civilians and neutralize those who committed asymmetric attacks. On triangular cooperation, several members said that the current consultations were not genuine and that there was a need to find the best way to consult with troop- and police-contributing countries, as well as with the Secretariat. On partnership with the African Union, many said that it should be strengthened based on the latter's comparative advantages.

#### **D. AMISOM: Lessons learned**

26. On 26 June, the Working Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Mahamat Zene Cherif. In the period from 2007 to 2015, AMISOM made significant contributions to improving the security and political situation in Somalia. He



mentioned, inter alia, the recapture of almost all the territories previously occupied by Al Shabaab, including Mogadishu, and the continuation of the constitutional process. He nevertheless recognized that the group remained a threat owing to persistent asymmetric warfare. AMISOM was an example of cooperation among the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union, and there was a need to draw the corresponding lessons in order to address challenges to peace and security in Africa. He recalled Chapter VIII of the Charter, which stipulated that “the Security Council shall, where appropriate, utilize such regional arrangements or agencies for enforcement action under its authority”. He affirmed that AMISOM was on the right track thanks to the support of the countries neighbouring Somalia, the African Union, the United Nations, the European Union and bilateral partners. Stressing that the concept note (see S/2015/1037) circulated prior to the meeting contained lessons learned that were far from being exhaustive, then he invited the briefers and the members of the Working Group to propose additional lessons.

27. The Working Group then heard briefings by Mr. Atul Khare, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Mr. Tête António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations and Mr. Tekeda Alemu, Permanent Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the United Nations.

28. Mr. Khare recalled the report of the High-level Independent Panel which highlighted the importance of boosting the United Nations-African Union strategic partnership, and, on a case-by-case basis, support to African Union peace operations authorized by the Security Council, including through predictable funding. AMISOM received three forms of support, namely, logistical support, direct or bilateral support, and support through a trust fund. The United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOA) supported more than 30,000 personnel of AMISOM and the Somali National Army, providing 1,600 tons of rations and 2.4 million litres of fuel and water per month. With regard to lessons learned, he said that there must be a clear mandate to ensure the predictability and sustainability of the basic operational requirements of AMISOM. He had ordered a strategic review of UNSOA with a view to identifying measures to ensure that the Office responded to changing needs. More efforts were needed at the strategic and operational levels of the African Union and the United Nations to conduct integrated planning and set priorities. In addition, he noted the difficulties of supporting the Somali National Army through voluntary contributions and the difficulties stemming from the high cost of transporting supplies because the main supply routes were not practicable.

29. Mr. António declared that AMISOM was a regional initiative, as envisaged in Chapter VIII of the Charter, supported by the international community, that Africa needed support to implement “African solutions to African problems”. He said that United Nations logistical support through assessed contributions, financial support from the European Union, bilateral support and support through the trust fund were proof that it was possible to share the burden and reduce everybody’s load. He also said that the security environment in which AMISOM had deployed and continued to operate was an environment in which no United Nations operation could function, owing to United Nations peacekeeping principles. Given the difficulties faced by troop- and police-contributing countries to provide the Mission with helicopters and engineering units, he advised African States to build their capacities and suggested in this regard to review training programmes and the doctrine of African defence and

security institutions. Since AMISOM could not remain in Somalia forever, he said that it was essential for the international community to support the Federal Government of Somalia through its Guulwade (victory) plan. AMISOM was an example of collective success to be used as a reference in the light of ongoing security challenges.

30. Mr. Mayr-Harting said that substantial progress had been made in Somalia. For this to be sustainable, progress at the political level must go hand in hand with progress in the area of security. He said that there was an urgent need to revisit the mandate of UNSOA to enable the Office to provide the necessary logistical support not only to AMISOM but also to the Somali National Army. In that connection, he described the Guulwade plan as a good basis for training and equipping the army. It was essential to increase the capacity of the Somali police. The European Union, through the African Peace Facility, had spent 920 million euros since the establishment of AMISOM in 2007, and it was essential for that support to be translated into results on the ground. However, the current level of European Union support for AMISOM was not sustainable, hence the urgent need to seek other contributors, in particular the African Union.

31. Mr. Alemu affirmed that AMISOM was a success and an exceptional case of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. He declared that, unlike conventional operations, AMISOM had been deployed under conditions where there was no peace to keep. The deployment became possible owing to the courage shown by the African Union in consultation with IGAD, and the sole aim of the troop-contributing countries to bring peace to Somalia. On the reasons for AMISOM success and lessons learned, he underscored the consent of the Somali authorities of the then Transitional Federal Government and the continued political support of the current Federal Government of Somalia; as well as the leading role of the subregion as a facilitator of the peace and reconciliation process, with the support of the international community; the subregion's support for and participation in AMISOM; the political, financial and logistical support provided by partners including the United Nations and the European Union to IGAD and the African Union. He declared that the single most decisive factor was the political consensus on the approach taken to restore peace in Somalia. In his view, the consent of the host country, consistency between regional and subregional organizations and the implementation of an innovative partnership based on the principles of subsidiarity and the division of labour were the backbone of the success of AMISOM. Despite this, he recalled that the fight against Al Shabaab was not over, hence the need for partners to stay the course and maintain their unity in order to eradicate the Al Shabaab terrorist threat in Somalia and the region. He said that since AMISOM was not destined to remain in Somalia forever, it was necessary to develop the capacity of the Somali National Army and the Somali police, for whom support must be coordinated.

32. Following the four briefings, there were discussions among the members of the Working Group, those who briefed the Group and the Member States present, including Somalia. All participants condemned the attack by Al Shabaab on the AMISOM base in Leego, 100 km north-west of Mogadishu, which had left dozens of Burundian soldiers dead and as many others injured. They commended the pacification work of AMISOM despite the scarcity of resources and called for long-term support and the strengthening of the Somali National Army. There was a need to provide basic services to the populations of the liberated areas and to develop a long-term policy to address the challenges of economic development in Somalia. The Chair

reiterated that AMISOM was a military operation with proven abilities in a difficult situation based on triangular cooperation between the African Union, the United Nations and the European Union. There was a need for military successes to be matched by socioeconomic advances. Finally, he appealed to the members of the Working Group to take into account the views expressed and to take action to enable Somalia to become master of its destiny, including by supporting and strengthening its armed and security forces.

