



Revised Pilot Version

Drafting Correspondence and Reports: Guidance for Peacekeeping Personnel

Guidance and Exercises on
Written Communication
for
DPKO—ITS



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Lesson one



Introduction to course

Introduction to fellow participants

Overview of different types of written communications

Focus on notes, memos, e-mail messages

Welcome to The Drafting Correspondence and Reports Course for Peacekeeping Personnel



Welcome to the “Drafting Correspondence and Reports for Peacekeeping Personnel” course. During the course, we will review the following forms of internal and external correspondence used in peacekeeping:

1. **Notes** to the Secretary-General and other senior United Nations officials;
2. Inter-office **memos**, **fax** and **email messages**
3. **Letters** of the Secretary-General and other senior United Nations officials;
4. **Code cables** to peacekeeping operations;
5. **Notes verbales**;
6. **Talking Points**
7. **Reports of the Secretary-General to the GA and SC**

We will get more familiar with the forms and uses of each types of written communication so that we can choose the most appropriate one for a given situation and feel more confident about our writing style. We will also explore guidance on what constitutes good content, conventions on formatting, choice of language, tone and style etc.

We will learn about principles of clear writing such as determining reader and purpose; using techniques to produce clear, concise and courteous writing; organizing information so that it is easy to follow; and reviewing correct use of prepositions. In addition, we will learn about UN editorial conventions relating to abbreviations, capitalization, dates and time, numbers and UN spelling.

Each group session will start with a mix of guidance and exercises on different principles of clear writing and UN editorial conventions. This will be followed by a combination of review of guidance and templates as well as exercises on one or two writing formats. At the end of each session, you will be given an assignment. To minimize workload, you will be given the choice to select samples of correspondence from your personal files instead of composing new writing. Participants will receive a certificate of completion for this course provided that they have attended at least four out of six classroom sessions and at least one out of three individual sessions.

A brief history of report writing at the United Nations

Writing training for the UN community has a history in the Organization. A number of General-Assembly resolutions and statements have called for improvements in the quality of the drafting at the United Nations.

The Secretary-General has been requested:

1. “to develop systematic training programmes for staff ... with a view to securing a consistent drafting standard and to improving drafting skills.”
(Resolution 35/56 of 14 December 1978)
2. “to examine ways of improving drafting skills of Secretariat officials ... with a view to ensuring the production of more concise reports.”
(Resolution 38/32 of 25 November 1983)
3. “to upgrade the drafting and editorial abilities of the Secretariat as a whole...”
(The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its first to fifteenth reports on the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 (A/45/7/Add.1, para. 4))

In response to the charge that United Nations reports are too long, various recommendations have been made:

4. “Reports should present the required information as briefly as possible ...”
(The United Nations Editorial Manual, 1971)
5. “Writing for the United Nations calls for the same qualities of **brevity, clarity, simplicity of language and logical organization** of material as are desirable in all writing of a factual character ... Reports should be **action-oriented** and contain **precise** information confined to a description of the work done by the organ concerned, to the conclusions it has reached, to its decisions and to the recommendations made to the organ to which it is reporting. “
(Editorial directive ST/CS/SER.A/13/Rev.4 of 11 March 1980)
6. “The Secretariat shall prepare for the Council issue-oriented consolidated report.”
(Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/7 of 29 July 1988)
7. “**Accurate, clear, concise, consistent** writing is the kind most desirable in an international organization.”
(*A Guide to Writing for the United Nations*, W.H. Hindle)

Exercise: Let's Introduce and Discuss



Let's get to know a bit about our fellow participants. Take a few moments to introduce yourself to the person next to you and discuss the type of writing you do (or are preparing to do) in your job and any concerns you have about it. In short, tell...

- your name
- what your job is
- what type of writing you do (or are preparing to do)
- your concerns about the writing (form, grammar, UN writing rules, or any others)
- your familiarity/use of “writing tools” such as the
 - *United Nations Correspondence Manual* or
 - *United Nations Editorial Manual* or
 - “Guidelines for Drafting Correspondence for DPKO Political Affairs Officers” and “Sample Book on Correspondence for DPKO Political Affairs Officers”

Once you have had a chance to discuss the above with the colleague next to you, you can introduce yourself to the whole group.

Exercise on Written Communications: Different Types, Different Forms, Different Audiences



Let's get familiar with the different types of communications and share our knowledge about them.

Work with the person next to you and decide the answers to the following questions. To focus attention, take turns asking the questions aloud:

1) Which type(s) of communication can include a closing, "Best regards" followed by the writer's name and signature?

memo code cable note verbale email message note letter fax

2) Which type(s) of communication require(s) a summary of one to three sentences or phrases at the very beginning (just before the body of the message)?

memo code cable note verbale e-mail message note letter fax

3) Which type(s) of communication require numbered paragraphs?

memo code cable note verbale e-mail message note letter fax

4) Which type(s) of communication is used to communicate among senior staff within DPKO/DFS?

memo code cable note verbale e-mail message note letter

5) Which type(s) of communication is/are used to communicate with organizations outside the UN?

memo code cable note verbale e-mail message note letter fax

6) Which type(s) of communication is/are sent from DPKO/DFS Headquarters to a peacekeeping operation concerning significant, substantive issues—and offer guidance on how to proceed with these?

memo code cable note verbale e-mail message note letter

7) Which type of communication is always written in the third person?

memo code cable note verbale e-mail message note letter

8) In which type(s) of communication does the writer need to be clear, concise (not using any more words than necessary to convey the message)?

memo code cable note verbale e-mail message note letter

9) In which types of communication should the purpose be stated as close to the top as possible (preferably in the first paragraph)?

memo code cable note verbale e-mail message note letter fax

Welcome to the challenge of writing for the international community



The exercises in this booklet are designed to provide review and practice of some rules and conventions for creating clear, concise, professional written communications according to United Nations standards.

We all want our written communications to get the attention they deserve. To ensure that they do, we must make our messages as clear as we can to those who will receive them. It is always advisable to make our written messages “action-oriented”: that is, we must make it very clear what we want or need the recipient to do as a result of having read our message. For this reason, it is important to make the purpose of the written communication clear right from the beginning. You want the recipient to read and act on your message; you do *not* want your message to get placed at the bottom of the pile because it seemed too complicated or unclear to the reader.

It is a challenging task to write for the international community. In the book, *A Guide to Writing for the United Nations*, author W.H. Hindle (formerly Chief of the Editorial Control Section, Office of Conference Services, United Nations Headquarters) writes,

“Our duty is to inform. It sounds a simple duty. It is not. For those we have to inform are the representatives of [192] nations varying in language, culture, tradition, and even mode of thought. We have to inform them in a language acceptable to them all, often in a language which is foreign to many of them, sometimes in a language which is foreign to ourselves.”

To fulfill this challenging writing task Hindle advises the writer to use “Short, plain words, short sentences, short paragraphs. No colour, no adornment! Following these rules may make our reports shorter.”

