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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013

Review of arrangements for funding and backstopping special political missions

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 65/259 (sect. XIII, para. 7), the Secretary-General has reviewed the current funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions with a view to identifying possible alternatives. The review finds that, given the evolution of the role of these missions over the past decade, the funding arrangements for such missions and their associated requirements for backstopping are not adequate in three important respects:

(a) The biennial programme budget is not the optimal vehicle for funding special political missions;

(b) Start-up and expansion of special political missions are impeded by the lack of well-defined mechanisms to finance them between conferral of a mandate and approval of a budget;

(c) Much of the backstopping capacity that special political missions need to draw upon is provided by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Global Service Centre, which are not funded from the programme budget.

The report presents options to address the various aspects of the current situation. No single measure can address the full range of issues and specific problems may lend themselves to more than one solution. The alternatives identified in the report all aim to create a funding framework for special political missions that better accommodates the volatility of their resource requirements and operational characteristics than do current arrangements; facilitate transition between different forms of United Nations presences in support of peace, such as from a peacekeeping operation to a special political mission; fill the gap in mechanisms for funding



mission start-up; and enhance effectiveness by eliminating barriers to backstopping capacity based on the funding stream.

The report puts forward for consideration by the General Assembly a number of options that could address these challenges to one degree or another.

Abbreviations and acronyms

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
BINUB	United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi
BINUCA	United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic
BNUB	United Nations Office in Burundi
BONUCA	United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic
CNMC	Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission
MICAH	International Civilian Support Mission in Haiti
MINUCI	United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire
MINURCA	United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic
MINURCAT	United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad
ONUB	United Nations Operation in Burundi
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNAMET	United Nations Mission in East Timor
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNFICYP	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNIOGBIS	United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau
UNIOSIL	United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone
UNIPSIL	United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone
UNMIN	United Nations Mission in Nepal
UNOA	United Nations Office in Angola
UNOB	United Nations Office in Burundi
UNOGBIS	United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau
UNOMIG	United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia
UNOMSIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone
UNOSOM	United Nations Operation in Somalia
UNOTIL	United Nations Office in Timor-Leste
UNOWA	United Nations Office for West Africa
UNPOS	United Nations Political Office for Somalia

UNRCCA	United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia
UNSCO	Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
UNSOA	United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia

I. Introduction

1. Over the past decade, a proliferation of political missions has assumed an important place in United Nations efforts towards the maintenance of international peace and security. The United Nations has increasingly come to utilize these mechanisms — collectively named “special political missions” and funded through the programme budget — for the delivery of mandates in a range of fields, including preventive diplomacy efforts through regionally or nationally based political offices; complex political engagement by missions working alongside multinational peacekeeping forces and supporting peace processes; justice mechanisms; expert groups that monitor and strengthen Security Council sanctions regimes; and integrated peacebuilding offices.

2. There are currently 31 special political missions. Their financial volume has expanded exponentially, as has the number of staff on the ground, which has grown to more than 4,000 civilians, most of whom are deployed in missions with multidimensional mandates and often in dangerous environments. While gaps in the arrangements for smaller field missions for preventive diplomacy and peacemaking were discerned as long ago as 1995, the vastly increased requirements of the missions have made the need to address these gaps more pressing.

3. The present report is submitted pursuant to section XIII of General Assembly resolution 65/259, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to conduct a thorough review of the current funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions, with a view to identifying possible alternatives. The proposals presented in the report have been developed with the objectives of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of these missions; enhancing transparency and accountability; avoiding duplication; and facilitating oversight by the General Assembly of the budgets of the United Nations. These proposals are also in line with the priorities identified by the Secretary-General for 2011, which include improving the budget process to better manage resources, as well as to embrace innovation and increase the impact of United Nations operational activities.

4. Special political missions form part of a range of interventions and presences of varying configurations deployed by the United Nations in different circumstances to address threats to international peace and security. The other main grouping of such activities is peacekeeping operations. Different financial arrangements apply to each, reflecting their different character and facilitating the apportionment to Member States of the related costs on a different basis between the two types of activities. The analysis undertaken by the Secretariat concludes that the current funding arrangements present challenges in three important respects. First, the biennial programme budget does not well accommodate the dynamism of the life cycle, the unpredictable timing and the operational characteristics of special political missions and does not provide Secretariat backstopping resources that ebb and flow with mission needs. Special political missions may be added, or added to, in mid-cycle, including within an annual cycle, although the regular budget is biennial. These missions therefore have a considerable impact on the overall programme budget figure. Secondly, the practice of financing much of the capacity at Headquarters for backstopping through one funding source (peacekeeping) and generally limiting the use of that capacity to peacekeeping when it is increasingly also required for special political missions inhibits the optimal utilization of Secretariat capacity. Thirdly, current funding arrangements also do not have the flexibility to respond to the funding requirements that arise during mission start-up, expansion or transition.