#### **E. MINUSMA: A “peacekeeping operation” within a counter-terrorism setting**

33. On 31 July, the Working Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Mahamat Zene Cherif. He said that Mali was in the midst of a crisis which threatened its unity and stability, exacerbated by the presence of terrorist groups creating a complex and challenging security environment for MINUSMA. Despite the signing of a political agreement between the Government and armed groups, security was lacking owing to the growing presence of armed and terrorist groups throughout the country. MINUSMA was the target of asymmetrical attacks, including by improvised explosive devices; and that the Mission was currently not only the second most dangerous United Nations mission but also the one for which future security trends were the most disturbing. He wondered whether MINUSMA, whose mandate was to implement a peace agreement, was operating in the appropriate context given the lack of peace because of the presence and actions of armed, terrorist and criminal groups undermining peace. The list established and updated by the Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) indicated the existence of seven entities associated with Al-Qaida in Mali. He commended the efforts of the French forces mandated to combat terrorism in the Sahel, including in Mali. He said that the dangerous environment, characterized by repetitive asymmetrical attacks, adversely affected the implementation of the MINUSMA mandate at operational, political and financial levels. In view of this situation, he said that MINUSMA required the support of the Security Council to adapt to the difficulties on the ground, and reminded participants of the recommendations in the concept note (see S/2015/1038) circulated prior to the meeting.

34. The Working Group then heard briefings by Mr. Dmitry Titov, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Smail Chergui, African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, Mr. Mick Lorentzen, Director, Division of Regional Operations, Department of Safety and Security, United Nations Secretariat, Mr. Alexis Lamek, Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, and Ambassador Sékou Kassé, Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations.

35. Mr. Titov said that MINUSMA played an important role in the discussions leading to the ceasefire agreements. The security situation continued to be of major concern — 42 MINUSMA peacekeepers had been killed and 166 injured since April 2013 as a result of hostile acts. MINUSMA was not operating in a conventional peacekeeping setting because of the presence of a multitude of armed and terrorist groups which contributed to making the asymmetrical environment increasingly worrisome. Violent attacks, which had originally been concentrated in the north, had spread to Bamako, targeting Mission personnel and Malian civilians. He recalled the ambush by extremists in Timbuktu which had killed six peacekeepers and injured five

others. Regarding measures taken, he stated that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had established three level II hospitals, that medical evacuations by air had improved, and that the Department was considering the establishment of a new logistics battalion in order to better secure supply convoys. A new integrated security system for protection against indirect fire, including sensors, surveillance cameras and radar was being considered for Kidal and Gao. The Department was seeking to improve the preparedness of staff through training, equipment, support and organization. Training of staff on improvised explosive devices was being intensified, and eight teams, trained to destroy such devices were being deployed. The Mission had deployed a special intelligence team with officers working on a wide range of new technologies, such as unmanned aerial systems. However, there is still a long way to go for MINUSMA to be fully prepared for the asymmetrical environment in which it operates. The commitment of the Malians was the foundation of long-term stability, and the peace agreement was a very good basis on which to build peace while calling on all, particularly signatory armed groups, to focus on its implementation. He noted the need to take decisive action against spoilers and extremist groups who rejected peace. He commended France's efforts to fight terrorism and build the capacity of Malian forces, whose redeployment in the north was vital. He also commended the African Union regional initiatives against instability in the Sahel, particularly the African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel and the Nouakchott Process, which provided important support for the peace agreement. The policy and the operational constraints of MINUSMA prevented it from fighting extremists. Troop- and police-contributing countries must be able to support and protect themselves, and he called on member States to support them. Despite the risks, threats and challenges, the international community would spare no effort to uphold its responsibility towards the people of Mali.

36. Mr. Chergui said that the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali had been a happy event and the result of consensus negotiations that should serve as a model. However, he noted that the Agreement remained to be implemented and requested in this regard that the economic dimension be borne in mind, including employment opportunities to prevent those who had laid down their weapons from being drawn into the criminal economy. He said that MINUSMA was operating in an environment that required another type of commitment, while recalling the existence of several parties that were not signatories of the Agreement, including terrorist and criminal groups and proposing a strategic approach to the situation. He said that the African Union was determined to strengthen its strategic partnership with the United Nations and made two proposals to strengthen MINUSMA. The first is to further strengthen the Mission personnel and logistics as well as the mandate, where necessary. The Mission should reach its authorized strength and its full capacity as well as the required level of logistics that would enable it to carry out its mandate to protect civilians and its personnel. The second proposal is to establish a specialized unit within the Mission, which would be mandated and equipped to undertake preventive or offensive operations. He indicated that the African Union was ready to work with the United Nations to define the concept of operations of this brigade and encouraged States to contribute. The 5 November 2014 Ministerial meeting in Niamey demonstrated the support for this African Union proposal to contribute to the Mission. He recalled that the High-level Independent Panel findings according to which the United Nations should not engage in counter-terrorism tasks, and that the Panel had recognized the need to undertake such tasks in partnership with regional organizations and a coalition of the willing. In the long term, there was a need to address the root

causes of terrorism and violent extremism by fighting poverty, underdevelopment, ignorance and the lack of opportunities and employment for young people.

37. Mr. Lorentzen provided information on the security situation and United Nations security risk management in Mali. He said that the Organization was working in a highly unpredictable and volatile security environment. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, as the head of the security management team, continued to review the security situation and security risk assessments. He described the various security levels for Mali while underlining that armed conflict and terrorist activities continued to affect United Nations activities in the north and the centre. In the past three months, United Nations facilities and convoys had been attacked and MINUSMA vehicles had been targeted on five occasions by improvised explosive devices. The security situation would not improve in the near future despite the measures taken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, MINUSMA and the security management team. Despite the signature of the peace agreement last month, armed and terrorist groups remained active and continued to carry out operations throughout the country. The United Nations was Al-Qaida's declared strategic target, and the presence of several Al-Qaida affiliated groups in the country was a direct threat. Algeria, Mauritania and the Niger had already been affected by the growing presence of radical armed groups in northern Mali and the potential emergence of these groups in the south of Mali could have similar consequences for Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire in the medium to long term.

