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FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR UNITED NATIONS STAFF SAFETY AND SECURITY

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INTRODUCTION

1. This paper provides information to update the Executive Board on developments related to the funding of a strengthened United Nations security management system. Discussions on this topic ensuing from the Secretary-General's proposals and the related General Assembly resolution are continuing within the United Nations system and with member states. When final decisions are made, they may have financial implications for WFP. Those financial implications will be incorporated in the WFP budget, to be submitted to the Executive Board in October 2001.

BACKGROUND

2. Dangers on the ground for WFP and other humanitarian personnel are real and constant. A decade ago, the security of such United Nations staff was not the major concern it is today. WFP has thousands of personnel, many of them staffing operations in high-risk areas. According to United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD) statistics, 27 WFP staff, and 172 other civilian personnel working for the United Nations, lost their lives through acts of violence from 1992 to April 2001. A further 27 men and women in WFP's service during that time died on duty, including as a result of fatal accidents. In addition, relief aeroplanes have been fired on, relief convoys hijacked or ambushed, and staff kidnapped, robbed or intimidated at checkpoints and roadblocks. The most recent example, for WFP, was the ambushing of a food convey in Burundi in April 2001, injuring two drivers.
3. General Assembly resolution 54/192 noted the dramatic rise in casualties among national and international humanitarian personnel as well as in injuries through abduction, hostage-taking, harassment and illegal arrests. It also drew attention to the continuous erosion in respect for the principles and rules of international humanitarian law.
4. The primary responsibility for the safety and security of United Nations personnel and their dependants rests with the host Governments. This responsibility flows from every Government's normal and inherent function of maintaining law and order and protecting persons and property within their national boundaries. At the same time, UNSECOORD is responsible for all policy and procedural matters related to the security of United Nations personnel and their dependants. Member states are being urged to support measures to improve legal recourse for addressing attacks on humanitarian workers, such as an additional protocol to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel to include all humanitarian workers, and by vigorously prosecuting those responsible for acts of violence against such personnel. It is unacceptable that, to date, only six people involved in the violent deaths of United Nations system personnel have been brought to justice.



5. In February 2000, further attention was drawn to the deterioration in the working environment for humanitarian personnel when the Security Council held an open debate on the protection of United Nations personnel. The Deputy Secretary-General and WFP's Executive Director represented the United Nations Secretary-General and operational agencies in that debate. (Attached is the Executive Director's Statement from that forum.) It was noted that the Secretariat's budget for UNSECOORD for system-wide security was merely US\$537,000, which is supplemented by operational agency support. At the end of the meeting, in a statement made by its President (S/PRST/2000/4), the Security Council expressed serious concern for the continued attacks on United Nations and associated personnel. States and non-State parties were urged to respect fully the status of United Nations personnel to ensure their safety, and underlined the crucial importance of unhindered access to populations in need.
6. While a significant deterioration in the security environment for humanitarian workers has now been broadly acknowledged, this had not yet been translated by member states into a change in priorities and, subsequently, action, with the adjustment of budgetary mechanisms or allocations to enhance security for United Nations staff worldwide.

ENHANCING THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

7. Wide-ranging efforts have been made by the Secretariat and operational agencies to enhance the United Nations security management system. Over and above agency-specific measures to enhance staff security—such as security awareness training, upgrading of premises and facilities, improved communications and introduction of counselling services—many collaborative inter-agency measures have been adopted or are in progress. Many of these were stimulated by a comprehensive set of recommendations from two inter-agency task forces convened by the Deputy Secretary-General in November 1999 to review policy and legal issues and operational aspects relating to staff security. WFP was an active participant in these task forces and supported in particular the need to:
 - establish minimum operational security standards (MOSS), for example, for communications infrastructure, safety equipment, evacuation plans and training requirements;
 - improve information exchange between United Nations agencies and partners on the ground (such as with WFP's chairing of an Inter-agency Standing Committee Staff Security Task Force to explore arrangements for United Nations/NGO collaboration on security);
 - develop security management and security awareness training (the latter of which is now mandatory for all WFP staff); and
 - ensure the follow-up required for bringing to justice the perpetrators of crimes against United Nations personnel.



8. Recommendations that are within the purview and authority of the Secretary-General are in the process of being implemented. For example, security competence is now one of the criteria for the selection of Resident/Humanitarian Coordinators, and inter-agency guidelines have been drawn up on the use of armed guards for humanitarian convoys and on the minimal operational security standards. Other recommendations, however, cannot be implemented without the requisite resources, such as additional UNSECOORD personnel or funds for training, communications and equipment.