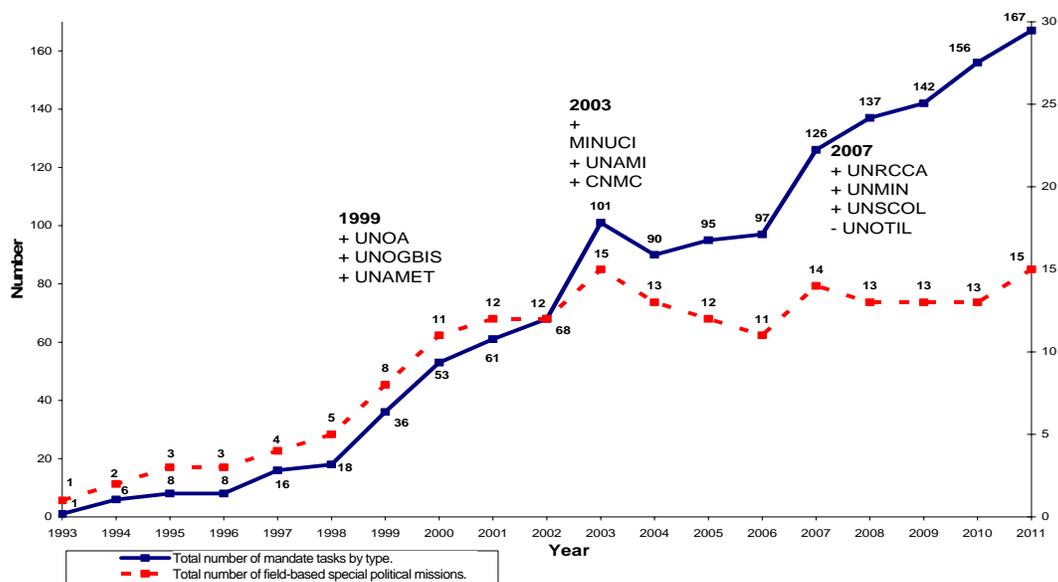
5. The present report puts forward options to change the current funding arrangements aimed at two fundamental purposes: to create a funding framework for special political missions that better accommodates the volatility and unpredictability of their resource requirements and operational characteristics than does the programme budget; and to enhance efficiency by eliminating barriers based on funding stream to access the backstopping that special political missions require.

II. Expanded roles and mandates

6. The recent history of field-based special political missions is generally understood to begin in 1993 with the creation of UNOB. At the outset, special political missions were assigned reporting and monitoring tasks but over the past decade their mandated roles have expanded. By 2000, when there were eight political missions in the field, the typical special political mission had, on average, four different core sets of mandated tasks, which were some combination of facilitating political processes, implementing peace agreements, coordinating United Nations activities in the country, and mobilizing international assistance and providing electoral assistance.

7. The number and range of mandated tasks have since changed dramatically. In 2003, a field-based special political mission mandate had an average of seven tasks. By 2010, half of such missions had mandates that contained 12 to 24 tasks.¹

Figure I
Comparison of field-based special political missions and mandate tasks,
1993-2011



Note: For the years that had a significant increase in the total number of mandates, the field-based special political missions added that year have been indicated on the graph.

¹ UNAMA (23), UNPOS (20), UNIOGBIS (17), UNIPSIL (17), UNAMI (15), UNOWA (15) and BINUCA (12).

8. BONUCA, which was established in 2000, is illustrative of a special political mission with a multidimensional mandate. Following on from the preceding peacekeeping operation, MINURCA, the mandate of BONUCA in 2001 included technical assistance to the national police in addition to expanding its work on political facilitation, mediation and human rights. BONUCA subsequently made the transition to an integrated peacebuilding office, BINUCA, with a comparable list of tasks. The missions in Sierra Leone (transitioning from a peacekeeping operation) and Guinea-Bissau also received a greater number and diversity of mandated tasks over time. In Guinea-Bissau, UNOGBIS was created in 1999 with two mandated tasks. Its successor, the integrated peacebuilding office UNIOGBIS, which was established in 2010, has 17 tasks.

9. In addition to the unique set of tasks within their individual mandates, special political missions also are subject to a range of thematic mandates, which require enhanced support and backstopping, in particular those concerning women and peace and security, sexual violence and conflict, and children and armed conflict. Overall, the breadth of the tasks that any individual special political mission must carry out creates the requirement for a wide range of specialized expertise, either within the mission itself or through a backstopping arrangement with a provider outside the mission.

III. Funding arrangements for special political missions

10. In introducing the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011 to the Fifth Committee, the Secretary-General stated that he thought it necessary to put in place an alternate funding mechanism for special political missions (see A/C.5/64/SR.10, para. 8). While these missions have never corresponded ideally with the concept of the programme budget, the growth in their number, size and operational scope in recent years has cast this misalignment into sharper relief.

11. The budgetary proposals for special political missions for 2011 contained in A/65/328 and Add.1-7 and Add.1/Corr.1 and 2, Add.2/Corr.1, Add.3/Corr.1 and Add.6/Corr.1 provide for 30 such missions, given the discontinuation of UNMIN. For the purpose of budget presentation, special political missions have been grouped in recent years into three clusters, with two larger assistance missions (UNAMA and UNAMI) presented separately.

12. Fifteen special political missions are field-based and account for about 94 per cent of the resources provided for all special political missions. Beyond UNAMA and UNAMI, there are 13 other field-based special political missions, including four regional political offices, four integrated peacebuilding offices and other political initiatives. In addition to activities based in the field, there are an array of other special initiatives for peace and security that include special and personal envoys and sanctions groups and monitoring panels. These activities have been grouped into clusters I and II in budget presentations.

13. The inclusion of special political missions in the programme budget has progressively affected the programme budget process by situating requirements for those missions in the context of the negotiation of a total budget envelope, placing pressure on other budgetary requirements. Whether it is appropriate to consider resource requirements for these non-perennial aspects of the United Nations peace and security architecture in the context of the programme budget merits

consideration. The initial appropriation for a biennial programme budget has rarely, if ever, reflected the full biennial requirement for special political missions. There are often significant additional requirements for revised appropriations when the second year of mission resource requirements is factored in. In an environment where the overall level of the programme budget is a key factor, the second year of mission requirements which had not been provided for in the first instance should not be considered as off-cycle add-ons to the approved programme budget.