38. Mr. Lamék paid a tribute to MINUSMA peacekeepers and their precursors of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali. He said that France would continue to honour their sacrifice, and that it was for MINUSMA to create the conditions reducing the vulnerability of the Mission personnel. He said that there was a need to equip them adequately, train them properly, inform them of the necessary principles, and build their capacity to reduce the risks associated with the terrorist threat. He said that the agreement prepared in Algiers and signed in Bamako was a historic opportunity to build lasting peace in Mali. Its implementation would be decisive, and the follow-up Committee had begun its work and it was important for the impacts of the agreement to be felt by the people. In order to support the peace process effectively, MINUSMA operational capacity should be further strengthened. He welcomed the ongoing project to establish a logistics battalion and said that more time was needed to put in place appropriate protective measures to reduce peacekeepers' vulnerability. He stressed the need to increase the Mission presence in order to show the population the existence of an alternative to traffickers, armed groups and terrorist groups. Economic issues remained to be resolved and he asked the host country to do its share.

39. Mr. Kassé said that Mali had begun to implement the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. MINUSMA was not operating in an environment consistent with its mandate and reiterated the call of Malian authorities to address the situation in Mali in a specific manner. Given that MINUSMA is not operating in a peacekeeping environment and is not mandated to fight terrorism, violent extremism and drug trafficking, he expressed his support for bilateral and multilateral initiatives to train and equip Malian forces to respond to asymmetrical warfare, initiatives to train and equip MINUSMA to deal with asymmetrical environments and initiatives to support the Nouakchott Process. He also reiterated the call of Malian authorities and African regional and subregional organizations to adjust the MINUSMA mandate so that the Mission matches the security environment in which it was operating, in particular

through the establishment of a force tasked to combat terrorism and cross-border crime. He called for the operationalization of the rapid reaction force within MINUSMA, and for the use of all means to prevent the threats and attacks by terrorist groups, narco-jihadist groups and other hostile forces to the implementation of the Agreement.

40. Following the five briefings, members of the Working Group said that the situation in Mali was exceptional. They called for reducing the vulnerability of the Mission by strengthening it, inter alia, by adapting the rules of engagement to match the situation. Some members said that the solution to the Malian crisis was political. These members said that there was a need to address the root causes of terrorism and extremism and to hold accountable those who undermined peace. Other members recognized that there were similarities between the situation in Mali and the situation in Somalia except that there was a peace process in Mali. However, to respond effectively to the security challenges facing Mali, particularly the terrorist threat, many concluded that there was a need for the African Union and the United Nations to continue consultations on this issue in order to find a solution in the context of their partnership.

#### **F. Bilateral and multilateral capacity-building for troop- and police-contributing countries**

41. On 31 August, the Working Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Mahamat Zene Cherif to consider how to leverage important bilateral and multilateral capacity-building to more predictably create the impact desired by all involved: the donor country, the recipient country or regional organization, and the United Nations. Contributing to peacekeeping should be the concern of the entire international community not limited to that of troop-contributing countries alone. He welcomed the 26 September 2014 Peacekeeping Summit and bilateral, multilateral and regional actors who provide capacity-building through training and equipment programmes. In this regard, he noted several such programmes including the United States-led Global Peace Operations Initiative and African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership, France's Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities and the recent initiative by Japan to develop the engineering capabilities of troop-contributing countries as well as European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization-led capacity-building programmes.

42. It is necessary to strengthen the coherence of capacity-building efforts and the coordinating role of the United Nations Secretariat as well as the correlation between capacity-building efforts and peacekeeping requirements, he declared. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support of the United Nations Secretariat have a key role, he continued, while welcoming the creation of the Strategic Force Generation and Capability Planning Cell within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in 2015. He drew attention to the concept note (see S/2015/1039) circulated prior to the meeting.

43. The Working Group heard briefings by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, Mr. Yoshifumi Okamura, as well as the Director of the Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. David Haeri.

44. Mr. Okamura said that Japan has been one of the Member States sponsoring training and equipment programmes since 2008, contributing approximately \$40 million and dispatching trainers to 13 African peacekeeping training institutions. He declared that Japan, in close cooperation with the Department of Field Support, recently launched such a new train-and-equip project. Elaborating on the concept and progress of the project, he explained that the intention was to fill significant capacity and equipment gaps of troop-contributing countries and accordingly allow them to deploy their engineering units rapidly and in a timely manner. He said that under the project, the Department of Field Support will establish a training hub to offer support packages comprised of equipment and training for African troop-contributing countries with Japan providing the necessary funds for the project, covering the cost to procure the required engineering equipment, as well as its military engineering experts as trainers. He affirmed that it was planned to have the project's trial training at the Humanitarian and Peace Support School at the International Peace Support Training Centre in Nairobi in September 2015, to be followed by full-scale training courses in 2016. It seeks to provide 10 trainees nominated from some African troop-contributing countries for six weeks, the necessary skills to maintain and operate heavy engineering equipment, including grader, bucket loader, dozer, and hydraulic excavator, he explained. One specific feature of the project is that the Department of Field Support is in the driver's seat and will implement it in close partnership with troop-contributing countries and Japan, in a "triangular partnership" arrangement, which differentiates it from other training and equipment programmes, he said. Another feature of the project is that its training programmes will follow the United Nations Engineering Units Manual, which had been completed by the working group co-chaired by Japan and Indonesia under the United Nations Military Units Manuals project. There are three issues for further consideration, namely, coordination with other initiatives for greater coherence of bilateral and multilateral capacity-building efforts such as the African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership, cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, particularly its military force generation services, and the respective African troop-contributing countries to design training programmes which would meet their requirements, as well as expansion of Japan's project with critical gaps in other enabler capabilities, including airlift, transport, medical, and communications, which should also be addressed.

45. Since its early days, Mr. Haeri said, United Nations peacekeeping had been marked by and benefited from initiatives sponsored by Member States and multilateral organizations particularly train-and-equip programmes and operational partnerships. He explained that train-and-equip programmes had contributed to broaden the base of contributors to United Nations peacekeeping, help fill key capability gaps in missions, raise the overall level of peacekeeping performance in the field, as well as create and reinforce cooperation between Member States. Capacity-building for United Nations peacekeeping is most effective when focused on specific capability and mission requirements and when conducted in an efficient and sustainable manner. At times, however, countries benefiting from such initiatives received training that was not relevant to the tasks to be conducted or consistent with United Nations training standards. On other occasions, countries received equipment that could not be operated and/or maintained by themselves beyond a brief initial period. There is a need for better coordination among training providers, capacity builders, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, and field missions. In this regard, he proposed the establishment of a small partnership capacity within the Integrated Training Service which would help to

match training capacity to training needs. He also proposed the institution of a training certification system where Member States would certify the delivery of predeployment training in accordance with United Nations standards to help to ensure that all uniformed personnel are deployed only after receiving appropriate training. He further proposed to set up a training of trainers centre to support Member States' preparations for peacekeeping and to provide training support to missions, by deploying qualified instructors to conduct or oversee the delivery of training.