The Secretary-General's Proposals

9. As a subsequent measure, the Secretary-General's Report on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel, presented to the General Assembly in October 2000 (A/55/494), explicitly acknowledged the failings and inadequacy of the current central United Nations security system. It called for urgent remedial action and put forth a set of comprehensive and concrete recommendations to address those failings. The estimated cost of implementing those enhancements is US\$53.2 million for the biennium 2002–2003. The Secretary-General also requested authorization from the General Assembly to utilize, as an interim measure, other budget lines for funding the enhanced system during 2001.
10. The Secretary-General's recommendations included the need for:
 - a full-time Assistant Secretary-General post as United Nations Security Coordinator to provide focus and leadership in United Nations efforts to strengthen security coordination and management;
 - 16 posts for UNSECOORD New York to conduct, inter alia, security training, investigations, policy development, counselling, monitoring and assessment of crisis situations and rapid response to critical incidents;
 - 100 posts in the field, primarily Field Security Officers (FSOs), to provide professional security advice to the Designated Official and the Security Management Team; and
 - replacing the current unreliable cost-sharing mechanism for funding UNSECOORD and FSOs with funding from the United Nations Regular Budget, which would indicate that security was a core responsibility of the United Nations towards its staff globally, rather than dependent on voluntary funds.
11. UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP fully supported those recommendations and continue to believe that this package, in its entirety, is the **minimum critical mass** needed to provide an acceptable level of security measures for the global United Nations system. If implemented, this package would have a profound impact on the security of United Nations staff.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION

12. The outcome of the General Assembly debate (resolution A/55/238) endorsed, for 2001, the establishment of only eight new Professional posts in UNSECOORD and eight FSO posts in the field. The General Assembly indicated its preparedness to discuss the Secretary-General's proposals this year, in the context of the approval process of the United Nations Regular



Budget for the Biennium 2002–2003. However, that will occur on the premise that the United Nations security management system will be financed through a cost-sharing arrangement among the specialized agencies, funds and programmes. The General Assembly also insisted on the need for the Secretary-General to address, in this context, its other key concerns with regard to the need for “a unified chain of command”, a clear accountability framework and a comprehensive picture of all security arrangements.

COST-SHARING ISSUES

13. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, which are mostly funded from voluntary contributions or extra-budgetary resources, currently pay 80 percent of the present costs of UNSECOORD New York and totally finance the existing 60 UNSECOORD Field Security Officers. The present cost-sharing arrangement dates back to 1980 and is based on an agency's number of staff with contracts of one year or more. However, this formula has proven inadequate over the years, as it does not include the larger group of persons for whom the United Nations is responsible in terms of safety and security measures. In addition, the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes with significant operational responsibilities in unstable environments not only have strengthened their internal capacities for staff safety and security to meet specific needs, but have also contributed to the UNSECOORD staffing at Headquarters and made staff available for security review missions, etc. At the field level, different formulae have been used in an attempt to reflect staff composition more accurately, but the criteria for who should be counted as staff have differed among country teams.
14. WFP, like UNDP, UNHCR and UNICEF, believes that the General Assembly should consider the use of the United Nations Regular Budget as the appropriate funding source for the following reasons:
 - **It is a matter of principle and priority.** It is the responsibility of all United Nations member states to provide the requisite basic resources to ensure adequate security coverage for all United Nations personnel. Staff confront risk on a daily basis. Staff security requirements are legitimate Secretariat costs for all member states and have to have a solid and stable financial base. Member states need to make that commitment and give the issue the priority it deserves.
 - **It represents fairer burden-sharing.** If the cost of the minimum requirements is covered through the United Nations Regular Budget, there will be fairer burden-sharing and proportionality on a matter that affects nationals of all member states.
 - **There is a fundamental contradiction in the cost-sharing approach agencies adopt to support the Secretariat.** On the one hand, there is the recognition by member states that security costs should be reflected in the Regular Budget, and on the other, the imposition on agencies funded on a voluntary basis of a fixed cost-sharing arrangement to reimburse such expenditure. This suggests that the systems of voluntarily-funded agencies must be changed to meet the upfront need for funds of entities with regular and assessed budgets.
 - **There are supplementary costs for agencies in any case.** The Secretary-General's proposals will lead to the establishment of a minimal critical mass for a safer working environment for United Nations staff. However, those proposals do not cover *all* the



requirements. With or without a cost-sharing arrangement, agencies with significant field operations will need to cover the additional staff safety and security costs that are specific to their operations, particularly in complex emergencies and refugee situations. This entails additional Security Advisers linked to specific aspects of the agencies' operational mandates, often budgeted within the framework of United Nations Consolidated Appeals and other humanitarian operations; staff safety awareness training; and country-specific staff protection or programme operating costs, such as enhanced telecommunications equipment, specialized vehicles, additional logistical support and upgrading of premises and facilities. These "additional" costs already represent the individual commitment of each operational agency to staff security and would be complementary to the minimum critical mass as proposed by the Secretary-General.