14. Furthermore, the volatility of mission resource requirements based on shifting mandates is difficult to reconcile with a programme budget process designed around predictability. The establishment of an outline of the programme budget and a contingency fund under General Assembly resolution 41/213 and the annex to Assembly resolution 42/211 reflected the desire of Member States to know at the outset of the biennium the level of resources that would be required during that biennium (see A/C.5/51/57, para. 24). While the more systematic integration of mission requirements in the proposed programme budgets consequent to resolution 53/206 enhanced budget transparency and simplified funding procedures, it did not solve the problem of predictability and volatility. The provision for special political missions has expanded, from an initial appropriation of \$86 million in the 2000-2001 programme budget to a revised appropriation of \$1.2 billion in the 2010-2011 programme budget. The share of the budget represented by these missions has also increased significantly, from 6 per cent in the 2000-2001 programme budget to over 20 per cent in the 2010-2011 programme budget. From the 2002-2003 biennium onwards, a pattern of significant changes within a biennium is evident, with resource requirements increasing from 50 to 100 per cent from the initial to the revised appropriation. The second performance report for the programme budget continues to be largely dominated by the volatile requirements of special political missions.

15. Although part of the programme budget, special political missions are budgeted on the basis of the mandate and requirements of the mission, and do not follow the programme planning and budgeting cycle as they may be approved at any time of the year. The biennial programme budget arrangements make it very difficult to adjust capacity for Headquarters backstopping, because while new missions may be mandated, programme budget staff capacity at Headquarters is very difficult to change outside the regular budget cycle. In terms of resource planning, the overall provision for political missions for the next biennium in the budget outline is generally based on the overall appropriation for ongoing missions that are anticipated to continue into the following biennium.

16. The present financial calendar for the programme budget is not optimal. In practice, an annual financial process is made to fit into a biennial framework. The January to December financial year reflects the requirements of the programme budget. While the calendar year arrangement has proven serviceable, given the increasing reliance of the special political missions on backstopping services obtained from providers that are funded through peacekeeping assessments, which follow a July to June cycle, advantages would accrue from alignment of the financial year for special political missions (January to December) with that of peacekeeping operations (July-June). This would provide a comprehensive global view of all backstopping requirements, open opportunities for further efficiency gains through the global field support strategy and ease the administrative aspects of transition from peacekeeping operations to special political missions, or vice versa.

This also would strengthen oversight by the General Assembly by facilitating its consideration of all interrelated cross-cutting issues.

17. The expenditure classification under the programme budget is not fully aligned with the expenditure classification for peacekeeping operations, which better reflects the requirements of field operations. While not an issue when such missions largely involved special envoys and travel and conference costs, the higher levels of field-based special political mission activity have made more apparent the limitations of the programme budget.

18. Given the foregoing demonstration that the Organization's current approach to funding special political missions is not adequate, the General Assembly may wish to consider the alternative of establishing a special and separate account for the funding of special political missions that would be budgeted, funded and reported upon on an annual basis with a financial period of 1 July to 30 June. This approach would increase transparency and solve the problems described in paragraphs 13 to 17.

19. Should the General Assembly wish to establish a special, separate account and adopt the proposed change in the financial calendar for special political missions, the following steps by the Assembly would produce an orderly transition to that alternative funding arrangement:

(a) Appropriate and assess within the framework of the programme budget the financial requirements for the period 1 January to 30 June 2012;

(b) Establish the special account effective 1 July 2012 and assess for it the portion of the already approved programme budget that is needed by the special political missions for the period 1 July to 31 December 2012;

(c) Receive and consider budgetary proposals for special political missions for the period 1 January to 30 June 2013 during the main part of its sixty-seventh session;

(d) Receive and consider budgets for special political missions for the new financial period July 2013 to June 2014 at its second resumed sixty-seventh session.

20. Another option could be to improve transparency in the budget presentation for special political missions by funding these operations under a totally distinct section of the programme budget. This would involve segregating special political missions from the resources of the Department of Political Affairs and creating a new budget section exclusively for these missions. Resource requirements for the missions would be put forward annually under the new budget section. While this would also increase transparency, it would not fully address the problems identified by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 13 to 17.

Transitions to and from special political missions

21. Given the variety of arenas in which special political missions now operate, and of the mandates to which they work, the United Nations system needs to contend with transitions between the various forms of United Nations engagement. Transitions between peacekeeping operations and special political missions are not uncommon. Such transitions to political missions have taken place, inter alia, in Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Sierra Leone and Tajikistan. In

Timor-Leste and Liberia, transitions were reversed and peacekeeping operations were redeployed. The present funding and backstopping arrangements do not facilitate such transitions.

22. The distinction between the funding arrangements for peacekeeping and political missions is evident in the shrinking of resources and backstopping capacity, and the consequent risk of disruption to mandate implementation, that can ensue when a peacekeeping operation draws down and is replaced by a follow-on, field-based political mission. As noted in General Assembly resolution 64/269, careful planning and phasing of such transitions are clearly needed to avoid too precipitous a fall-off of capacity. The inability to scale up backstopping capacity as a peacekeeping operation transitions to a special political mission could have the perverse effect of delaying a transition for fear that the new mission would not have the support it requires. In addition, current arrangements impede the rational redistribution of capacity within the Secretariat to support missions in transition, as lead departments change. For example, staff in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations employed against posts funded from the support account would normally not be available to assist in backstopping the follow-on political mission because of limitations placed on the use of support account resources, based on Assembly resolution 61/279 and subsequent resolutions on the support account. This has a particular effect on the continuity of backstopping in areas such as police reform, disarmament and demobilization, and security sector reform.

Mission start-up and expansion

23. Special political missions lack well-defined and accessible mechanisms to finance mission start-up and expansion, pending the approval of a budget. Currently, advance funding for the launch or expansion of special political missions is available only through the envelope of the existing overall special political mission budget or through the Secretary-General's funding for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses of up to \$8 million as he certifies relating to peace and security or up to \$10 million per decision of the Security Council with the concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. This means that there is no independent, dedicated cash-flow mechanism to enable rapid response.

24. For example, the mandates for the integrated peacebuilding offices in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) and the Central African Republic (BINUCA) were approved in mid-2009, involving in both cases a significant scaling up of presence. As their budgets — each in the range of \$18 million to \$19 million annually — would not be considered by the General Assembly until the end of the year, to prepare for mission start-up, they had to rely on unplanned, unexpended balances in the overall provision for special political missions for that biennium. But as such balances are not generally known until late in the year, significant delays resulted. Providing for the expansion of an existing or start-up of a new political mission should not have to depend on other missions underspending their budgets.