46. On operational partnerships and co-deployment, between 2004 and 2014, eight United Nations operations benefited from operational partnerships on 41 occasions, ranging from instances where a small number of troops from one country were embedded into another country's battalion to situations where two countries joined up individual companies to form a battalion. Operational partnerships proved to be useful for new troop-contributing countries in navigating the United Nations peacekeeping system for the first time, and several countries currently deploying formed units in United Nations peacekeeping gained experience by embedding a small number of troops in another country's contingent. Similarly, they offered an alternative to smaller troop-contributing countries, which might not have the necessary resources to deploy and or sustain an entire unit on their own. Such partnerships demonstrated the need to continue exploring such arrangements and ways to make them work effectively. The Secretariat could also do more to enable and support operational partnerships. A key measure is to improve the information-sharing channels with bilateral donors on potential partnership opportunities among troop-contributing countries, as well as the ability of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to help enable them.

47. Coordination mechanisms are essential to ensure that third-party capacity-building initiatives are aligned to the policies, practices, standards and requirements of United Nations peacekeeping operations, he declared. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support continuously strive to improve the linkages between bilateral capacity-building efforts and the actual requirements for United Nations peacekeeping. Additional Member State capabilities were required, namely, air assets, combat logistics units, and French-speaking formed police units to close the most urgent gaps in current operations, as well as enablers critical for mission start-up, such as engineering and construction units; level II hospitals; CASEVAC/MEDEVAC; utility helicopters and fixed-wing tactical airlift; transportation and logistics; airfield units; and formed police units to enable more rapid deployment.

48. He highlighted the important opportunity the session offered to discussing not only ways to strengthen existing capacity-building initiatives, but also how to ensure that future programmes could effectively respond to medium- to long-term needs and gaps in United Nations peacekeeping.

## **G. MONUSCO Intervention Brigade: Lessons learned**

49. On 19 October, the Working Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Mahamat Zene Cherif. He said that the main objective of the meeting was to undergo a preliminary review of the unprecedented Intervention Brigade experiment, without prejudice regarding the possibility of duplicating this arrangement, or not, in the future. In March 2013, the Security Council adopted resolution 2098 (2013) to further strengthen the political mandate of MONUSCO and allow the creation of an



Intervention Brigade within the Mission. The creation of this Intervention Brigade was the result of a process that originated in July 2012 with the proposal of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to deploy a Neutral Intervention Force, which was subsequently adopted in October 2012 by SADC. The lack of funds impeded its deployment by the regional organization, prompting the Security Council to step in. He recalled the mandate of the Intervention Brigade to carry out targeted offensive operations within the overall efforts of MONUSCO to prevent the expansion of all armed groups, neutralize and disarm them in order to contribute to the objective of reducing their threat to State authority and civilians in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, and to make space for stabilization activities.

50. Formed by contingents from Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania, and South Africa, the Intervention Brigade, composed of three Infantry battalions, one Artillery company and one Special Forces and Reconnaissance Company, achieved a great deal. Tactically, its deployment allowed MONUSCO to adopt a more proactive stance towards armed groups perpetrating human rights violations. Moreover, this experience has not resulted, as feared, in a sharp increase in casualties for Blue Helmets, which proved that a more robust posture did not necessarily go together with higher fatalities. Indeed, it can even be said that such a posture might very well — to a certain extent and in some contexts — decrease the risks of attacks and therefore of casualties among United Nations troops. Operationally, he said, the Intervention Brigade encouraged some troop-contributing countries to provide robust capabilities and to accept significant operational risks by reducing ambiguities and divergent interpretations on the ground owing to the crystal-clear objectives set out in the resolution. Moreover, as evidenced by the military victory over the M23 rebel group, the Intervention Brigade demonstrated a good unity of effort with the MONUSCO Force Commander and the Operations Commander of the Armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC). The Intervention Brigade use of United Nations air assets, artillery, and mortars as force multipliers supporting FARDC was notably efficient. Strategically, the Intervention Brigade experiment clearly showed that, when properly designed and in a favourable political context, the deployment of an offensive brigade could be a powerful incentive for spoilers to lay down their arms and join the political and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes. As a result, it could be seen as a useful tool of leverage for the Mission's other components and for the advancement of its overall political mandate. Moreover, the Intervention Brigade could play an interesting role — in the early stages — in helping the authorities to attain their objective of strengthening their control over remote and unstable areas. He drew attention to the recommendations contained in the concept note (see S/2015/1040) that was circulated prior to the meeting.

51. The group then heard briefings by Mr. Ignace Gata Mavita wa Lufuta, Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations and Mr. Lot Dzonzi, Deputy Permanent Representative of Malawi to the United Nations.

52. Mr. wa Lufuta situated the context in which the Intervention Brigade had been created. Faced with the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, weak FARDC and the passivity of United Nations forces, accused by the Congolese people of being unable to bring peace to the country after several years of its presence, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had launched a plea to convince its partners and the States of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and of the SADC, the need to set up a force capable of helping to end