- **It would be administratively cumbersome.** Based on experience, reimbursement to the United Nations through cost-sharing would be unnecessarily circuitous, time consuming and cumbersome. The United Nations has no specific policy on cost-sharing, and the current system is extremely slow. Ensuring that minimum staff security arrangements are in place worldwide is too important an issue to pilot a new cost-sharing policy. More important, security funding should not be used to set a precedent for relegating to agencies and their voluntary donors the financing of core recurrent costs incurred on behalf of all member states.
- **It diverts voluntary funds from humanitarian assistance.** In essence, drawing a large portion of the required US\$53.2 million from humanitarian agency operations for added security payments will result in a loss of that money from programmes for refugees, the internally displaced and the poor. This creates a moral dilemma for the heads of United Nations humanitarian agencies. They are increasingly called upon to operate in high-risk situations. The capacity of these agencies to maintain a presence and provide assistance ultimately depends on maximizing the safety and security of their staff. Staff protection must not be achieved at the expense of the beneficiaries that the humanitarian agencies are there to serve.

CURRENT STATUS

15. In February 2001, the Secretary-General requested that agencies, funds and programmes confirm their readiness to implement a revised cost-sharing arrangement to cover the costs of an enhanced United Nations security management system. In response, the heads of UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP sent a letter to the Secretary-General, asking that the issue of funding for the core requirements of the global United Nations security system be discussed again with member states and the General Assembly.
16. All agencies have been briefing their member states, requesting that the General Assembly discuss this issue again. In early May, in New York, the four above-mentioned agencies addressed the Humanitarian Liaison Working Group on this topic. Later in May, WFP will discuss funding arrangements with agency colleagues at the ad hoc Working Group Meeting on Security, of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), in Paris.



17. Meanwhile, WFP has been working closely with UNDP, UNHCR and UNICEF to develop proposals for a new cost-sharing formula and analyse the implications of such an arrangement.
18. The criteria of any new cost-sharing arrangement need to be simple to apply and global in reach, and should include all staff covered by United Nations staff safety and security measures. Therefore, all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes with staff in the field would need to participate.

CURRENT SECURITY COSTS FOR WFP

19. In 1999–2000, WFP spent approximately US\$12 million to cover security costs. This includes WFP's current contribution to UNSECOORD (US\$517,000 for UNSECOORD headquarters staff and US\$2,507,937 for UNSECOORD-appointed Field Security Officers); it also includes WFP Field Security Advisers, Security Awareness Training, Peer Support and Fire Safety Training, and Malicious Insurance Act policies. WFP does not have a special fund for security. In addition to Programme Support and Administrative (PSA) funds covering the Field Security Cell at Headquarters, security costs for the field are incorporated in the direct support costs (DSC) for emergency operations (EMOP) and protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs).
20. WFP does not yet know in detail the additional cost implications resulting from the new cost-sharing arrangement, or indeed its shape. The Programme will continue to require funding to cover WFP-specific security costs that will be charged against DSC for the respective operations. WFP will also require funding to cover its part of the eventual cost-sharing arrangement, which could be as high as US\$7.5 million. This fixed cost would need to be paid either by an increase in the indirect support costs (ISC) or through utilization of the General Fund. WFP expects to be able to present the actual cost of its share to the Executive Board in October 2001, as well as the proposed funding mechanism.

THE WAY FORWARD

21. **Coordination.** WFP is firmly committed to collaborating with other agencies and coordinating under the UNSECOORD umbrella and each country Designated Official. To be able to establish a safe and secure working environment for WFP staff, safety and security measures have to be taken within the context of the United Nations security management system. It is thus of utmost importance to WFP that there be a strong, effective and well-resourced UNSECOORD that can support humanitarian operations, and that all United Nations agencies work in tandem.

ADVOCACY FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

22. According to the United Nations Secretary-General: "There should be nothing discretionary about the financing of staff security; it is neither a luxury nor a perk". Staff security is a top priority for WFP and other humanitarian organizations. WFP, together with UNICEF, UNHCR



and UNDP, will seek to ensure that shortcomings within the current system are addressed as a matter of priority. For this, both UNSECOORD and United Nations agencies need additional resources, and thus agencies will continue to engage with member states to discuss funding arrangements and aspects of cost-sharing.