25. One mechanism used for financing mission start-up is the authority of the Secretary-General, provided most recently in General Assembly resolution 64/246 for the biennium 2010-2011, to enter into commitments for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses related to peace and security in the amount of up to \$8 million a year, or up to \$10 million with the prior concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for each prior decision of

the Security Council. While this mechanism enables the Secretary-General to initiate actions that respond to emerging threats to international peace and security, it is not well-suited to the start-up or expansion of special political missions that have already been mandated. UNAMA, for example, which had significant expansions approved by the Security Council in March of 2008 and 2009, had to wait for resources for nine months pending consideration of a budget. With special political missions having annual budgets as high as \$275 million a year, a cash-flow mechanism to enable rapid response during the start-up or the expansion of a mandated mission is required. This is precisely the purpose of the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund, as described in financial regulation 4.5 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, except that its use is confined to peacekeeping operations. Such mechanisms for interim funding are valuable means of reconciling the need for oversight by the Assembly with the need to commence mandated work in fast-changing conflict and post-conflict environments.

26. Also related to the start-up of political missions is their access to the strategic deployment stocks. When the strategic deployment stocks were established, all drawdowns had to be paid for in advance. This put missions for which a commitment authority or budget did not yet exist at a disadvantage. In its resolution 64/269, the General Assembly changed this with respect to peacekeeping operations, by authorizing commitments of up to \$50 million from the strategic deployment stocks, with the prior concurrence of the Advisory Committee, with reimbursement to be made after the receipt of the appropriation. It would help the start-up of special political missions to be permitted to draw on the strategic deployment stocks on the same basis.

27. Given the foregoing demonstration that the Organization's current approach to funding start-up, expansion and transition activities of special political missions is inadequate, the Secretary-General offers the following options that would improve performance:

(a) **Option 1. Authorize special political missions to access the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund on the same basis as peacekeeping operations. This is a proven mechanism to address cash-flow requirements during the start-up or expansion phase of a mission and therefore will solve the problem described above;**

(b) **Option 2. Increase the discretion of the Secretary-General within the programme budget for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses from the current \$10 million to \$50 million, with the concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. This option uses an existing mechanism to solve the problem described above.**

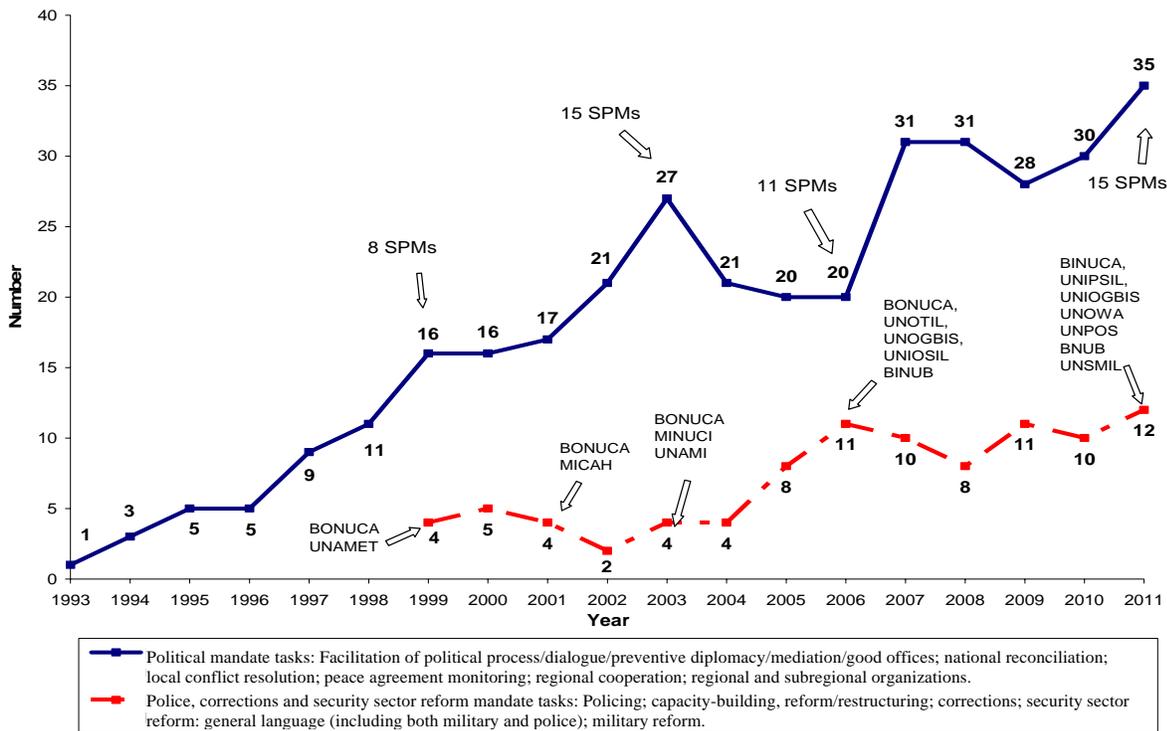
28. **In addition, and irrespective of the options presented in the preceding paragraphs, special political missions could be authorized to access strategic deployment stocks on the same basis as peacekeeping operations, extending the provisions of General Assembly resolution 64/269 concerning access to and reimbursement of the stocks to be applicable to special political missions. This option would allow special political missions to draw upon strategic deployment stocks in advance of the corresponding budget appropriation.**

IV. Backstopping of special political missions

29. The Department of Political Affairs leads 27 of the existing 31 special political missions. This includes all field-based special political missions, with the exception of UNAMA, which is led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The multifaceted substantive mandates of special political missions, especially those in the field, require complex Headquarters backstopping for planning, direction and substantive support. The report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/64/349) described what such backstopping entails.