this situation. Thus, in Kampala, on 8 September 2012, the Heads of State and Government of the ICGLR, supported by SADC, decided to set up a neutral international force which would be mandated by the African Union and the United Nations. He noted several positive aspects resulting from the advent of the Intervention Brigade. Its creation corrected the bad image that the Congolese had of MONUSCO, whose soldiers spent their time doing nothing. Through its support to the FARDC, the latter had been able to root out the rebels of the former M23, significantly reduced the nuisance of the Forces de Résistance Patriotique d'Ituri (FRPI) and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), as well as many other negative forces in little time. As part of the ICGLR and SADC, the countries contributing to the Brigade were anxious to see the war and atrocities end. They had a specific goal: support the FARDC to end the conflict. This goal was also shared by the Security Council, which through its resolution 2098 (2013), assigned a clear mandate to the Brigade to impose peace by preventing the expansion of armed groups, and by neutralizing and disarming them. As lessons learned, the Intervention Brigade experience reaffirmed the responsibility and moral duty to protect civilians following the massacres that took place in Rwanda, Srebrenica and eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Seventy years after its creation, the United Nations must adapt its peace operations to the current nature of conflicts, by placing the protection of civilians and robust mandates at the centre of its concerns. Despite the fears of a worsening of the conflict and potential significant losses among United Nations forces, expressed by some troop-contributing countries, the deployment of the Intervention Brigade within MONUSCO persuaded more than one armed group to surrender and lay down their arms. He expressed the gratitude of the Government and the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the international community, the United Nations and MONUSCO troop-contributing countries, particularly those contributing to the Intervention Brigade, for their assistance in defending his country's territorial integrity and sovereignty. Despite its imperfections, the Intervention Brigade is an experience that could benefit other countries.

53. Mr. Dzonzi said that the Intervention Brigade had been conceptualized by SADC and taken over by the United Nations to avoid command and control problems that could emerge from the presence of two operations in one country. He described the current security situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo as relatively stable but unpredictable owing to the presence of foreign negative forces such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) and the Lord's Resistance Army, as well as local armed groups. The defeat of the M23 and the liberation of Goma are the main achievements of the Intervention Brigade. As a result of stabilization by the Intervention Brigade some ADF members in Beni Territory and many FDLR cadres in "Petit" Kivu are surrendering and offering themselves for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. In addition to offensive operations, the Intervention Brigade has been involved in operations such as day and night patrols, escort patrols and humanitarian assistance through quick impact projects.

54. He mentioned that the misinterpretation that the responsibility to conduct offensive operations lay only with the Intervention Brigade gave MONUSCO a very bad reputation as the host State wondered why other MONUSCO brigades should remain in the country if they could not engage in offensive operations to root out the armed groups. He regretted the negative impact on operations created by the impasse between MONUSCO and the host State, as a result of which the FARDC conducted

operations against the FDLR without the Mission's support, owing to allegations of human rights abuses. Consequently, liberated areas are being reoccupied by the FDLR. To remedy this, the Intervention Brigade must operate jointly with the FARDC, including to distinguish Government Forces from armed groups who put on the uniform of the former. As lessons learned, troop-contributing countries should have highly responsive logistical support plans and units in addition to common battle rhythm and a joint planning approach to operations. There were high expectations on the Intervention Brigade to neutralize, within a short period of time, the numerous armed groups in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, including those embedded within the local population. Intervention Brigade units are overstretched and overtasked owing to the danger and vastness of the area of operations. Given the Intervention Brigade's numerous tasks, he requested additional armoured personnel carriers, adding that the Force should be transformed to cope with asymmetrical warfare. The impasse which immensely affected the operations of the Intervention Brigade should be resolved, and in this regard, MONUSCO must apologize and allow joint planning and operations. He recommended applying the "One Mission One Mandate" concept to all MONUSCO Forces and replacing MONUSCO's static brigades by more robust and rapidly deployable forces to effectively deal with the situation. Preferably, these forces should come from the SADC and the Great Lakes regions while encouraging the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to accelerate the reform of the security sector.

55. The members of the Working Group welcomed the thematic discussion owing to the lack of information, particularly lessons learned exercises on the MONUSCO Intervention Brigade. Some members underlined the importance of getting additional information on the issue while others pointed out that the Intervention Brigade was not the only solution at the disposal of the Security Council.

## **H. Partnerships: Importance of regional peacekeeping initiatives**

56. On 27 November, the Working Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Gombo Tchouli, Chad's Political Coordinator, seeking to generate a constructive exchange of views on the subject. He recalled Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations which envisioned a role for regional arrangements in the maintenance of international peace and security. No single actor, particularly the United Nations, could cope with international security challenges alone; actors such as the African Union had comparative advantages that could be utilized by the Security Council. The report of the High-level Independent Panel (see A/70/95-S/2015/446), which underlined that the United Nations was not prepared to deal with terrorist and armed groups and that capable regional forces were better when it came to dealing with such armed groups. He welcomed the increasingly offensive postures adopted by peacekeeping operations led by the African Union and subregional organizations in Africa.

57. He mentioned some of these organizations' advantages such as carrying out peace enforcement tasks where there is no ceasefire agreement or a political settlement and the little cost of their operations compared to larger United Nations-led missions. Neighbouring countries might be in a position to deploy troops most quickly through a regionally coordinated action, including through standby arrangements in addition to bringing a stronger political and military commitment to stabilizing a situation and containing a conflict and being better suited to intervene in conflicts that

might spill across national borders. The African Union and subregional organizations often bring a better understanding of the context, root causes and driving forces of a conflict as well as more political legitimacy and leverage to peace efforts, especially in contexts where one or more parties to the conflict do not welcome a United Nations presence. Peacekeeping operations launched by the African Union and subregional organizations had limitations including the lack of capacities needed to effectively carry out their mandates.

58. The African Union had established a Peace Fund to provide the necessary financial resources for its peace operations through financial appropriations from its regular budget, voluntary contributions from member States and other sources within Africa (private sector, civil society and individuals), as well as through appropriate fundraising activities. The African Union aims to finance 25 per cent of its peace support operations expenditures by 2020 through its own budget. In spite of the establishment of this Peace Fund, the African Union continues to be dependent on external sources of funding for its peacekeeping initiatives, namely, the African Peace Facility, financed through the European Development Fund; multi-donor trust funds; bilateral financial support to troop- and police-contributing countries and United Nations assessed contributions.

59. The lack of flexible, sustainable and predictable funding engenders acute problems that prevent the African Union from playing the role it should have in the field of peacekeeping. He detailed some of the main problems, notably the ad hoc character of funding for African Union peacekeeping initiatives, which inhibited long-term planning, the dependence on multi-donor trust funds, and the reliance on unpredictable sources of funding.