23. WFP is hopeful that United Nations member states will agree that the General Assembly should review this matter at its next session.

CONCLUSION

24. The Executive Director will continue to work with the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and other executive heads towards an enhanced and strengthened common United Nations security management system to ensure that adequate and improved security arrangements are in place for all United Nations staff.
25. WFP will continue to meet its present financial obligations towards UNSECOORD under the existing cost-sharing mechanism until the end of 2001.
26. The Executive Director will propose to the Executive Board, within the framework of the next budget, a separate funding request, to cover WFP's share of the new cost-sharing arrangement, to be effective from January 2002.
27. The Executive Director will continue dialoguing with Member States, asking that they consider revisiting, at the next General Assembly session, the funding mechanisms for an enhanced United Nations staff security management system.



ANNEX

Statement by
WFP Executive Director Catherine Bertini
to the United Nations Security Council
Open debate on Security of United Nations Humanitarian and Associated Personnel
9 February 2000
New York, USA

In more and more crises, the United Nations flag has become a target rather than a shield, and all too often aid workers must risk their lives to save the lives of others.

It is hard for us here in New York to really appreciate what humanitarian workers go through on a daily basis. In Somalia, Sudan and Afghanistan, United Nations relief convoys have been hijacked and our drivers beaten or killed. In Angola and Afghanistan, our planes have been fired on. Our staff have been held hostage in Sierra Leone, the Balkans, the Great Lakes Region, the Caucasus, and elsewhere.

Since 1992, United Nations agencies have lost 184 civilian staff to violence, including air crashes. Since 1994, there have been 59 incidents of kidnapping and hostage-taking, affecting 228 of our colleagues. In 1999 alone, there were 292 violent robberies, assaults, rapes and vehicle hijackings.

One recent victim, Saskia van Meijenfeldt, a dedicated young Dutch woman who worked for WFP, stands out in my mind. I think of her often. She and her colleague from UNICEF, Luis Zuniga, were shot in the head at point-blank range after an ambush in Burundi. Their deaths were all the more horrible because they were execution style—premeditated, cold, deliberate acts of violence aimed at the United Nations itself.

Those providing food, shelter and medicine—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, the ICRC and our NGO partners—often become victims in humanitarian crises. According to UNSECOORD, UNHCR and UNDP have each lost 25 staff since 1992, UNICEF and WFP have lost 27 each, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has lost 30 civilian staff. When you add deaths in vehicle accidents caused by work in difficult terrain and the deaths of short-term contract employees, the figures climb even higher.

The mechanical business of delivering aid in war zones is especially hazardous. WFP often handles the logistics of moving both people and supplies for all the United Nations agencies and for many NGOs in trouble spots such as East Timor, Kosovo and Angola. One of the saddest moments for us last year was when a WFP-chartered shuttle from Rome to Pristina crashed killing all 24 people on board.

A growing factor in the security picture has been the resurgence of the use of hunger as a weapon in war. People are willfully starved because of their politics, religion or ethnicity. Food stocks are stolen or destroyed, fields are burned. Hunger is an integral part of the tactics of violence in Somalia, southern Sudan, Angola and Afghanistan. It was also used in Kosovo in a systematic way not seen in Europe for half a century. The tactic does not vary that much, whether it is used in northern Afghanistan or northern Uganda. Delivering the food aid crucial for responding to this



has put humanitarian workers in harm's way. Warring factions sometimes see the delivery of food aid itself as a political act, and those who deliver it are seen as targets.

This is unacceptable. The international community must take concrete steps to ensure the safety of our aid workers and put a stop to this alarming trend. If humanitarian agencies are to carry out our primary task of assisting civilians, humanitarian workers have to be given better tools to ensure their protection.

United Nations Management & Security Culture

The Deputy Secretary-General wisely put the issue of staff security as one of her top priorities. Staff security has also become my highest personal concern at WFP. In 1998—a year in which WFP lost 12 staff members, seven of them murdered—we created a security task force to examine ways to better protect our people. Our greatest achievement so far has been an agency-wide security training programme for all WFP employees. In just 11 months, we have trained more than 5,400 WFP staff worldwide.

In fact, over a two-year period, we quadrupled our expenditures for security of staff.

We must equip all humanitarian staff for dangerous work through security training: in how to read the warning signs in volatile settings; how to deal with armed marauders; how to spot hidden land-mines; how to extricate themselves from trouble and deal with forced confinement.