30. The past five years have seen a tripling of the mandated tasks related to the political work of the missions, including the facilitation of political processes, dialogue and reconciliation, preventive diplomacy, good offices, mediation, support to peace processes and peace agreement monitoring and implementation, and more interaction with and support to regional and subregional organizations.

Figure II
Number of mandated tasks related to political processes and to policing, corrections and security sector reform in field-based special political missions, 1993-2011



31. More special political missions have also generated a corresponding demand for increased political backstopping in areas such as demands for reporting and providing support to the Security Council; increased demand for a United Nations

role in relevant contact groups, groups of friends and regional organizations; the provision of leadership and coordination of the new United Nations integration agenda applied in Headquarters and the field for assessment, planning and mandate implementation across all country-based special political missions; and demand for more conflict analysis and political analysis from new intergovernmental bodies such as the Peacebuilding Commission, which it is the responsibility of the Department of Political Affairs to provide. As the Department of Political Affairs has not had the possibility of drawing on the support account to build or enter into contracts for capacity in relation to mission needs, and as the programme budget does not readily adapt to short-term changes in Headquarters staffing needs, the Department has had to fill capacity gaps by undermining the coverage of other countries and regions, by attempting to mobilize extrabudgetary resources, and by taking other ad hoc measures. Not only does the Department not have access to a flexible mechanism to respond to the changing requirements of missions, it is the only Department in the Secretariat with significant servicing responsibilities for activities in peacekeeping operations (electoral assistance and mediation support) that does not have access to the support account to meet variable capacity requirements.

32. With respect to administrative backstopping at Headquarters, the Executive Office of the Department of Political Affairs provides administrative support for 13 of the 17 missions in clusters I and II and the Department of Field Support provides logistical and administrative backstopping support to the 15 special political missions based in the field. The table contained in the annex to the present report sets out the responsibilities for overall leadership and administrative support of these missions and initiatives.

33. For Headquarters-based missions, the Executive Office of the Department of Political Affairs and the Office for Disarmament Affairs provide support in finance and budget, human resources, information and communications technology and logistics. The Office for Disarmament Affairs supports one mission, and the number of special political missions the Department of Political Affairs supports has increased from six in 2004 to 13 in 2011. Since 2008, one new sanctions and monitoring panel has been established every year, each time with 10 to 12 personnel, leading to an increase in the total number of personnel to be administered by the Executive Office of the Department of Political Affairs from 70 to 113 (an increase of 61 per cent). The Executive Office is also a resource for the Department's regional desks that lead field-based special political missions.

34. For field-based missions, there is a correlation between the demand for Headquarters administrative and logistical backstopping and the size and capacity of the mission support structures. While it may seem counter-intuitive, the demands on Headquarters can be greater for small political missions, because their lack of support structures and delegations of authority requires that Headquarters provide the necessary service.

35. UNAMI and UNAMA possess internal support structures and related delegations of authority similar to small- to medium-sized peacekeeping operations. The support structures of the integrated peacebuilding offices may lack the specialization for more complex tasks, and thus support is provided from Headquarters. The political offices are very highly reliant on centralized support from Headquarters in all areas of administration and logistics. Because smaller

field-based special political missions generally have less depth in their support structures, the staffing capacity they do receive needs to be senior and experienced.

36. The creation of the Department of Field Support, with responsibility for supporting the political missions as well as peacekeeping operations, has strengthened the framework for administrative and logistical backstopping, while offering the opportunity for economies of scale in the delivery of services. The further development of the global field support strategy offers opportunities for the Organization to move from a mission-specific, “siloed” approach to field support, to an integrated business model that improves support to field-based missions through process re-engineering and economies of scale that target service improvements globally rather than through a mission-centric, stovepipe approach.

37. The Department of Political Affairs/Department of Field Support service level agreement, which came into effect on 15 December 2010, addresses Department of Field Support support to Department of Political Affairs-led field missions in all phases of a mission life cycle. The Department of Field Support designates a focal point for each field-based political mission to serve as a principal point of contact for the Department of Political Affairs; it will also undertake in the course of the coming year an examination of the common features of different types of field-based political missions to facilitate the planning and provision of support requirements in the future.

38. A critical feature of the services delivered by the Department of Field Support on the full range of support issues is assistance to the Department of Political Affairs in developing the mission support plan. Department of Field Support divisions at Headquarters typically backstop field-based special political missions in accordance with their terms of reference. The Department of Field Support also backstops through functions discharged at the Global Service Centre.² The backstopping services can be multimodal: depending on the requirements and circumstances of the mission, backstopping might be arranged through the country team, on a mission-to-mission basis, and through services provided by the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe, Uganda, and the Global Service Centre.

39. Other departments also discharge important backstopping functions. For the Department of Management, backstopping entails the full array of administrative services covering procurement, financial management and human resource functions.

40. The Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts supports special political missions in the areas of budget preparation, presentation to legislative bodies and budget implementation, and provides all the required accounting and insurance functions, payroll and income tax administration for international staff as well as global treasury and banking services. Under the supervision of the Office of Central Support Services, the Procurement Division at Headquarters undertakes procurement activities, provides advisory support for field procurement within the authority of field-based missions, and develops policies and procedures for procurement at Headquarters, field-based missions and offices away from Headquarters. It also develops training modules and oversees the delivery of procurement-related training. The Procurement Division also prepares and

² The Global Service Centre includes the premises and facilities of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, and the United Nations Support Base at Valencia, Spain.

administers contracts for the procurement of goods and service. The Office of Human Resources Management provides human resources support and services to the Headquarters-based special political missions under the authority of the Department of Political Affairs. For field-based special political missions, authority is delegated to the Department of Field Support, which is the first point of contact and provider of services. However, the Office of Human Resources Management provides significant backstopping support in the areas of administration of entitlements, recruitment and talent management, medical services and central human resources policy direction directly related to special political missions, an example of which is the recent harmonization of conditions of service for field staff.

41. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducts internal audits, inspections and evaluations of special political missions based on risk assessment. OIOS also investigates reports of possible misconduct of staff serving in special political missions. In addition to the resources deployed for oversight activities from Headquarters, OIOS maintains resident auditors at UNAMA and UNAMI.

42. The Office of Legal Affairs provides a full array of legal services to special political missions in respect of both substantive and support-related issues. In particular, the Office drafts and negotiates agreements, including the status-of-mission agreements and supplementary arrangements and memorandums of understanding with Member States and international and non-governmental organizations. The Office reviews the rules of engagement and other standard operating procedures. It advises on a broad range of international legal issues, including interpretation of Security Council mandates, application and enforcement of status-of-mission agreement provisions, privileges and immunities, safety and security, and humanitarian law. The Office also advises on special political mission institutional and cooperative arrangements, logistical support arrangements, procurement activities and contracting requirements, the resolution of related disputes, and personnel and administrative issues, including conduct and discipline matters, and issues arising from the United Nations system of administration of justice.

V. Funding of backstopping

43. The examination by oversight bodies and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in recent years of the adequacy of arrangements for the backstopping of special political missions has drawn attention to a variety of issues that required attention, beyond resources and funding. Recurring themes have included the need to abate the risk of duplication or gaps through a clear definition of the responsibilities of the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, a clear understanding of the services the Department of Field Support should provide, and improved systems for ensuring adequate and predictable mission planning, start-up and backstopping. The significant progress made to date in improving the institutional arrangements includes:

- (a) Establishment of the Department of Field Support, with a mandate to support field-based special political missions as well as peacekeeping operations;
- (b) Issuance of updated Secretary-General's bulletins on the organization and responsibilities of the Departments of Political Affairs, Peacekeeping Operations

and Field Support (ST/SGB/2009/13, ST/SGB/2010/1 and ST/SGB/2010/2, respectively);

(c) Completion of a service level agreement between the Department of Field Support and the Department of Political Affairs;

(d) Development by the Department of Political Affairs of standard operating procedures and guidelines for backstopping of special political missions;

(e) Development of mechanisms to apply the integration principle of United Nations efforts in post-conflict situations, including by applying the integrated planning process, leading Headquarters task forces, and developing supporting integrated strategic frameworks for Department of Political Affairs-led field-based missions and the United Nations country team;

(f) Adoption of the global field support strategy by the General Assembly;

(g) Development of guidance to support more effective political mission start-up and transition;

(h) Articulation of the responsibility and accountability of the regional divisions of the Department of Political Affairs, in addition to their ongoing, broad political affairs tasks, for backstopping political missions, through, inter alia, the inclusion of performance indicators in budgets.

44. While progress has been made in defining roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, and developing improved tools for planning and guiding missions, deficient funding arrangements for backstopping continue to inhibit the development of a predictable platform for backstopping, reduce the speed and effectiveness of response, and limit the utilization of specialized and expert capacities already available in the Secretariat to serve as global service providers available to special political missions and peacekeeping operations. Two distinct but interrelated issues are relevant.

45. The first is the issue of resources for Headquarters backstopping by the Department of Political Affairs and other departments. The absence of sufficient provision for substantive and administrative backstopping has been a strain on the Department and other departments, a matter which the Secretary-General has referred to in the past. To develop a better appreciation of backstopping capacity issues, the Secretary-General initiated measures to estimate the resources currently devoted to backstopping all special political missions in all departments and offices. While that exercise points to shortfalls in backstopping capacity in certain areas, the findings are considered preliminary. It would in any case be premature to assess capacity requirements without first addressing the flaws in the financing arrangements for backstopping, which foster gaps, duplication, inefficiency and non-transparent practices in relation to accountability to the General Assembly.

46. The second issue centres on the fact that special political missions do not have access to the backstopping services financed through the support account. This means that it is not straightforward for all the relevant capacities in the United Nations, irrespective of funding sources, to provide needed support and backstopping for special political missions in a transparent and regular manner. A means needs to be found to enable all the relevant capacities in the United Nations, irrespective of funding sources, to provide the needed support and backstopping for special political missions. The report of the Secretary-General on the

implementation of General Assembly resolution 63/261 (A/65/161 and Corr.1) indicated the need for field missions led by the Department of Political Affairs to access more easily the support and specialist capacity that is available in the United Nations. The financing arrangements for backstopping are central to addressing that issue.

47. The financial architecture for the backstopping of special political missions does not support a seamless approach to backstopping. Current arrangements have the effect of defining access to services on the basis of funding source, thereby creating incentives either to obscure the operational realities, to replicate existing capacities, or to establish administratively burdensome cost recovery procedures for mobilizing the requisite expertise.

48. The problem rests in the differences in and conditions governing the access to funding sources. While funded by the programme budget, field-based special political missions require administrative and logistical support from the Department of Field Support, as well as substantive support from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, notably by the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, which is called upon to support special political missions that are mandated to support police reform, drawing on the Police Division and its standing police capacity (as in the cases of UNAMI, UNIPSIL, UNOWA, BNUB, UNPOS, UNIOGBIS and BONUCA), security sector reform, disarmament and demobilization, mine action and functions related to justice and criminal law; by the Office of Operations, which leads UNAMA; and sometimes by the Office of Military Affairs. Trends in the growth of the related mandates are reflected in figure II, listing the special political missions responsible for those mandates. At the same time, the Department of Political Affairs supports electoral and mediation activities in peacekeeping operations, without access to resources funded from the support account.