60. The issue of flexible, sustainable and predictable funding was considered so important that, in 2008, it prompted the United Nations Secretary-General to establish an African Union-United Nations panel to consider the modalities of support to African Union operations established under a United Nations mandate. In the report entitled “The future of United Nations peace operations: Implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations” (see A/70/357-S/2015/682), the Secretary-General described the African Union as the key regional partner for the United Nations. Furthermore, the Security Council recognized the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in its first Presidential Statement on the review of peace operations (S/PRST/2015/22). In order to allow the African Union to continue to play a key complementary role in the field of peace and security, he drew attention to the recommendations contained in the concept note (see S/2015/1041) circulated prior to the meeting.

61. The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Edmond Mulet, and the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Tété António, then briefed the Working Group.

62. Mr. Mulet recalled the Security Council Presidential Statement on the peace operations review (S/PRST/2015/22), in which the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union was noted, and encouraged the Secretary-General to take measures to improve it. The report of the Secretary-General entitled “The future of United Nations peace operations”, called for “stronger global-regional partnerships” as central to effective international peace and security engagements. Significant progress had been made over the past 15 years through cooperation frameworks between the United Nations and regional organizations. The Secretary-

General had stated his intention to further institutionalize the cooperation with those regional partners with which the United Nations worked particularly closely, so as to enable consultation, common early warning and conflict analysis, and coordinated responses to the specific dynamics and needs of each region.

63. He said that the African Union, in particular, was the organization with which United Nations cooperation on peace and security issues was both the most extensive and intensive, and that that cooperation was further expanding and deepening. Given the breadth and depth of the cooperation, the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission were working to agree and sign a joint framework for cooperation on peace and security issues which would be finalized early in 2016. The framework will set out the principles, strategic objectives and broad mechanisms for the cooperation.

64. The issue of access to United Nations assessed funding for African Union operations authorized by the Security Council is worth looking into. He indicated that the Secretariat intended to carry out a joint review and assessment of financing support mechanisms for such African Union operations.

65. He noted that nine United Nations peacekeeping operations, six peace support operations led by the African Union and regional economic communities/regional mechanisms, one hybrid United Nations-African Union operation, and nine European Union civilian missions and military operations were still deployed in Africa. The models of these engagements were adapted to fit the specific circumstances of the crisis in question; therefore, he emphasized, a pragmatic and case-by-case approach was needed, between the United Nations and its regional partners, starting with early communication and procedures for crisis consultation.

66. Mr. António said that shared responsibility had begun to emerge in which the African Union acts as first responder to stabilize the situation in conflict countries, creating the conditions for the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping operations at a later stage. Challenges facing Africa such as transnational threats, the emergence of armed non-state actors, illicit trafficking and related security threats, as well as the rapid rise of terrorism and violent extremism required concerted responses from the African Union and the United Nations. He called for a strengthened partnership based on a creative reading of the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter. For the African Union, that chapter must be read and interpreted in a new and flexible way to allow everyone to contribute to conflict resolution, with transparency and complementarity as prerequisites. To face these challenges, the African Union had taken bold and decisive action by authorizing the deployment of peace support operations in extremely hostile and volatile environments where no other organization was willing to venture. African Union operations received robust mandates whose main task was most often the neutralization of armed or terrorist groups and the promotion of state authority. Alongside field operations, the African Union was also involved in the search for political solutions. He welcomed the progress made both institutionally and operationally, and noted with satisfaction the adoption of the first presidential statement of the Security Council on peace operations review (S/PRST/2015/22), in which the Council took note of the strategic partnership between the African Union and the United Nations and asked for measures to strengthen the partnership. Both organizations should agree on a set of principles to clarify their relationship and inscribe it on a more solid platform. As for the African Union, these principles should be centred on support for African ownership, prioritization, consultation in decision-

making, division of labour, shared responsibility and comparative advantage. The Security Council must find an answer to the problem of predictability and sustainability of funding to support African Union peace operations mandated by the Security Council. He asked that it be borne in mind that in launching its operations, the African Union contributed to maintaining international peace and security in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter. He welcomed the Secretary-General's support to the recommendation of the High-level Independent Panel for the establishment of mechanisms to provide stable, predictable and flexible support to African Union operations as well as his appeal to Member States to urgently review the way in which the United Nations could implement this initiative. For its part, the African Union had already decided to increase its contribution to the costs of its operations by 25 per cent by 2020. Despite the progress made in the African Union-United Nations partnership, much remained to be done, and that to move forward, the two organizations should learn from past experiences — its failures and successes.

67. The members of the Working Group praised the African Union-United Nations partnership but said that it had not yet reached the level of partnership it should have, given the crises and conflicts in Africa that needed to be resolved. Some members looked forward to the details of the African Union-United Nations review and assessment of financing support mechanisms for African Union operations authorized by the Security Council. One member has discouraged the increasing use of force in United Nations peacekeeping while acknowledging that sometimes, some situations do require it.

## **I. Towards a strategic dialogue between the United Nations Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat**

68. On 11 December, the Working Group met under the chairmanship of Mr. Mahamat Zene Cherif. A collective commitment to peacekeeping operations based on a shared understanding of the objectives and mandates of peacekeeping operations, between the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat was critical to successful missions. Triangular dialogue mattered because a stronger common vision for peacekeeping operations would result in unity of effort, which in turn would strengthen the operations' strategic, operational and tactical effect. He recalled that, as far back as 2001, the Security Council laid down principles of cooperation with troop-contributing countries and reiterated its agreement to hold consultations with them in a timely manner at different stages of an operation (see Security Council resolution 1353 (2001) and Presidential Statement S/PRST/2001/3). He also recalled the efforts of the Security Council to improve its working methods through the notes of its President of 2006 (S/2006/507) and 2013 (S/2013/630), respectively, as well as the 2014 and 2015 reports of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, in which the Special Committee recommended that troop- and police-contributing countries be involved early and fully in all stages of peacekeeping operations, in particular in advance of the renewal, adjustment, reconfiguration or drawdown of an operation.

69. He further recalled that, in keeping with resolution 1353 (2001) and relevant Security Council Presidential Statements, the High-level Independent Panel recommended in its report (see A/70/95-S/2015/446) that the Security Council

institutionalize a framework to engage troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat early in the mandate formulation process. In the context of planning for new missions, the Panel underlined the need to engage potential contributors early, to allow them to make an informed decision on whether or not to contribute. At this and in subsequent stages, the Panel stressed that force generation efforts should shape planning and potential mandate adjustments. As for cases of mandate renewals, the Panel encouraged regular triangular consultations at senior levels, as well as sustaining, reinforcing and institutionalizing the existing informal dialogue sessions.