“A report, for example, may be rather forbidding on the face of it. If we begin by saying

The situation has significantly improved in vital sectors since the period covered by the Preliminary Report as far as it can be judged by limited evidence available

it becomes formidable...If, on the other hand, we said

The situation has improved,

that would be a statement everyone could understand. It might need to be further qualified...but the qualification could come later. The essential point is the improvement.”

Hindle goes on to point out that United Nations writing has often been criticized in the mainstream by media and individuals. The respected literary critic Edmund Wilson described United Nations documents as, “This pompous, polysyllabic and relentlessly abstract style....” (in Wilson’s book, *Red, Black, Blond, and Olive*, p. 106)

Hindle reports another description of some United Nations documents, ‘I trust this is not a cry in the wilderness. For there must be many others who have had to endure the slow, heavy, disheartening and thoroughly boring task of reading through the publications of the United Nations...I have found much

useful information in the reports I have been using recently. But why in Heaven's name don't you reduce the unwieldy length of your treatises, cross out the frequent repetitions...injecting, if possible, some clarity and perhaps some life..."

In many reports, writers are dealing with sensitive issues, so it is important to maintain a diplomatic, neutral tone, when conveying every kind of feedback. Certainly the writer does not want to escalate tensions by using emotionally charged words/phrases ("the amendments are unacceptable") when more factual, neutral language would have a more successful outcome ("the amendments are inconsistent with the prior agreement") Striking the right balance between a tone that is diplomatic and direct is the key to getting the desired response from readers.

The advice, samples, and exercises in this booklet will help us to put some of Hindle's wise advice into practice. By working together, we can meet the challenge of lifting the standard of written communication in the international community of which we are all a part. Let's begin.

Lesson one – Language Tip:
Who are you are writing to and what does that person need to know?



BEFORE WRITING

Accuracy, clarity, conciseness, consistency are fine words, finer and rarer things. How are they to be achieved in United Nations documents?

The first step to this end consists in giving thought, before writing, to why we are going to write, what we are going to write, and how and for whom.

“... Conscientious authors and particularly specialists tend to tell the reader all they know rather than what [s]he wants to know. A United Nations [communication] should not say everything that can be said on a given subject, but should select and state those facts, and only those facts, that are necessary to understanding of the subject for a given purpose.”

-- from *A Guide to Writing for the United Nations* by W.H. Hindle

NOTE GUIDELINES

Note to Mr./Ms. Surname

Subject

1. All notes should be written in Times New Roman, font size 12. The line spacing should be single and spacing between paragraphs should be double. The first line of each paragraph should be indented 0.5 in. If there is more than one paragraph, each paragraph should be numbered. Please use the *Numbering* style in the styles drop down box on the format tool bar.
2. Please include all relevant background material, such as notes to which you are responding or the information prompting the note, on the left side of the folder in which you are submitting the note for signature. Notes should be submitted for signature under cover of a routing slip, which indicates the consultation process.
3. As a general rule, use a note (instead of a memorandum) when communicating with a senior UN official within the Secretariat, including within DPKO and DFS. In a note to an official outside of DPKO and DFS, do not copy (cc:) internal DPKO and DFS officials.
4. For additional instruction and information on notes, refer to the Office of Operations' "Checklist of Dos and Don'ts on Notes to the Secretary-General and Other Senior United Nations Officials".

Jean-Marie Guéhenno

1 May 2008

[The USG's signature block for notes of this type is always aligned at 4 in.]

cc: Mr./Ms. Surname should appear approximately 1 in. from the bottom of the page.

[Notes to the EOSG requesting action/signature/approval should close with the drafter's and administrative assistant's names and telephone extensions to facilitate any follow-up required.]

Exercise on Note to Mr. Zacklin



Note to Mr. Zacklin

Work with a partner. To focus attention, take turns reading paragraphs of the “Note to Mr. Zacklin” aloud. Then discuss the following questions:

- 1) What is the purpose of the note? Underline the sentence(s) that contain the note’s purpose.
- 2) What is the main subject matter of the note? What does it concern?
- 3) Is it possible to move the note’s purpose nearer to the beginning of the communication?

Re-write of Note to Mr. Zacklin

Now, with your partner, take turns reading aloud the revised version of the note and discuss the questions below:

- 4) Do the revisions match suggestions you and your partner had made after reading the original note?
- 5) Which note allows you to more readily absorb its content? Why?

Note to Mr. Zacklin

**Re: MOU between UNACAR and the Government of Terrana concerning
UNACAR activities in Terrana**

1. Further to Security Council resolution 1375 (2006), which called for Member States to assist the free, unhindered and expeditious movement to Carnana of personnel and equipment from the United Nations Assistance Mission to Carnana (UNACAR), your Office drafted a MOU that was dispatched to the Permanent Mission of Terrana on 23 February 2006. After hearing from UNACAR that the Terranian authorities appeared ready to sign the MOU, a second letter, drafted by your Office, was sent to the Permanent Mission on 20 June 2006 asking for formal confirmation and to proceed to signature. However, we have now received the attached letter and draft MOU from the Permanent Mission of Terrana requesting significant changes to the text, which, at first glance we feel is totally unacceptable.
2. We would be very grateful if your Office could review the attached letter and draft MOU. We would also subsequently appreciate OLA's participation with DPKO in meeting representatives from the legal division of the Terrana Permanent Mission to bring negotiations to an acceptable and expeditious conclusion.

First name, Surname
5 September 2006

Note: with added topic sentences and revisions

Unclassified

Note to Mr. Zacklin

**Re: MOU between UNACAR and the Government of Terrana concerning
UNACAR activities in Terrana**

1. I am writing regarding the recent exchange of correspondence between your Office and the Permanent Mission of Terrana concerning UNACAR activities in Terrana. On [date], we received the attached letter from Terrana which contains some changes to the original agreement. We would be very grateful if your Office could review the attached letter and draft MOU **and advise on how to deal with the revisions to the original agreement.**

2. Further to Security Council resolution 1375 (2006), which called for Member States to assist the free, unhindered and expeditious movement to Carnana of personnel and equipment from the United Nations Assistance Mission to Carana (UNACAR), **as you recall**, your Office drafted an MOU that was dispatched to the Permanent Mission of Terrana on 23 February 2006. After hearing from UNACAR that the Terranian authorities appeared ready to sign the MOU, a second letter, drafted by your Office, was sent to the Permanent Mission on 20 June 2006 asking for formal confirmation and to proceed to signature. However, we have now received the attached letter and draft MOU from the Permanent Mission of Terrana requesting significant changes to the text, which, at first glance we feel is **inconsistent with our prior understanding.**

3. We would also subsequently appreciate OLA's participation with DPKO in meeting representatives from the legal division of the Terrana Permanent Mission to bring negotiations to an acceptable and expeditious conclusion.



Remember:

Put your reason for writing as close to the top of your communication as you can.

The busy person who receives your message wants to know what you want/need as quickly as possible.

Exercise on Note Checklist

With a partner, scan the **Checklist of Do's and Don'ts on Notes** to find the following information (note that for ease of reference, the Checklist section and item number that addresses each question are included):

I) Purpose

- 1) What are some possible purposes of (i.e., reasons for writing) notes? (I, items 1,2,3)
- 2) In general, should you respond to a note in the same format? (I, item 4)
- 3) Where should you write the purpose of your note? (II, item 3)
- 4) Are notes used for routine, administrative matters? (I,item 3b)

II) Content

- 5) How should the note be structured? (II, item 3)
- 6) What should the total length of the note be? (II, item 2)
- 7) How many ideas should be put in one paragraph? (II, item 5)
- 8) Should a degree of analysis or mood of a situation be conveyed in a note? (II, items 9, 11)
- 9) What should be made clear at the end of a note? (II, item 6)

III)Formatting

- 10)Where can you find the official DPKO-DFS note format? (III, item 1)
- 11) Should paragraphs in a note be numbered? (III, item 4)

IV) Language, Tone, Style

- 12) What tone should the writer use when making recommendations? (IV, item 1)

VI) Submission procedures

13). In what case should you use the designation “Confidential”? (V, item 3)

CHECKLIST OF DOs AND DON'Ts ON NOTES TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND OTHER SENIOR UNITED NATIONS OFFICIALS

FOR DPKO POLITICAL AFFAIRS OFFICERS

I. Purpose

Do

1. As a general rule, use a note (instead of a memo) when communicating with a senior UN official **within the Secretariat, including within DPKO and DFS**.
2. Use a note, inter alia, for one or more of the following **purposes**:
 - (a) To convey information;
 - (b) To seek a decision and/or recommend action(s);
 - (c) To seek guidance (e.g., on legal issues or electoral matters);
 - (d) To transmit to the Chef de Cabinet correspondence and reports for the Secretary-General (e.g., draft SG letters, SG talking points, notes of SG meetings, draft SG reports).
3. As a general rule, use notes for:
 - (a) All **substantive issues**;
 - (b) **Administrative matters** that are considered **sensitive and not routine**, for example, senior mission appointments.
4. As a general rule, **respond in the same format**, i.e., if you receive a note, draft your answer in a note format.

II. Content

Do

1. **KISS** – Keep it short and simple. The shorter it is, the more likely it will be read by a senior official who has little time on his/her hands.
2. Keep the total length of a **note to the EOSG to under two pages**. However, notes can refer to other related papers attached as annexes or provided as supporting documentation.

3. **Structure** a note seeking a decision as follows:
 - (a) Subject/purpose of the note (in the first paragraph);
 - (b) Issue/problem/question (including background/context);
 - (c) Options and their individual pros and cons;
 - (d) Recommendation(s), i.e., the option(s) to choose and why;
 - (e) Next step(s)/action(s) required.
4. **Refer to previous correspondence** on the issue, as appropriate, at the beginning of the note.
5. As a general rule, stick to **one idea per paragraph**.
6. When ending a note, be clear as to the nature of the **action(s) required**, by whom and by when. Refer to attached draft talking points for suggested meetings or telephone conversations.
7. Always **consult** the relevant DPKO/DFS office(s), other UN entities (e.g., DPA, UNDP, OCHA, OHCHR, OLA), and the relevant peacekeeping operation(s) on the content of the note, as appropriate. Consultation is **mandatory**. Indicate who was consulted on the routing slip by ticking the relevant box(es) and adding the initials of the person(s) consulted. Reflect unresolved differences arising from the consultation process in the routing slip and, if possible, recommend a way forward. When no other office or entity was consulted, this needs to be explained in the routing slip.
8. **Reflect unresolved differences** of opinion between DPKO/DFS and other UN entities in notes to the SG, as appropriate.
9. As a general rule, while keeping it short, include analysis of **underlying trends, the motivations of others, the reason why it matters and the strategic picture**.
10. As a general rule, include recommendation(s) to address **immediate concerns**, as well as recommendation(s) that are more **forward-looking**.
11. Give a sense of **mood**, when appropriate, i.e., what it was like to be in the Security Council chamber or meeting room.
12. Be **honest** about what we don't know, for example, if an issue/position is unclear or no thought has been given to, or action taken on a particular issue.

13. Take into account **gender issues**, as appropriate, by considering whether:
- (a) The views, options and recommendations are likely to discriminate negatively against women/girls as compared to men/boys;
 - (b) There are opportunities for empowering women and enhancing their contribution to implementing the mission's mandate;
 - (c) Requests for action reflect the specific priorities of women/girls in the host country;
 - (d) The advice of gender experts (e.g., on elections, gender-based violence, police reform, etc.) is needed to develop the content of the note.
14. When appropriate, include views as to the possible consequences of taking **no action**.
15. Ensure that **all substantive content** is reflected **in the note**. Note that the **content of the routing slip** does **not form part of the official record**.

Don't

1. Don't use a note when communicating with a senior UN official outside of the Secretariat, e.g., head of a UN fund or programme. Use a memo or a letter instead, as appropriate.
2. Don't attach a transmittal note to notes to the EOSG.
3. Don't restate or quote extensively from attachments to the note.

III. Formatting

Do

1. Use the **official DPKO-DFS format** for a note. This is available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/On my computer/DPKO & DFS Templates/DPKO-DFS Note Template).
2. Use the **official DPKO-DFS model** for a note to the Chef de Cabinet requesting SG approval for the extension of senior mission leadership appointments (normally at the ASG and USG levels). This is available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/On my computer/Samples & Models/DPKO-DFS Model Note Extension of Appointment (2008)).

3. Use Times New Roman font size 12 and the “**Numbering**” style in the drop down box to ensure that the text is indented by 0.5 inches from the margin.
4. When there is **more than one paragraph**, number all **paragraphs**.
5. Address notes **to civilian** senior officials in the Secretariat as follows: **Mr./Ms. [Surname]**. This includes notes to the Chef de Cabinet.
6. Address notes **to UN, military** officials using their military titles as follows: **[Military title] [Surname]**, e.g., Major General Five.
7. Address the **SG and DSG by their titles**, not names, for example: “Note to the Secretary-General”.
8. Only for **internal notes** to senior DPKO/DFS officials, copy (“**cc:**”) relevant **heads of DPKO/DFS offices**.
9. Use the following convention when copying (“**cc:**”) a note to a UN official outside DPKO/DFS: **Mr./Ms. [Surname]**, e.g., Ms. Smith.
10. Organize the list of persons copied (“**cc:**”) in the note in **order of seniority**, and then alphabetically by surname and arrange the list **vertically**.
11. On a note to the Chef de Cabinet suggesting that the SG make a telephone call (and typically attaching talking points), copy (“**cc:**”) **the chief of the scheduling office** in EOSG to ensure prompt action, as follows:
“cc: Mr. Yoon”.
In addition, provide an electronic version of the note and talking points to OUSG/DPKO for follow-up purposes.

Don't

1. Don't include any opening or closing salutations.
2. Don't include a job title in the signature block of a note.
3. Don't, when copying (“cc:”) an official, include his/her job title.
4. In a note to an official outside of DPKO and DFS, don't copy (“cc:”) internal DPKO/DFS officials. The Administrative Assistant of the person signing the note will instead ensure that the relevant internal DPKO and DFS officials receive a photocopy of the signed note.

IV. Language, tone and style

Do

1. Suggest recommendation(s) in a **direct but diplomatic** manner, for example:
“You may wish to consider the following options...”
“I would recommend...because...”
2. **Address** notes to **multiple senior officials** as follows:
 - (a) Messrs. Pascoe and Holmes
 - (b) Mesdames Coomaraswamy and Mayanja

Don't

1. Don't overload the note with sophisticated nuances and caveats so that the message or action(s) to be taken are unclear.
2. Don't use honorific titles for UN civilian officials (e.g., “Ambassador” or “Dr.”). The title “Dr.” should only be used for a UN official who is a medical doctor.
3. Don't assume knowledge of peacekeeping acronyms, technical terms or concepts when addressing notes to senior UN officials outside of DPKO and DFS or to the EOSG.

V. Submission procedures, urgency and sensitivity designations

Do

1. Submit notes to **OASG/OO by 3 p.m. and OUSG/DPKO by 4 p.m.** to ensure timely review and signature.
2. For **urgent** notes, write “**Priority**” into the note itself and mark the routing slip either “**Immediate**” or “**Most Immediate**”. Then **follow up** with both OASG/OO and OUSG/DPKO to reinforce the urgency.
3. Mark **sensitive** notes as either “**Confidential**” or “**Strictly Confidential**”, as appropriate.
4. Ensure that the **same sensitivity designation** is used **on both the note and the routing slip**, for example, if a note is marked “Confidential” then the routing slip should also be marked “Confidential”.
5. Use the designation “**Confidential**” **sparingly**. Use the sensitivity marker “**Confidential**” for “information or material whose unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the work of the United Nations” (Secretary-General's Bulletin on information sensitivity, classification and handling (ST/SGB/2007/6)).

6. Use the designation “**Strictly Confidential**” with extreme caution, as it carries significant implications with regard to organizational transparency. Use the sensitivity marker “**Strictly Confidential**” for “information or material whose unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to or impede the conduct of the work of the United Nations” (Secretary-General’s Bulletin on information sensitivity, classification and handling (ST/SGB/2007/6)).

VI. Handling procedures

Do

1. Note that **unclassified and confidential notes** signed by the USG/DPKO or ASG/OO are distributed to the following:
 - (a) USG/DPKO (OUSG/DPKO ensures the onward distribution to relevant DPKO officials outside of the Office of Operations and DFS officials);
 - (b) ASG/OO;
 - (c) The relevant Regional Director in OO;
 - (d) The relevant desk in OO.
2. Note that **strictly confidential notes** signed by the USG/DPKO or ASG/OO are distributed to the following:
 - (a) USG/DPKO (OUSG/DPKO ensures the onward distribution to relevant DPKO officials outside of the Office of Operations and DFS officials);
 - (b) ASG/OO;
 - (c) The relevant Regional Director in OO.
3. Note that **transmittal notes to the Chef de Cabinet attaching notes of meetings of the SG or DSG** are handled as follows:
 - (a) USG/DPKO and ASG/OO receive a full copy of the signed transmittal note with the attached note of the meeting of the SG or DSG;
 - (b) The relevant Regional Director in OO and relevant desk in OO receive a copy of the signed transmittal note without the attached note of the meeting of the SG or DSG.

Exercise on Memo - Sample 1



- 1) Is the name and title of the recipient indicated appropriately in the “To” line?
- 2) Is the name and title of the writer indicated appropriately in the “From” line?
- 3) Is the date written according to UN editorial standards?
- 4) Is the subject line appropriate?
- 5) Is the purpose of the memo stated clearly in the first paragraph?
- 6) Is each paragraph of the memo numbered?
- 7) Is any closing (such as “Yours sincerely” or “Best regards”) needed in a memo?
- 8) Does the memo contain a polite closing paragraph?

Memo – Sample 1

**Routine
Unclassified**

TO: Mr. S. Muhammad Shaaban, Under-Secretary-
A: General
for General Assembly and Conference
Management

DATE: 8 May 2007

REFERENCE:

THROUGH:

S/C DE:

FROM: Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General
DE: for Peacekeeping Operations

SUBJECT: **Report of the Secretary-General on Côte d'Ivoire**

OBJET:

1. I would like to request a waiver from the 8,500 word limit for typed manuscripts for the above report, which will be submitted to the Secretary-General today. We have exceeded the word limit by 4,700 words. This was unavoidable as we had not only to clearly explain to the Security Council the new political reality in Côte d'Ivoire, but also to provide detailed and justified recommendations for a new role for the UN, as well as proposals for adjusting the structure of UNOCI, in light of the Ouagadougou agreement recently signed by the Ivorian parties. These recommendations were requested by the Security Council in its Presidential Statement S/PRST/2007/8 of 28 March 2007, and are based on the findings of a DPKO-led inter-departmental assessment mission which visited Côte d'Ivoire from 10 to 22 April.

2. It would be very much appreciated if your Office could accommodate this request.

Questions on Memo Checklist

I) Purpose and Content

- 1) In what circumstances are memos used? (I, items 1, 2)
- 2) In general, should you respond to a memo in the same format? (I, item 3)
- 3) Where should you write the purpose of your memo? (I, item 4)
- 4) Where should you refer to any previous correspondence that may have occurred?
I, item 5

II) Formatting, language, tone and style

- 5) Where can you find the official DPKO-DFS memo format? (II, item 1)
- 6) What font size should you use in a memo? (II, item 2)
- 7) Should you number paragraphs in a memo? (II, item 3)
- 8) Where should you indicate the addressee's job title? (II, items 4,5)
- 9) When should you use the "Through" line of a memo? (II, item 6)
- 9) How do you determine the order of recipients of cc's? (II, item 9)

III) Submission/Clearance

- 10) How should you indicate an "urgent" memo? (III, item 2)

CHECKLIST OF DOs AND DON'Ts ON INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUMS (MEMOs)

FOR DPKO POLITICAL AFFAIRS OFFICERS

I. Purpose and content

Do

1. As a general rule, use a memo for **formal communication** with UN entities other than DPKO and DFS (e.g., other Departments of the UN Secretariat, UN agencies, funds or programmes, UN international tribunals).
2. As a general rule, use memos for **administrative issues** (e.g., personnel or finance issues, requests for waiver of word length).
3. As a general rule, **respond in the same format**, i.e., if you receive a memo, draft your answer in a memo format, even if the content relates to a sensitive substantive issue (e.g., Office of Internal Oversight Services audits and investigation reports, requests for confidential documents from UN international tribunals).
4. State the **purpose** of the memo in the **first paragraph**.
5. Refer to **previous correspondence** on the issue at the start of the memo.
6. Ensure that **all substantive content** is reflected **in the memo**. Note that the **content of the routing slip** does **not form part of the official record**.
7. Always **consult** the relevant DPKO/DFS office(s), other UN entities (e.g., DPA, UNDP, OCHA, OHCHR, OLA), and the relevant peacekeeping operation(s) on the content of the memo, as appropriate. Consultation is **mandatory**. Indicate who was consulted on the routing slip by ticking the relevant box(es) and adding the initials of the person(s) consulted. Reflect unresolved differences arising from the consultation process in the routing slip and, if possible, recommend a way forward. When no other office or entity was consulted, this needs to be explained in the routing slip.

Don't

1. Don't use a memo to communicate with senior UN officials in the EOSG. Use a note instead.

II. Formatting, language, tone and style

Do

1. Use the **official DPKO-DFS format** for an inter-office memo. This is available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/On my computer/DPKO & DFS Templates/DPKO-DFS Memo Template).
2. Use Times New Roman font size 12 and the **“Numbering” style** in the drop down box to ensure that the text is indented by 0.5 inches from the margin.
3. **Number all paragraphs**, even if the memo only has one paragraph.
4. Put the addressee’s name, followed by their **job title**.
5. Address memos **“To”** UN officials using the following convention:
Mr./Ms. [First name] [Surname] e.g., Ms. Alicia Bárcena.
However, remove the Mr./Ms. in the **“Through”** and **“From”** lines as such:
[First name] [Surname] e.g., Edmond Mulet.
6. Use **“Through”** when this recipient’s official clearance is required.
7. Highlight the **subject line** in **bold**.
8. Use the following convention when copying (**“cc:”**) a memo to a UN official outside of DPKO/DFS: **[First name] [Surname]**, e.g., Felicia Smith.
9. Organize the list of persons copied (**“cc:”**) in the memo in **order of seniority** and then alphabetically by surname, and arrange the list **vertically**.
10. Write out **acronyms and abbreviations in full the first time** they are used in the text of the memo, for example, “Office of Operations (OO)”.

Don’t

1. Don’t underline the subject.
2. Don’t fill in the reference line.
3. Don’t include any opening or closing salutations (e.g., “Many thanks”).
4. Don’t use honorific titles for UN civilian officials (e.g., “Ambassador” or “Dr.”). The title “Dr.” should only be used for a UN official who is a medical doctor.

5. When drafting a memo to another UN entity, don't copy ("cc:") the memo to internal DPKO or DFS officials. The Administrative Assistant of the person signing the memo will, instead, ensure that the relevant internal DPKO and DFS officials receive a photocopy of the signed memo.

III. Submission and clearance procedures, urgency and sensitivity designations

Do

1. Submit memos to **OASG/OO by 3 p.m. and OUSG/DPKO by 4 p.m.** to ensure timely review and signature.
2. For **urgent** memos, write "**Priority**" into the memo itself and mark the routing slip either "**Immediate**" or "**Most Immediate**". Then **follow-up** with both OASG/OO and OUSG/DPKO to reinforce the urgency.
3. Mark **sensitive** memos as either "**Confidential**" or "**Strictly Confidential**" as appropriate.
4. Ensure that the **same sensitivity designation** is used **both on the memo and the routing slip**, for example, if a memo is marked "Confidential" then the routing slip should also be marked "Confidential".
5. Use the designation "**Confidential**" **sparingly**. Use the sensitivity marker "**Confidential**" for "information or material whose unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the work of the United Nations" (Secretary-General's Bulletin on information sensitivity, classification and handling (ST/SGB/2007/6)).
6. Use the designation "**Strictly Confidential**" **with extreme caution**, as it carries significant implications with regard to organizational transparency. Use the sensitivity marker "**Strictly Confidential**" for "information or material whose unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to or impede the conduct of the work of the United Nations" (Secretary-General's Bulletin on information sensitivity, classification and handling (ST/SGB/2007/6)).

Exercise on Writing E-mail Messages



Subject Headings

For each of the following situations, which would be the best, most useful subject line? Be prepared to explain your choices.

1. As a result of the recent audit in your department, changes need to be made.
As the supervisor, you are writing to your staff to inform them of the changes.
 - a. Action needed
 - b. Auditor's action points
 - c. Good news and bad news
 - d. We need to keep better records
2. You are writing to your boss to request a week off work next month so that you can take a trip to Bermuda.
 - a. Bermuda
 - b. On vacation
 - c. Can I take a week off?
 - d. Holiday request for 15-19 November
3. You recently missed a mandatory all-department meeting (you forgot about it!), and are writing to your boss to apologize.
 - a. Missed meeting
 - b. What happened yesterday?
 - c. Sorry I missed the meeting – I forgot!
 - d. Apologies for absence from dept'l meeting

5. You are sending a reminder to other staff in your department regarding tomorrow's meeting on Darfur.
- a. Meeting
 - b. Tomorrow's meeting
 - c. Darfur report meeting - Tues
 - d. Reminder: Darfur report meeting – Tues 12 Oct
6. You are responding to part of a long discussion started about 10 e-mails ago which started as *Departmental Workplan 2010-2011*. You are concerned about the deliverables for one item.
- a. RE: FW: RE: Departmental Workplan 2010-2011- deliverables for new website
 - b. RE: FW: RE: Departmental Workplan 2010-2011
 - c. New website deliverables - 2010-2011
 - d. Workplan deliverables – new website

Salutations

For each of the situations listed below, indicate what salutation you feel is best. (More than one answer may be possible.)

7. You are writing to a staff member, Mariam Haddad, whom you don't know personally.
- a. Dear Mariam,
 - b. Dear Ms Haddad,
 - c. Dear Mariam Haddad,
 - d. Good morning,
8. You are writing to a colleague with whom you work closely, Elizabeth Smith, with a new question.
- a. E-
 - b. Dear Elizabeth,
 - c. Elizabeth,
 - d. [No salutation]

9. You have received a simple request from someone signing 'Terry Waite'. You don't know this person and 'Terry' can be either a man's name or a woman's name. How do you set up your response message?
- Good morning,
 - Dear Sir / Madam,
 - To Whom It May Concern,
 - [No salutation]
10. You have received a message from a colleague in another programme signing 'Kim Do Young' about an ongoing project. You don't know this person. How do you begin your response?
- Dear Kim,
 - Dear Mr. Kim,
 - Dear Mr. Young,
 - Dear Kim Do Young,
11. You are writing to all other staff members in your department.
- Dear all,
 - Dear colleagues,
 - Dear [Name of your department] staff,
 - [No salutation]

Closings

12. Which of the following closings do you feel are appropriate for a work-related e-mail message? Circle those you feel are appropriate, and cross out those you feel are not. Can you think of others?

Best regards,	Regards,	Till soon,	Bye,	All the best,
Warm regards,	Love,	Thank you,	Sincerely,	Ciao,
Yours Faithfully,				Others?

Dates

13. What is the best way to write the date in the following e-mail? Why?

Dear fellow 'Netiquetters',

This is just a friendly reminder that our **next Netiquette meeting** is
_____ at **2 pm** in **DC2-610**.

Please see the attached agenda, and, if you like, contact me with any additional topics for discussion.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Best regards,
Jodi

- a. 11/12/11
- b. tomorrow
- c. next Tuesday the 12th
- d. tomorrow, Tuesday, 12 November 2011
- e. Other? _____

Being concise

14. Use only as many words as you need—not more. Discuss the following e-mail. What was done well? What could be better?

To: Ms Tilsom
SUBJECT: RE: Travel Reimbursement Claim

Dear Ms Tilsom,

We have received your recent travel reimbursement claim, and this claim will be processed as soon as we receive the remaining documentation: forms TR10A and TR500.

Best Regards,

Mr. Xin

Tone

15. Be attentive to the tone of your e-mail message. Discuss the following two e-mail beginnings. As a reader, how might you react to each message? Which one is better and why?

MESSAGE A

SUBJECT: Unsatisfactory working conditions

Dear Ms Smith,

I am writing to call your attention to the unsatisfactory working conditions in our office...

MESSAGE B

SUBJECT: Improving working conditions

Dear Ms Smith,

The current working conditions in our office could use some improvement. I have a few suggestions ...

General guidance for using E-mail

When using e-mail, care in the following five basic areas can help to ensure efficiency in your correspondence: Address Line, Format & Organization, Style, Attachments, Archiving.

1. Address Line

- **Do use the 'To' line for action and the 'cc' line for information.** That is, the more carefully you address your e-mail, the better your recipient can prioritize his/her messages.

If you want a correspondent to take some action upon receiving your e-mail, then type his/her address in the 'To' line. If you are simply sending a 'courtesy copy' to keep the recipient informed, then type his/her address in the 'cc' line.

In general, using 'bcc' (blind courtesy copy) is not recommended in the business context because of the lack of transparency. One appropriate use of 'bcc' is when sending out an announcement to a large group of people. (cf. All 'Broadcasts' are sent out in 'bcc'). The advantages of this method include protecting the privacy of the recipients and avoiding a mass 'Reply All'.

- **Don't send to "the world,"** but only to those to whom the message directly pertains. Carefully consider who really needs to receive your message and refrain from 'cc'ing additional people.
- **Don't 'reply to all' unless absolutely necessary.** Use 'Reply to all' only if everyone on the original mailing list needs to see your reply.

2. Format & Organization

- **Do have a clear, appropriate subject line.** A clear subject allows your reader to know the topic and maybe the purpose of your message in advance. Using a clear subject both helps your reader to prioritize what to read and allows him/her to find your message again later.

Example: Subject: Reminder: Netiquette Meeting today, 3 Oct. at 3pm

- **Do** change the subject line if the topic has changed – even if you are using the ‘reply’ function.
- **Do begin your message with a clear purpose statement.** After reading the first line of the message, your reader should know why you are writing, and ideally, what you want him/her to do in response. All this information should be visible on the first screen of your message.
- **Don’t bury your responses within the original message text.** Ultimately, your goal is to make it as easy as possible for your reader to find your response. In many cases, if you need to respond to something complex, it may be best to list your responses under short headings that refer to each of the questions you had been asked.

If there are few questions, you may choose to type each answer immediately below each question in another colour. (*Please note:* colour should only be used for internal messages since the colour formatting may not be compatible with recipient software.)

- **Do include your “signature.”** A “signature block” in e-mail refers to the automatic title and contact information found at the bottom of an e-mail you send or receive. Use plain font and include your:

Name– including the title Mr./Ms./Mrs., especially if your name is unusual or confusing to many people;

Job title – written out, not as an abbreviation

Department – written out, not as an acronym

E-mail address – especially important for those using ‘webmail’

Phone number – useful so that your reader can easily call you

Example: Ms Jodi Nooyen
English Language Instructor
UN Language & Communications Programme
nooyen@un.org
(212)963-2001

- To create your ‘signature’ in Lotus Notes, click on TOOLS.

3. Style

- **Do be concise.** Aim for sentences of no more than 15 words each. Your paragraphs should consist of about three sentences with a blank line in between paragraphs. The following website provides a lesson in this: http://ceds.vu.edu.au/webbja/Concise_writing1.htm
- **Do avoid redundancy.** Respect your reader's time by saying what you need to say clearly and concisely without unnecessary repetition.
- **Do type the http:// prefix before any website address.** If you send someone a link, it is best if they can simply click on that link. For example, not including the http:// prefix can sometimes cause a 'dead link', a link that is not 'clickable'.

4. Attachments

- **Do use 'Reply with History' for an ongoing conversation via e-mail.** For work, e-mail is often used to discuss a topic. Especially when you are commenting on a previous e-mail, it saves your reader time if the 'history' (and context) is easily accessible.
- **Don't attach large files or files created by very new or uncommon software.** For recipients at your duty station, this is not of great concern. However, this guideline is important if sending a message to a UN mission or to someone outside the UN system. It can take a long time for a large attachment to open if the server is a slow one.

Also, it is often useful to check if your receiver has the (version of the) software program that you are using.

- **Don't return the original attachment.** – Especially for those with slow internet connections, resending the original attachment can cause your reader to wait a long time for your reply to download. Moreover, deleting the attachment eliminates any doubt that the attachment to one message in the chain may be different to any other iterations.

5. Archiving / Saving messages

- **Do save e-mail messages by topic in folders.** Lotus Notes allows us to create folders and sub-folders for both our inbox and sent messages so that we find correspondence back more quickly.

- **Do keep in mind that your e-mail messages are automatically archived**, not deleted. Archived e-mails can be accessed via your Lotus Notes mailbox, Webmail access and Blackberry.

An automated archiving system is in effect in DPKO-DFS. Rather than deleting messages from e-mail boxes, the messages are moved to a secondary server. This enables you to retain and access all your e-mail messages without burdening the e-mail servers with the associated storage and processing tasks.

Each night, the system automatically moves messages from your inbox to your archive database, according to the schema specified below:

Message location	Archive items older than
Inbox	90 days
Sent folder	30 days
User folders	90 days
Draft messages	30 days
Calendar entries	366 days
ToDo entries	366 days
Junk Mail folder	7 days

Messages will be archived, NOT deleted, and will remain accessible

Lesson two



Language tip: leave out the roundabout phrases

Gain awareness of different cultural styles of organizing information

Change “heavy phrases” to single words

Use verbs instead of nouns (where possible)

Focus on code cable format

Focus on fax format

Lesson two – Language Tip: Leave out the roundabout phrases



In warding off those enemies of simplicity and clarity, some positive rules may be of help.

A first positive rule of clear writing

A first positive rule would be to state a fact or an idea directly whenever possible. Often this is best done by following the natural order of thought: subject, verb object. Here the language of childhood may offer us better models than the language of bureaucrats. "Mary had a little lamb" is a perfect example of concise, simple statement of fact. It is thereby much more effective than the bureaucrat's roundabout "with respect to the question of pets, Mary exercised rights of ownership over a certain juvenile member of the sheep family".

Sentences beginning "with respect to" (or such variants as "in regard to", "concerning", "in reference to") leave the reader dangling. When there is a long chain of them, as sometimes happens in United Nations reports, the reader may become too tired to go on and find out what is "the question with respect to which the writer wishes to write.

-from *A Guide to Writing for the United Nations*, by W.H. Hindle

Many distinguished writers have made similar points about the importance of conciseness in writing...

Quotes on Writing



“The most valuable of talents is never using two words when one will do.”
-Thomas Jefferson

“Omit needless words. Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts.”

- William Strunk, Jr.

“I didn’t have time to write a short letter, so I wrote a long one instead.”
- Mark Twain

“Easy reading is damned hard writing.”

- Nathaniel Hawthorne

“Don’t tell someone what you know. Tell them what they need to know, what it means, why it matters.”

- General David C. Jones,
US Air Force Chief of Staff
(1978—81)

“I believe more in the scissors than I do in the pencil.”

-- Truman Capote

And the British writer, George Orwell said,



"Euphemism, question begging and sheer cloudy vagueness fall on the facts like soft snow, blurring the outlines and covering all the details."

- George Orwell

In his time, Orwell criticized government writing, which could obscure information with inflated language.

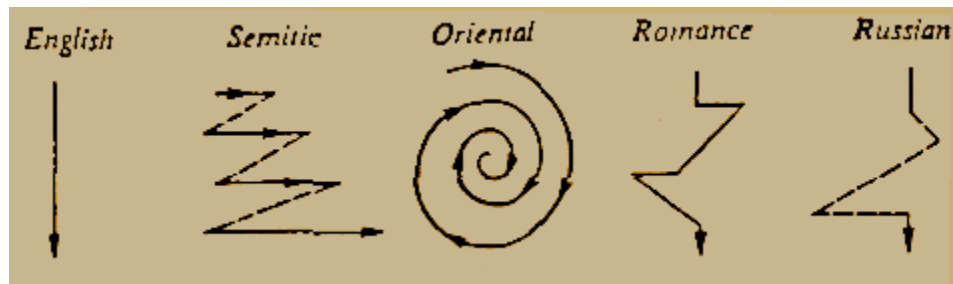
Sometimes the meaning of a text can get lost in an excess of words. Below are some one-word alternatives to heavy phrases. The one-word alternatives can be useful if we find our paragraphs are drowning in too many heavy phrases. Look at the examples below and then see if you can think of one-word alternatives to the other big phrases.

Literary legend, George Orwell wrote an essay in 1946 called *Politics and the English Language* as something of a cure for the state of writing in publications of the day. The list below brings to light five rules from said essay that will bring out your writing from the pack:

1. Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.
2. Never use a long word where a short one will do.
3. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
4. Never use the passive where you can use the active.
5. Never use ... a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.

Cultural Styles for organizing information

Organization of Information: Cultural Styles



The linguist Robert Kaplan pointed out that each culture has its own particular way of organizing written information. He believed that the style of organization reflected a particular culture's patterns of thought. Kaplan wrote a very influential article called "Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education"; he made people look at the connection between different cultural patterns of thinking and how this pattern was reflected in the way the culture organized information in writing. The article pointed out that even when people wrote in a second language, they would often use the same system of organization they had learned in their native language.

Kaplan represented the different patterns of organization in five diagrams. The manner of organization in *English-medium writing* is shown as a straight line, indicating that Anglo cultures present the main idea of their communication right away -- at the beginning of the communication.

Kaplan posited that *Semitic* cultures layer differing ideas side by side, leaving it up to the reader to make the connection among them. *Oriental* presentation slowly and carefully approaches the main point, carefully setting down all the points that led up to it. The *Romance* languages approach the main point directly, but indicate the complexity of the issue at hand by bringing in related points. Kaplan didn't write about African patterns of narration; what do you imagine he would have said about them?

What do you think of Kaplan's diagrams? How do you think his work on the different cultural writing styles can help us?



Reducing wordiness

Organizational documents often contain many “heavy phrases” that could be replaced with single words. If you find that your document is becoming too “wordy” and are looking for ways to cut it down, consider choosing from the list of one-word alternatives in the left-hand column below. Can you fill in the missing “one-word: alternatives?”

Exercise on Heavy Phrases to Single Words



Substitute a single word for the phrase on the left.

Heavy Phrase	Single word
along the lines of	like
as of this date	yet, still
at all times	
at the present time	
at the time of	
by means of	
concerning the matter of	
despite the fact that	
due to the fact that	

during the period of	
for the period of	
for the purpose of	
for the reason that	
in a position to	
in a manner similar to	
in reference to	
in regard to	
in connection with	
in relation to	
in order to	
in spite of the fact that	
in the event that	
in the near future	
in view of the fact that	
in the amount of	
prior to	

subsequent to	
the majority of	
until such time as	
with regard to	
with respect to	
with a view to	

Filler words



Below are some “filler” words that often do not contribute to the meaning of a sentence:

basically, substantially, essentially, somewhat

If you use them, ask yourself if you need them. Often, such words can just “get in the way” of conveying the meaning of the sentence. The words that “filler words” modify are generally strong enough to stand on their own, as in the example below:

(a) The two parties have essentially different positions on the issue.

(b) The two parties have different positions on the issue.

The word, “essentially” does not contribute to the meaning of the sentence. The word “different” by itself is enough to convey the message.

Consider the use of the underlined words in the sentences below. Do they contribute to the meaning of their respective sentences – or are the words they are meant to modify strong enough to stand on their own?

At the meeting, the Committee heard a substantial number of views.

Our opinions basically differ on that issue.

Shortening sentences

When writing, we need to consider whether all the words in our sentences are necessary -- and are contributing to their meaning. Some words can be superfluous. We can strengthen our sentences by deleting such words.

Let's look at the examples below:

1. Delete meaningless words

Peace building **actually** depends on certain factors that **basically** involve political will more than any **particular** ideology.

Peace building involves political will more than ideology.

2. Eliminate redundancies and unnecessary repetition of ideas

The Committee still hasn't come to a decision yet.

The Committee members made a decision to have a meeting to welcome visiting officials. The main reason for deciding to have a meeting to welcome visiting officials was that some of the Committee members had pointed out that the Committee did not utilize opportunities to obtain guidance and advice from visiting officials.

The Committee members decided to have a meeting to welcome visiting officials. Some Committee members had pointed out that the Committee did not utilize opportunities to obtain advice from visiting officials.

3. Avoid sentences with *it* and *there*

There was a discussion of the new agenda by the team leaders.

The team leaders discussed the new agenda.

Avoid "metadiscourse"

High turnover rates have been observed to occur in offices that have been determined to hire staff that are over-qualified.

High turnover rates occur when offices hire over-qualified staff.

Hindle's positive rule

A second positive rule would be to use verbs rather than nouns whenever possible. Verbs are dynamic; nouns, especially abstract nouns, tend to be static. An announcement from the United Nations that "world trade continued its expansion" does not convey the same sense of movement as "world trade continued to expand". Through the use of "its", it also endows world trade with a separate personality which world trade does not in fact possess.