But in-house training by WFP or our sister agencies, although extremely important, is not enough. We must also improve our communications systems, our field structures and equipment, our security consciousness. And we must have the cooperation of host Governments in providing better protection and allowing the United Nations to use needed communications systems, and then in pursuing and prosecuting those responsible for violence against United Nations staff.

There needs to be a shared recognition that the job of “humanitarian worker” is now, more often than not, a dangerous one. Soldiers, who may spend only a small part of their time in dangerous, life-threatening situations, are instilled with an awareness of security. Humanitarian aid workers, on the other hand, who may spend most of their time in equally high-risk environments, are not taught to be aware of risks. It's time we were.

This means that we need to increase the awareness of security in United Nations culture and, more important, embrace security management as an integral part of all United Nations humanitarian operations.

Security Council

I commend the President and the Security Council for your willingness to address the issue of security for humanitarian workers. Humanitarian agencies are facing some difficult questions these days. The most difficult of all is: When is the security risk for our staff so great that we cannot reach the victims of war—who then die for lack of food, shelter, water and medicine. Where do you draw the line?

I also commend the Council for your increased interest in and attention to humanitarian issues in general, recently highlighted by the President's focus last month on Africa. I believe I speak for



all the United Nations agencies when I urge the Security Council not to take political decisions without considering the safety of humanitarian aid workers. Humanitarian operations frequently contribute to the fulfillment of your mandate for peace and security. Your efforts to focus attention on the security of United Nations staff will strengthen the United Nations' clear lead role in humanitarian action worldwide.

We need to confront the simple fact that the United Nations sends unarmed aid workers into environments where member governments will not send their own armed troops.

Recommendations

A number of recommendations have been made to strengthen the “consciousness and competence” of the United Nations approach to security. I would like to highlight some for your consideration:

1. **The humanitarian principles of impartiality must be maintained in all crises. And they should be taken into account even when the Security Council takes its decisions on conflict situations.** The humanitarian principles of impartiality must be accepted and the terms of engagement must allow aid workers to reach innocent civilians wherever they are on either side of a conflict. We must reaffirm, for instance, that no innocent child or adult should starve because of a war or conflict.
2. The Security Council should examine its authorization of peacekeepers in crisis situations. The Council regularly spells out peacekeepers' role in protecting civilians but does not clarify their role in protecting aid workers. **I would recommend that the Council explicitly include and define how future peacekeeping operations will protect humanitarian workers as well.**
3. **We must also mobilize the international community to punish those responsible for crimes against humanitarian workers.** A strong message must be sent to governments and groups under whose jurisdiction murders, kidnappings and harassment take place that they will be held accountable and punished if they fail to respect aid workers' lives. In the case of countries that do not take serious action to prevent or investigate and prosecute crimes against humanitarian workers, **I suggest the Council consider calling for a system to monitor such violations against humanitarian workers, leading to penalties.**

Too often, in cases of attacks on United Nations relief convoys, murder or hostage-taking, responsible governments or groups enjoy total impunity. All too often we hear, “It wasn't our troops who were responsible, it was the rebels” or the other way around. Sound investigative reports are rare. Earlier, I said that 184 United Nations staff members were killed in the last eight years. Of them, 98 were murdered. I ask you to guess how many people have ever been tried and convicted of killing a United Nations staff member. Two.

4. **Security training must be conducted for all United Nations staff members who work in insecure environments.** This should be a pre-condition for staff to participate in high-risk operations. United Nations managers and officials must be fully trained in security management and be responsible for integrating security into their operations. **Each agency should review its facilities and equipment to ensure it is providing the best support possible to staff.**



5. **We should enhance UNSECOORD's role of coordinator of and clearing house for security information** by increasing its staff and funding. I welcome the Secretary-General's decision to appoint a full-time security coordinator. The United Nations budget should be revised to accommodate a larger staff. Once expanded, UNSECOORD could have the capacity to deal with many other management issues, including deploying security officers to all major United Nations humanitarian projects in crisis areas. Please note that currently there are only 12 staff members in UNSECOORD. And eight of those staff are paid for by agency budgets. Minus malicious acts insurance, UNSECOORD's own budget for one year is US\$537,000—that is for the coordination of security for tens of thousands of United Nations Staff worldwide.

Conclusions

As humanitarian aid workers, we want to work under a United Nations flag that is a symbol of hope—and safety. We don't want to abandon the poor people we help when insecurity makes the job too dangerous. We want to be there to provide food, shelter, medicine and hope.

Every day, that's what United Nations staff members do. They give everything they've got to save people living in the worst circumstances on earth. They shouldn't have to give their lives.

