

73rd United Nations General Assembly

**Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth) Committee
Thematic Debate**

Comprehensive Review of Special Political Missions

**INDIA STATEMENT
by
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Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for organizing this useful debate on the comprehensive review of the Special Political Missions (SPMs). We would also like to thank USG Mr. Khare, and USG Ms Dicarlo for their comprehensive briefings on the subject.

2. My delegation aligns itself with the Statement made by Morocco on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

3. We take note of the Reports of the Secretary General on overall policy matters relating to the SPMs and on Strengthening of the UN system, elaborating on his proposals for restructuring of the UN peace and Security pillar.

4. The SG in his report has highlighted the centrality of the SPMs to his vision for the core work of the organization and in dealing with the challenges to international peace and security. He also spoke of how these challenges are mounting at a time when several goals articulated in the charter are under threat and violent conflicts and fragility threaten the lives of millions around the world. He has emphasized about the focus on improving transparency, accountability, effectiveness and mission capacities of SPMs in order to strengthen their work and better the outcomes.

Mr. Chairman,

5. In addition to the 14 UN Peacekeeping missions that are deployed currently, there are 13 field-based SPMs. This high number which is growing also gives an idea of the fragile

situation of peace and security in today's world. Almost all of these missions deal with situations that have witnessed internal armed conflict situations, often involving non-state actors. This reflects the vastly transformed nature of such situations handled by the United Nations.

6. In an evolving spectrum of challenges that we are faced with today, the importance of finding inclusive political solutions to prevent and resolve conflicts cannot be highlighted enough.

7. The thematic debate of the Fourth committee on the Comprehensive review of the Peacekeeping operations that ended just last week, also echoed the theme of primacy of politics. That debate relating to peacekeeping and the one that we are having today are, of course, linked and they feed into each other.

8. However, the conceptual and organizational fragmentation is still to be addressed adequately despite the growing recognition of the importance of a more comprehensive approach required for sustaining peace by linking peacekeeping, finding political solutions and investing in institutions for governance.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Today, there are 38 Special Political Missions, including 13 that are field-based (cluster III), with 4 among those being for multiple countries. There are 11 Special Envoys, Advisers and Representatives which form the SPMs relating to Cluster I.

10. In addition to these there are 14 SPMs which constitute the various Sanction Panels and Monitoring groups for UNSC sanctions and CTED (cluster II) which perform crucial work relating to Counter-terrorism are also important SPMs.

11. While the SG in his report has spoken of the SPMs relating to cluster I and III, he has not referred to the SPMs belonging to cluster II. The 14 SPMs of cluster II comprise nearly one third of the total SPMs.

12. The challenges to peace and security from terrorist threats are mounting day by day, and the importance of the work of these SPMs cannot be understated for the wider UN membership. It would be useful to receive a briefing from the ED, CTED about the work of the CTED as an SPM, as also about the 13 other Sanction Panels and Monitoring groups.

Mr. Chairman,

13. By leaving out the cluster II SPMs, the SG's report remains less than comprehensive. Secretary General and several member states have raised the issue of addressing fragmentation on various occasions. The assessment of SPMs will become more comprehensive if all the SPMs are addressed here.

Mr. Chairman,

14. I would now like to touch upon the work of the Cluster I and II SPMs. The various offices of Special envoys of the SG and the missions which are field-based undertake complex tasks in today's world. To achieve lasting solutions, the process must be inclusive and respect the principles of impartiality and consent of parties. It should also be based on a respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States.

15. The success of UN's peace operations can only come from a collective responsibility and engagement of the member states. A greater involvement of the membership in mandate formulation and renewal through genuine consultations is essential. Regrettably, the policy formulation in the context of SPMs remains opaque and requires much greater transparency. More consultations are required between the Security Council and wider membership. The recent review of the UNAMA mission remains a case in point, which was done without substantive inputs from the wider membership.

Mr. Chairman,

16. We hope that the Department of Political Affairs, or its subsequent avatar, would organize more interactive briefings for the member states in general and especially by the heads of the SPMs. We need more not less collaboration and coherence. When we review the SPMs we must take about all the crucial tasks performed by them one of which is indeed counter terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

17. I would now like to touch upon the issue of ongoing reforms in the peace and security architecture of the UN Secretariat. The SG's report on reform of the peace and security architecture acknowledges that the growing complexities of modern conflicts have rendered the currently fragmented and ad hoc approach very ineffective. The report does provide some solutions through the SG's reform agenda which are still unfolding. It would have been useful to have an assessment from SG about the impact of all 3 reform tracks on the SPMs. In this regard the current report is a missed opportunity.

Mr. Chairman,

18. While the SG's report on peace and security reform aims to bridge the bureaucratic fragmentation, it is silent on the ad hoc manner in which the budgets for the SPMs are handled. Despite being the most utilized mechanisms of the UN, including by the UN Security Council, to address the numerous crises across the world, the budgetary arrangements of SPMs are far from being optimal.

19. A separate account aligned with the peacekeeping budget cycle and assessed at peacekeeping scales should be the logical course going ahead while addressing these challenges. On this aspect the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions made recommendations in 2011 that were later reiterated in the reports of the

High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture. There are many benefits of this approach listed in several reports, the most important being the enhancement of the transparency in the budgetary process of SPMs.

20. We hope that we will hear more from the SG on these issues going forward

With these words I conclude Mr. Chairman. Thank you.