70. Although various consultation formats such as Security Council meetings with troop- and police-contributing countries and Secretariat consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries exist, there appeared to be limited opportunities for a substantive and meaningful discussion between these three stakeholders. There was no forum in which the Security Council together with the Secretariat could engage potential contributors to share its assessment of a conflict and gather views and information regarding the availability of capabilities from the potential contributors before it indicated its intention to authorize an operation.

71. On potential areas for development, progress could be made by expanding upon informal good practice as well as the establishment of new informal mechanisms for consultation. He stressed the importance of expanding informal dialogue sessions, including ahead of mandate renewals, to exchange views on ongoing operations, including on challenges, and provide troop- and police-contributing countries the chance to ensure that the Council was cognizant of their concerns. For new operations, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report (A/70/357-S/2015/682), he said that the Security Council with Secretariat support could inform potential contributors of its conflict assessment before the authorization of an operation with a view to both allowing potential contributors to consider capability requirements and giving the Council an opportunity to gather views on challenges and opportunities on potential mandated tasks. He indicated that, as the Council moved closer to authorizing or changing the mandate of an operation, consultations could be held to ensure clarity on priorities, operational implications and required capabilities. This could be complemented by informal consultations by the Secretariat with potential troop- and police-contributing countries for a new mission, including discussions towards a conditional commitment of capabilities, where possible. He drew attention to the concept note (see S/2015/1042) circulated prior to the meeting.

72. The Working Group heard briefings by Mr. François Grignon, Director a.i., Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Gerard van Bohemen, Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations, and Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations.

73. Mr. Grignon said that strengthened triangular dialogue had the potential to enhance the overall performance of peacekeeping operations. As the peace operations review had pointed out, more must be done to make triangular dialogue more strategic, meaningful and substantive by involving all relevant stakeholders in the planning, authorization and implementation processes of the mandates. Focusing on practical modalities to strengthen triangular dialogue, he proposed six measures, building on the Secretary-General's proposals in his implementation report (A/70/357-S/2015/682). He encouraged the Council to seek the views of troop- and police-contributing countries during its consideration of new mandates for new and existing missions, including on draft resolutions before they are adopted because their

perspective would enrich the Council's understanding of the challenges, and contribute to realistic responses. He also encouraged troop- and police-contributing countries to strengthen coherence and coordination, both on operational and strategic issues related to specific missions to enable the Security Council and Secretariat to better take their views into account in the design and management of peacekeeping operations. The troop- and police-contributing countries meetings of the Security Council were a forum for dialogue and exchange of views between these stakeholders. The meetings could be further strengthened by defining and circulating agendas in advance and sharing meeting summaries afterwards. It would also be beneficial if distinctions were clearly made between meetings focusing on "strategic" issues such as mandates from "operational" meetings focusing on issues such as capabilities or equipment. Given that informal encounters allow frank and substantive exchanges, informal triangular exchanges on UNMISS initiated by New Zealand proved to be very useful. A similar format could be expanded to cover all multidimensional peacekeeping operations with regular mandate renewals, and could be hosted by the other elected members. The Secretariat stood ready to provide joint briefings to Council members and potential troop- and police-contributing countries during planning for new missions. Council members were required to help troop- and police-contributing countries to meet capability gaps through operational consultations for ongoing missions as underscored in the High-level Panel and Secretary-General follow-up reports. The Secretariat also stood ready to bring to the Council's attention serious conduct issues, including sexual exploitation and abuse.

74. Mr. van Bohemen said that greater inclusion of troop- and police-contributing countries in the processes of the Security Council would lead to better decision-making and outcomes for United Nations peace operations. Following discussions with troop- and police-contributing countries, he indicated that the key problem was not a lack of mechanisms for discussions, but that these mechanisms were not providing enough value. Early this year, using the UNMISS mandate as a model and working with another Council member and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the United Nations Secretariat, New Zealand initiated a series of informal round-table exchanges with UNMISS troop-contributing countries. Although they did not have formal status, the exchanges had become substantive and interactive, with the Department providing detailed briefings and troop-contributing countries raising outstanding concerns and asking questions. New Zealand encouraged similar exchanges across other missions, and also supported the holding of regular Secretariat briefings for troop-contributing countries and Council members on the MONUSCO military operations. New Zealand gained as a Council member improved understanding of the functioning of the missions, their operational challenges as well as the perspectives of troop- and police-contributing countries.

75. Based on his country's experience, he mentioned three practical areas for strengthening triangular consultations. First, informal and flexible in nature, they should be a frank exchange of information and an operational level update by the Secretariat to better understand the situation on the ground so that participants could engage on a more equal footing. Ideally, there should be a basic agenda in order to properly discuss particular issues, rather than general overviews. To get the greatest value, it helped if participants invested in coming well prepared. Secondly, he declared that there was a need for a better upfront and sustained dialogue when preparing new mandates or when significantly changing existing mandates. He emphasized that the Council should not be presented with proposals for United



Nations peace operations or draft resolutions that had not undergone some degree of triangular consultation. As called for by the High-level Panel and by the Secretary-General in his report, he expressed his support for early discussions between Council members, the Secretariat and troop- and police-contributing countries to strengthen the design of mission mandates. The third practical area was to provide to relevant troop- and police-contributing countries some Security Council documentation, such as correspondence on critical security incidents within missions, and notifications of peacekeepers deaths, given the direct involvement of their personnel. He finally hoped that Member States would support New Zealand's approach to triangular consultations, and encouraged other Council members, particularly elected members, to consider taking on such roles themselves.

