



General Assembly

UN LIBRARY

NOV 21 1990

UN COLLECTION

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/45/602  
10 October 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-fifth session  
Agenda item 76

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF  
PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS

Standard operating procedures for peace-keeping operations

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In paragraph 12 of its resolution 44/49 of 8 December 1989, the General Assembly expressed the hope that the Secretary-General would complete his work on standard operating procedures for peace-keeping operations and make it available to Member States. The Secretariat has been engaged in this task since 1989 and has made considerable progress in defining a methodology and delineating the wide and complex range of issues and practices involved. The present report is intended to be a progress report, pending completion of the work in early 1991.
2. Every United Nations peace-keeping operation has its own set of standard operating procedures, containing instructions for all aspects of its operations and administration. The procedures are prepared by the commander and his staff as soon as the operation is first deployed and they are revised at regular intervals thereafter. Each operation's procedures naturally reflect the type of operation it is, its mandate, its concept of operations, the political and military environment in which it is deployed and so on.
3. The standard operating procedures that exist at present contain significant differences in format and content. This is to some extent inescapable. Given the diversity of peace-keeping operations undertaken by the United Nations, it would be neither desirable nor practicable to fit all operations into the straitjacket of a single, inflexible set of procedures. However, many operating procedures are common to all peace-keeping operations, deriving as they do from the nature of United Nations peace-keeping and from the standard peace-keeping practices that the Organization has developed over more than four decades. It is important for the integrity and efficiency of United Nations peace-keeping that those common practices should be applied in the same way in all operations. However, because

each peace-keeping operation is responsible for preparing and revising its own standard operating procedures, there has been a tendency for the development of unnecessary and unwelcome divergences between the procedures of different operations.

4. The Secretary-General has decided to correct this state of affairs by producing a set of guideline standard operating procedures that can be used by each peace-keeping operation in preparing its own procedures. The guideline standard operating procedures will reflect the procedures common to all peace-keeping operations and the approved techniques to be applied in each situation. Where a procedure is of universal application (as is the case, for instance, with many of those relating to matters of personnel or logistics) it is intended that the language in the guideline standard operating procedures should be incorporated in full by each peace-keeping operation in its own procedures. Where, on the other hand, each operation's procedures have to be tailored to specific individual circumstances (as would be the case with the procedures relating to operations), the substantive content will vary, but it is intended that the format provided in the guidelines should be followed by each peace-keeping operation in order to ensure that all relevant points are covered.

5. The guideline standard operating procedures currently in preparation are organized in five separate sections: a general introduction, followed by detailed descriptions of procedures to be followed in relation to headquarters organization, operations, personnel and logistics.

6. The introduction provides basic definitions and describes the purposes and aims of the guideline document. It explains the practice of peace-keeping, its characteristics, command structure and operational direction. The section on headquarters deals with the organization of the mission's headquarters, staff responsibilities and duties, headquarters routine, guidelines for staff work, and visits to peace-keeping operations. The section dealing with operations addresses the mandate of a mission and its concept of operations, the use of force, liaison, humanitarian functions, operational activity, troop security, air operations, communications, training and reporting. The section on personnel reflects existing administrative instructions on personnel matters and explains the privileges, immunities and responsibilities of United Nations peace-keepers, particularly in relation to a status of forces agreement, if one has been negotiated. Rules, regulations and policies relating to rotation, extension, repatriation, pay and allowances, leave and holidays, medical matters and related issues of an administrative nature are spelled out in detail. Finally, the section on logistics describes the United Nations logistics system, outlining ways of meeting each of the requirements relating to the deployment and support of a peace-keeping operation, including supply, transport, maintenance and repair, accommodation, communications, movement control and boards of survey.

7. It will be clear from the concept described above that the guideline standard operating procedures will have to cover all eventualities and to explain in some detail the considerations that need to be borne in mind by commanders of peace-keeping operations of different sizes and mandates in preparing their operating procedures. As a result the current draft of those guidelines, including a number of illustrative annexes, exceeds 300 pages.

/...

8. When the draft has been further refined at Headquarters, it will be sent to the commanders of existing peace-keeping operations so that their views and advice may be taken into account in finalizing the guidelines, a process which it is hoped to complete before the end of the current year. The guideline standard operating procedures will then be made available to Member States in accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/49.

9. At the same time, the guideline standard operating procedures will be issued to the commanders of all peace-keeping operations, who will be instructed to review their present procedures and bring them into line with the guidelines by a date to be determined in early 1991.

10. The guideline standard operating procedures will similarly be issued to the commander of each new peace-keeping operation with instructions to prepare the new operation's procedures on this basis and to give this work the highest priority, with the aim of sending a draft to Headquarters for approval not later than four weeks after deployment of the new operation.

11. The guideline standard operating procedures will be reviewed once a year at Headquarters and revised as necessary.

-----