49. The capacities of the Department of Field Support and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations are, overwhelmingly, funded by the support account for peacekeeping operations, at 92 and 93 per cent respectively. Within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, of the 150 posts and positions in the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, only the leadership cell is funded in the programme budget (about 98 per cent of the capacity of the Office is funded from the support account) and a significant portion of the Mine Action Service posts are funded from voluntary contributions. The General Assembly, in its resolution 61/279 and all subsequent resolutions on the peacekeeping support account, stressed that the support account is to be used for the sole purpose of financing the resource requirements for backstopping and supporting peacekeeping operations at Headquarters, and that any change in this limitation requires the prior approval of the Assembly. As a practical matter, the issue has proven less clear cut. For example, the Department of Field Support has from the outset been expected to support special political missions and cannot do so without drawing on its capacity that is funded from the support account.

50. The review of resources utilized to backstop special political missions indicates an appreciable draw on capacity that is funded from the support account. As the mandates of special political missions may increasingly require many of the same types of backstopping expertise that peacekeeping operations require, current arrangements provide only three alternatives: either to extend inadequate support; or

not to extend support; or to create costly, duplicative capacities. The Secretary-General therefore now believes it is necessary, in the interests of efficiency, transparency and his own accountability to the General Assembly for the effective stewardship of resources in accordance with mandates, to cease defining access to services by funding stream. Institutional coherence and cost-effectiveness require that the Secretariat should leverage its centres of expertise in the good interests of the Organization. In principle, all field-based special political missions should have access to the full range of capacities extant within the Secretariat.

51. The following approaches would provide the required access:

(a) **Option 1. Make the support account available to all departments and offices to fund their variable backstopping requirements in relation to the field-based special political missions and confirm the responsibility to support special political missions, while maintaining the existing arrangements for the financing of the support account and the Global Service Centre. This approach would solve the problems with special political mission backstopping described in the present report;**

(b) **Option 2. Presuming that the General Assembly decides to establish a special and separate account for special political missions as suggested in paragraph 18 above, use that account to fund the support account and the Global Service Centre on a pro rata basis in line with the share of special political missions of the total backstopping requirements for both peacekeeping operations and special political missions. This approach would also solve the problems with special political mission backstopping.** Based on the timetable for transition outlined in paragraph 19 above, the envisaged formula for sharing the costs of the support account and of the Global Service Centre between the special account for special political missions and peacekeeping operations would come fully into effect for the 2013-2014 biennium, as that would be the first time the budgets for both peacekeeping operations and special political missions would be considered and appropriated for a full year at the same time. As a transitional step, the formula for sharing the costs for the 2012-2013 biennium would be applied to the six months of special political mission resources that are designated for the special account at the time the support account and the budget for the United Nations Logistics Base, which funds the Global Service Centre budgets for the 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013 financial period, are approved;

(c) **Option 3. Authorize the charging of variable headquarters backstopping requirements to special political mission budgets. This would facilitate access, especially for departments and offices funded primarily from the programme budget, to variable capacity in response to the ebb and flow of special political mission needs. This would, however, make the distinction between the funding of the mission and the funding of Headquarters capacity, less clear;**

(d) **Option 4. Include special political mission variable backstopping requirements within the support account and the capacity of the Global Service Centre. This approach would solve the problems with special political mission backstopping described in the present report. It would require an annual midyear additional appropriation for the programme budget to reflect the share of the special political missions of the backstopping services provided through the support account and by the Global Service Centre.**

52. The table below illustrates what the contribution of the special political missions would be to the cost of the support account and the Global Service Centre for a full year, based on the approved budgets for special political missions for 2011 and peacekeeping operation appropriations for the period 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011.

Notional special political mission contribution to the support account and the Global Service Centre

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Peacekeeping operation appropriations, 2010-2011	7 391 633
Budget, special political missions, 2011	631 162
Total, peacekeeping operations and special political missions	8 022 795
Special political mission share	7.86 per cent
Support account	363 811
Special political mission support account share	28 595
Global Service Centre	68 179
Special political mission Global Service Centre share	5 359

VI. Implementation arrangements

53. Some of the proposals made in the present report imply changes to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. As it will be necessary for the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session to consider revised financial regulations and rules in connection with the introduction of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, revisions necessitated by the adoption of one or more of the preceding options could be presented in that comprehensive context.

VII. Conclusions

54. Special political missions are important vehicles for the work of the United Nations in support of international peace and security. Significant measures have been taken in recent years to place the institutional arrangements for these missions on a stronger footing, but current funding arrangements are deficient because they do not provide for timely mission start-up or expansion. The funding arrangements for Headquarters backstopping have two important gaps. One is that much of the existing capacity needed to backstop special political missions is funded from the support account, which is generally restricted to the support of peacekeeping operations. A second element is that the biennial programme budget does not readily adapt to the variable backstopping capacity needs that result from the ebb and flow of special political mission activities.

55. The alternative funding arrangements set out in the present report aim to create a more effective budgetary framework for special political missions and more cost-effective and transparent arrangements for Headquarters backstopping. Alternatively, special political missions and their backstopping requirements could continue to be financed through the arrangements presently utilized. Or, in order to

avoid defining access to Headquarters backstopping services by funding stream, the support account could provide explicitly for the needs of special political missions, with the programme budget contributing to the support account on a pro rata basis. Or, a separate account for special political missions could be established. Similarly, to facilitate start-ups and transitions, the Secretary-General could have a larger commitment authority or special political missions could draw upon the peacekeeping reserve fund and/or the strategic deployment stocks.

VIII. Actions for the General Assembly

56. The General Assembly is requested to consider the findings of the review and the alternative approaches advanced by the Secretary-General in the report to address the challenges and shortcomings in the current mechanisms for financing and backstopping special political missions.