76. Mr. Bin Momen said that major troop- and police-contributing countries had for many years been insisting on a structured and institutionalized mechanism for triangular dialogue. That was to create their stakes and ownership in the mandate setting process, but mostly to bridge the gap that remained between the work of the Security Council and that of the peacekeeping missions. Despite some good practices in the recent past, mostly sporadic and issue-specific, a regular, sustainable mechanism through which a coherent, action-oriented dialogue process was missing. With some degree of will and innovativeness, the New Zealand initiative should be easy to scale up further and create a mechanism facilitating meaningful dialogue through a combination of formal and informal approaches, to add real value and address any existing deficit in communication and coordination with demonstrable effect. The formal approach would help to situate the mechanism in the mainstream processes and the informal approach would help to make the forum more interactive, focused and results-driven, instead of making it yet another formal structure dealing with broad-based, generic issues. This mechanism could be in the form of a Working Group comprising all members of the Security Council and all troop- and police-contributing countries, with the presence and support of the Secretariat. He explained that the Working Group might also remain open to interested finance-contributing countries and could focus on two broad thematic issues: the evolving gaps and challenges faced by existing missions, including the multidimensional operations, in terms of their respective mandate implementation; and the shifts in priorities and capabilities that would be required for any renewal, change or recalibration of mandates, and their possible implications on the ground. The proposed Working Group might be mandated to report primarily to the Security Council, and also to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations as deemed relevant, while functioning in parallel, and in regular interface with the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations. The details concerning the Working Group might be worked out through an authorized process. Once the mechanism was operational, it might be worth considering its further division of work around certain thematic clusters. The agenda on a strategic triangular dialogue remained outstanding over the years, much to the concern of troop- and police-contributing countries, while recognizing that there seemed to be an opportunity yet again to do something concrete to plug that gap.

77. The members of the Working Group called for an enhanced triangular dialogue through formal and informal meetings. They praised New Zealand's initiative which could be emulated by other members of the Security Council. They specifically emphasized the importance of starting consultations before a mandate renewal by the Security Council. Troop- and police-contributing countries pointed out the lack of

information and documentation as a major problem. In this regard, they asked that the Security Council share with them draft resolutions and draft presidential statements on peacekeeping in order to provide their inputs.

### **III. Conclusions and recommendations**

78. Between 1 January and 31 December 2015, the Working Group held nine meetings with troop- and police-contributing countries, during which increased attention was devoted to important peacekeeping cross-cutting and mission-specific issues.

79. Some of the issues were of particular concern to the High-level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. The report of the High-level Independent Panel and the Secretary-General's implementation report informed the activities of the Working Group in 2015, particularly on issues such as safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers, partnerships and the strategic dialogue between the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat.

80. On 31 December 2015, the Security Council adopted a comprehensive Statement of the President (S/PRST/2015/26) on strengthening cooperation with troop- and police-contributing countries, initiated by Chad. The statement, which was based on the recommendations of the Secretary-General in his report entitled "The future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations" (S/2015/682) and the recommendations of the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see S/2015/446), noted the lack of effective consultations despite the existence of many mechanisms. The Security Council stressed the importance of substantive, representative and meaningful exchanges and remained committed to further discussions to enhance triangular consultations. It urged troop- and police-contributing countries to provide their views on this issue by 31 March 2016.

81. The Working Group should continue to work towards strengthened interaction between these three stakeholders. It is of paramount importance that troop- and police-contributing countries continue to participate in the activities of the Working Group and that the Secretariat participate in the Working Group's meetings, including on those deemed sensitive.

82. As with other subsidiary bodies of the Security Council, it is advisable that the Working Group's documents be available on the website <https://eroom.un.org/eRoom>. It is similarly advisable that informal transmittals of the Security Council, particularly draft resolutions and draft presidential statements on peacekeeping be shared with interested troop- and police-contributing countries prior to the start of informal negotiations.

83. The conclusions and recommendations derived from the present report of the Working Group should be scrupulously explored and where relevant implemented.

**Annex****Meetings of the Working Group between 1 January and 31 December 2015**

<i>No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Briefers</i>	<i>Theme</i>
1	20 February	Members of Working Group and troop- and police-contributing countries	Mr. Richard Nduhuura, Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations Lieutenant General Maqsood Ahmed, Military Adviser for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations	Traditional peacekeeping versus peace enforcement
2	23 March	Members of Working Group and troop- and police-contributing countries	Mr. David Pressman, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations Mr. Dmitry Titov, Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Department of Peacekeeping Operations Ms. Abigail Hartley, Chief of Policy, Advocacy and Public Information, United Nations Mine Action Service	Safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers: asymmetric threats
3	6 May	Members of Working Group at the ambassadorial level and members of the High-level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations	Mr. Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations Mr. Tête António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations	Special meeting with the members of the High-level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations
4	26 June	Members of Working Group and troop- and police-contributing countries	Mr. Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support Mr. Tête António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Ambassador and Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations Mr. Tekeda Alemu, Permanent Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the United Nations	African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM): Lessons learned

<i>No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Briefers</i>	<i>Theme</i>
5	31 July	Members of Working Group and troop- and police-contributing countries	<p>Mr. Dmitry Titov, Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Department of Peacekeeping Operations</p> <p>Mr. Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union</p> <p>Mr. Mick Lorentzen, Director of the Division of Regional Operations, Department of Safety and Security</p> <p>Mr. Alexis Lamek, Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations</p> <p>Mr. Sékou Kassé, Permanent Representative of Mali to the United Nations</p> <p>Mr. Haile Menkerios, Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union and Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union, was present as an observer.</p>	MINUSMA: a “peacekeeping operation” within a counter-terrorism setting
6	31 August	Members of Working Group and troop- and police-contributing countries	<p>Mr. Yoshifumi Okamura, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations</p> <p>Mr. David Haeri, Director, Policy, Evaluation and Training Division, Department of Peacekeeping Operations</p>	Bilateral and Multilateral Capacity-building for troop- and police-contributing countries
7	19 October	Members of Working Group and troop- and police-contributing countries	<p>Mr. Ignace Gata Mavita wa Lufuta, Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations</p> <p>Mr. Lot Dzonzi, Deputy Permanent Representative of Malawi to the United Nations</p>	MONUSCO Intervention Brigade: Lessons learned
8	27 November	Members of Working Group and troop- and police-contributing countries	<p>Mr. Edmond Mulet, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations</p> <p>Mr. Tété António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations</p>	Partnerships: Importance of Regional Peacekeeping Initiatives
9	11 December	Members of Working Group and troop- and police-contributing countries	<p>Mr. François Grignon, Director a.i, Department of Peacekeeping Operations</p> <p>Mr. Gerard van Bohemen, Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations</p> <p>Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations</p>	Towards a Strategic Dialogue between the United Nations Security Council, troop-contributing and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat