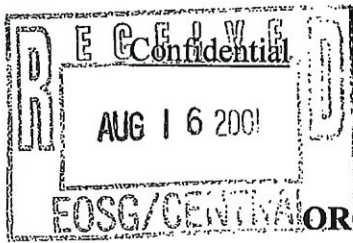


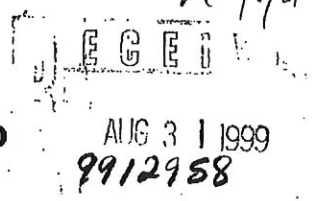
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Note to the Secretary-General



ORGANIZING FOR THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

1. The United Nations faces a series of major new challenges in the political/military field. Apart from Kosovo and East Timor (with Phase II imminent and Phase III looming up), there is the enormously complex and difficult nexus of the DRC/Great Lakes, not to mention Ethiopia/Eritrea. Our reputation depends critically on how competent and coherent our response is judged to be by the international community.

2. As you know from several recent conversations, I am far from persuaded that our current institutional arrangements are adequate to the challenge. The fact that you have had to ask the Deputy Secretary-General to chair task forces on Kosovo and now East Timor is evidence of that. DRC/Great Lakes will be even more complex and demands a response that reflects this. My particular concern is that, just as you expect advice from DPKO based on their long experience in operational matters, so the advice you receive on the political and strategic aspects should fully reflect and respect the expertise and experience that has been built up over the years in DPA, as well as the mandate for peace-making/negotiating, peace-building and post-conflict peace-building given to DPA by the General Assembly. I would also like to be confident that the guidance sent to multi-disciplinary missions and the advice you receive – especially on key judgement calls – is based on broad consultation and reflects interdepartmental agreement (and disagreement where necessary). That is too often not the case at present.

3. The problem lies, in my view, in the way the “lead department” concept is being interpreted when it comes to political, peacemaking/negotiating and post-conflict peace-building issues. My concern is with the *practice* rather than the *concept* of the arrangement and has little to do with who should be in the lead (which, as you know, I believe would not matter greatly if there was genuine teamwork). There is, in fact, some merit in DPKO continuing to coordinate the inputs of all departments, funds and agencies; leading in operational and related matters; and providing a coherent channel for communication to and from missions.

4. The “lead department” concept seems to produce problems mainly between DPKO and DPA. Whereas OCHA is accepted as having primary responsibility for the humanitarian component of missions, OHCHR for the human rights, DPI for the information programme and DPKO, of course, on operational aspects, DPA’s primary responsibility for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and post-

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conflict peace-building is not reflected in the arrangements for the management and direction of peace-keeping missions.

5. The present arrangement is wasteful and leads to duplication. Whatever we may claim to ACABQ or the Fifth Committee, the current practice of the "lead department" concept produces an inevitable overlap and duplication between DPA and DPKO. Monitoring and analyzing developments in *all* countries and informing and advising the Secretary-General of any useful role that the UN can play is a core function of DPA. DPA has accordingly assigned desk officers for all countries including those where there are peace-keeping missions or are being planned. These assignments preceded the deployment of the missions and will outlive them. The responsibility that DPA has for a given country does not, and cannot, lapse or become suspended when a peace-keeping mission is established. Moreover almost all conflicts have a strong regional dimension. It is DPA that is responsible for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and arrangements as well as the countries that play the key role in efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts in their regions.

6. The cases of DRC and East Timor are particularly illustrative of the need for better arrangements than the present doctrine. The DRC conflict has three inter-linked political dimensions: internal, regional and international. The solutions that are being considered are political. The intra-Congolese conflict is to be resolved through a national dialogue leading to an inclusive transitional arrangement and elections. The regional dimension involves a substantial number of countries in southern and central Africa and the preferred political solution is a regional conference that will address their long-term peace and security concerns. The international dimension aims to provide support for regional efforts and to contribute to crucial post-conflict peace-building activities and longer term reconstruction and rehabilitation needs.

7. Similarly, the implementation of the results of the referendum in East Timor (Phase II) and the transition to independence (Phase III), should it come to pass, are essentially political tasks. The main elements of Phase III would be the administration by the United Nations of a Non-Self Governing Territory focusing for the most part on issues of decolonization, governance, administrative reform and institution building. In short, the UN role would be primordially to engage in post-conflict peace-building, an area for which you have designated DPA as the focal point.

8. I believe that it is time to work out new arrangements that reflect the respective competencies given by the General Assembly to the two departments. The present set up is not only a source of duplication but also leads to confusion and lack of continuity as well as tensions between DPA and DPKO. (It is, may I

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say, by some way my biggest professional frustration.) Cyprus and Georgia may provide a useful model. In Cyprus, DPA is responsible for the good offices mission of the Secretary-General while DPKO manages the peacekeeping side. The same applies in Georgia/Abkhazia. This has not proved unduly cumbersome or inefficient. Much as the human rights, humanitarian, information and for that matter military and police components of missions report to their respective departments and offices for guidance, the political and, where they exist, the peace-building components of missions should be asked to report to DPA.

9. The classic response is that Cyprus and Georgia/Abkhazia are in the negotiating/peacemaking phase, whereas Kosovo, DRC etc are implementation. But that is an impossibly clumsy standard of measurement. In Kosovo and the DRC, there is, and will continue to be, much to negotiate about and much long term thinking to be done. In Western Sahara – theoretically in the implementation phase – the truth is that we have been negotiating with the Moroccans about implementation for the past two years. The same was true of Sierra Leone for more than a year. And in Angola, which less and less resembles a peace-keeping operation in any meaningful sense of the term, it is difficult to see what we are implementing.

10. It is evident that the success of any mission will also depend on the cooperation among its component parts. It will therefore be incumbent on all concerned departments, offices, funds and agencies to ensure the closest possible cooperation. This note is intended in that spirit.

11. I would welcome an opportunity to discuss all this with you.



Kieran Prendergast
30 August 1999

cc: The Deputy Secretary-General
Mr. Riza
Mr. Miyet