Annex

Special political missions

		<i>Establishing decision</i>	<i>Based in: central and sub-offices, and liaison^a</i>	<i>2011 staff^b</i>	<i>2011 budget (Thousands of United States dollars)</i>	<i>Lead department/ admin. support</i>	<i>Neighbouring and predecessor missions</i>
Cluster I							
1.	Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Cyprus	S/1997/321 (open mandate)	Nicosia	19	3 474.5	DPA/DFS	UNFICYP
2.	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar	General Assembly resolution 48/150 (1994)	New York Headquarters	5	1 216.7	DPA/DPA	
3.	Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara	S/2005/498	New York Headquarters/ Home	1	629.2	DPA/DPA	
4.	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)	Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)	New York Headquarters	3	734.1	DPA/DPA	
5.	Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for the Prevention of Genocide	S/2004/568 (resolution 1366 (2001))	New York Headquarters	9	2 575.6	n.a./DPA	
6.	United Nations representative to the International Advisory and Monitoring Board of the Development Fund for Iraq ^c	Security Council resolution 1483 (2003) S/2003/1030	New York Headquarters		—	DM/DM	
7.	United Nations Representative to the Geneva international discussions	S/2010/103 S/2011/279 A/65/328/Add.7	Geneva	7	1 469.0	DPA/DFS	UNOMIG
Cluster II							
8.	Monitoring Group on Somalia/Eritrea	Security Council resolution 1519 (2003)	Nairobi	3 (8)	2 186.2	DPA/DPA	
9.	Panel of Experts on Liberia	Security Council resolution 1760 (2007)	Home	— (3/1)	641.7	DPA/DPA	
10.	Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire	Security Council resolution 1584 (2005)	Home	1 (5)	1 302.9	DPA/DPA	
11.	Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Security Council resolution 1533 (2004)	Home	1 (6/1)	1 447.9	DPA/DPA	
12.	Panel of Experts on the Sudan	Security Council resolution 1591 (2005)	Addis Ababa	2 (5/3)	1 802.7	DPA/DPA	
13.	Panel of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Security Council resolution 1874 (2009)	New York Headquarters	5 (7/2)	3 036.2	DPA/DPA	
14.	Panel of Experts on the Islamic Republic of Iran	Security Council resolution 1929 (2010)	New York Headquarters	4 (8)	3 217.7	DPA/DPA	

	<i>Establishing decision</i>	<i>Based in: central and sub-offices, and liaison^a</i>	<i>2011 staff^b</i>	<i>2011 budget (Thousands of United States dollars)</i>	<i>Lead department/ admin. support</i>	<i>Neighbouring and predecessor missions</i>
15.	Al-Qaida/Taliban Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team and Office of the Ombudsperson	Security Council resolution 1526 (2004)	New York Headquarters	10 (9/1)	4 299.0	DPA/DPA
16.	Panel of Experts on the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Security Council resolution 1970 (2011)	Home	2 (8)	1 670.4	DPA/DPA
17.	Support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and group of experts (Security Council resolution 1977 (2011))	Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) (10-year mandate)	New York Headquarters	5 (8)	3 045.7	ODA/ODA
18.	Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate	Security Council resolution 1373 (2001)	New York Headquarters	40	8 902.0	CTED/CTED
Cluster III						
19.	United Nations Office for West Africa	S/2001/1129	Dakar for West Africa	32	7 715.3	DPA/DFS CNMC
20.	United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia	S/2007/280 (open mandate)	Ashgabat for Central Asia	29	3 133.0	DPA/DFS
21.	United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa	S/2010/457	Libreville for Central Africa	20	3 505.2	DPA/DFS
22.	United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone	Security Council resolution 1829 (2008)	Freetown and 4 sub-offices	82	16 629.6	DPA/DFS UNIOSIL UNAMSIL UNOMSIL
23.	United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic	S/PRST/2009/5	Bangui and 4 sub-offices	157	19 793.6	DPA/DFS BONUCA MINURCAT MINURCA
24.	United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau	Security Council resolution 1876 (2009)	Bissau	119	18 440.1	DPA/DFS UNOGBIS
25.	United Nations Office in Burundi	Security Council resolution 1959 (2010)	Bujumbura and 4 sub-offices	134	22 145.8	DPA/DFS BINUB ONUB UNOB
26.	United Nations Political Office for Somalia	S/PRST/1995/15 (open mandate)	Mogadishu and 4 sub-offices (Nairobi)	105	16 345.0	DPA/DFS UNSOA AMISOM UNOSOM I-II
27.	Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon	S/2007/86 (open mandate)	Beirut	82	9 094.2	DPA/DFS UNIFIL UNSCO/PRSG

	<i>Establishing decision</i>	<i>Based in: central and sub-offices, and liaison^a</i>	<i>2011 staff^b</i>	<i>2011 budget (Thousands of United States dollars)</i>	<i>Lead department/admin. support</i>	<i>Neighbouring and predecessor missions</i>
28.	United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission	S/2004/298 ^d S/2004/299 (open mandate)	Dakar for Cameroon-Nigeria	20 8 714.2	DPA/DFS	UNOWA
29.	United Nations Support Mission in Libya	Security Council resolution 2009 (2011)			DPA/DFS	
30.	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan	Security Council resolution 1401 (2002)	Kabul and 8 sub-offices (Islamabad, Tehran, Kuwait)	2 755 259 059.0	DPKO/DFS	
31.	United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq	Security Council resolution 1500 (2003)	Baghdad and 3 sub-offices (Amman, Kuwait, Tehran)	1 051 201 536.3	DPA/DFS	

Abbreviations: DPA, Department of Political Affairs; DFS, Department of Field Support; DM, Department of Management; n.a., not applicable; CTED, Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate; PRSG, Personal Representative of the Secretary-General.

^a This includes the main office (in the capital city), sub-offices in the same country and liaison or support offices in other countries. Terminology varies, for example, sub-offices are called regional offices in UNPOS, UNAMA and BNUB.

^b (x/y) refers to (experts/consultants).

^c Established in May 2003, considered liquidated in 2008-2009 then re-presented in 2010-2011.

^d Authorization to move support to the CNMC onto the regular budget (it was established in December 2002).