-from *A Guide to Writing for the United Nations*, by W.H. Hindle

Exercise: Use verbs instead of nouns



Is the following sentence ‘reader-friendly’?

The mission focused on the stabilization of the post-conflict situation and the subsequent facilitation of a political process with allowance for the resumption of negotiations and operationalization of mandated programmes.

Was it easy to absorb the meaning of that sentence? Sometimes the meaning can “drown” in a “sea of nouns”. How can we “drain” the sea of nouns and “rescue” the meaning?

Look at the rewrite of the sentence below. What has changed?

The mission focused first on stabilizing the post-conflict situation. Later, it facilitated a political process that allowed negotiations to resume and mandated programmes to be put in place.

Use verbs rather than nouns in the following sentences:

- 1) Many professional writers exhibit a preference for the use of verbs rather than nouns.
- 2) We would appreciate your advice in the identification of stakeholders who participated in the implementation of the new framework, and who could make a contribution to the workshop.
- 3) We do not have the intention of further participation in this matter.
- 4) A key milestone was the adoption of a Constitutional Framework, which has provisions for the division of responsibility between the two parties.
- 5) The 2004 UNTIR agreement, in cooperation with SPI, facilitated the establishment of a standards process, whereby SPI would have to achieve basic human rights as a condition for the commencement of the future status process for the country.

CODE CABLE

URGENCY
SENSITIVITY

TO: SURNAME, MISSION ACRONYM, CITY
INFO: SURNAME, MISSION ACRONYM, CITY
FROM: GUÉHENNO, UNATIONS, NEW YORK
DATE: 1 May 2008
NUMBER:
SUBJECT: **Bold and underlined**

Summary: If a cable exceeds two (2) pages, a summary is to be provided, outlining concisely the main issues of the cable. As a general rule, the body of a cable should not exceed four pages, and its attachments should not exceed 18 pages. Courier New, bold, font size 12, single line spacing should be used for the summary.

1. Courier New, font size 12, line spacing 1.5 should be used for the body of the cable and spacing between paragraphs should be doubled. The first line of each paragraph should be indented 0.5 in. If there is more than one paragraph, each paragraph should be numbered. Please use the *Numbering style* in the styles drop down box of the template.

2. Any relevant background information, such as cables to which you are responding or information prompting the cable to be sent, should be included on the left side of the folder in which the cable for signature is being submitted. The folder should be submitted under the cover of a routing slip, which indicates the coordination/consultation process that has taken place in preparing the cable.

3. Identify the main drafter(s) at the end of the code cable using the following convention: [Drafted by [Surname], [Department]/[Office or Division]/[service or section or unit]] to help with working-level follow-up. In rare

instances where the identification of the drafter is not advised (such as the exposure of the staff member(s) to undue pressure, difficulty or risk), omit the name of the drafter and, if needed, also the name of the division/service/section/unit.

4. For more detailed instructions and information on code cables, please refer to the Office of Operations' "Checklist of Dos and Don'ts on Code Cables".

Best regards.

[Drafted by Surname, Department/Office or Division/Service or Section or Unit]

Exercise One on Evaluating a Code Cable (UNMITER)



With the person next to you, have a look at the attached code cable. Then, discuss the seven questions below:

- 1) Is the urgency designation “IMMEDIATE” appropriate?
- 2) Where is the sensitivity designation? In your view, what would be the appropriate sensitivity designation for this code cable?

(To discuss questions 3-5, it may be helpful to read the code cable summary and paragraph aloud.)

- 3) Is the content included in the summary appropriate?
- 4) Is a summary needed at the top of this code cable?
- 5) Is substantive guidance and analytical commentary included in paragraph 3?
- 6) Is it appropriate to split a paragraph between two pages?
- 7) Is the proper convention used for indicating the drafter(s)?

CODE CABLE

**IMMEDIATE
Confidential**

TO: BUCKE, UNMITER, TERRANA
INFO: PASCOE, UNATIONS, NEW YORK
FROM: LE ROY, UNATIONS, NEW YORK

DATE: 22 November 2008

NUMBER:

SUBJECT: Meeting with Deputy Mediator Ambassador Reitz

Summary: Supports UNMITER in its efforts to prepare for a possible meeting between Chairman Swanson and rebel leader Richard Dean and encourages the presence of SRSG Bucke and UNMITER representatives in Peacetown at the time of the talks.

1. Thank you for your CDN 23 of 20 November informing of the discussions with the Deputy Mediator and Ambassadors representing the Regional Political Cooperation Organization and the Republic of Sumora. We are grateful for the efforts undertaken on behalf of UNMITER to liaise with the Mediator and key international partners to ensure the successful implementation of the All Inclusive Agreement.

2. We welcome the possibility that Chairman Swanson and Richard Dean will meet in Peacetown, and fully support your presence and that of other UNMITER representatives if

needed, especially given the possible technical nature of the discussions.

3. Given the pressure that exists to ensure a positive outcome of this discussion, we fully support your efforts to prepare the ground for a successful meeting in collaboration with the Regional Political Cooperation Organization. We would be grateful to be kept fully informed of the intended preparatory steps to be taken, including at the level of the Verification Mission which would necessarily include the naming of a replacement for Colonel Thompson as Chair, and to receive any indication of what this headquarters can do to assist during the lead up to the discussions.

Best regards.

[UNMITER IOT/ADII/00/DPKO]

Answers to the code cable exercise

1) Is the urgency designation “IMMEDIATE” appropriate?

- The urgency designation “Immediate” is only used for code cables that require the attention of, or a response from, the mission within the same day.
- In this case, an urgency designation of “Routine” would be more appropriate.

Refer to [all dos](#) and [don'ts](#) under section “VI: Urgency designations for outgoing code cables” in the *Checklist of Dos and Don't on Code Cables*.

2) Where is the sensitivity designation? What should be the sensitivity designation for this code cable?

- The drafter has not used the official DPKO-DFS template for a code cable. On the official template, the distribution designation (Only) and the sensitivity designation (Confidential) are selected together.
- In this case, a sensitivity designation of “Unclassified” would be more appropriate as the content of the code cable does not appear to be confidential in nature.
- Do, use the designation “**Unclassified**” whenever possible.
- Do, use the designation “**Only/Confidential**” sparingly.
- Do, use the designation “**No Distribution/Strictly Confidential**” with **extreme caution**, as it carries significant implications with regard to organizational transparency.

Refer to the *Checklist of Dos and Don't on Code Cables*, section “VIII: Sensitivity designations”.

3) Is a summary needed at the top of this code cable? No. (See 4 below.)

4) Is the content of the summary appropriate?

- The subject title and summary should both reflect the content of the code cable. [Note that in the re-write of the code cable, the subject title has been slightly re-worded to indicate more clearly the content of the code cable.]
- The summary does not capture key substantive points of the code cable nor indicate action/next steps. [Refer to the *Checklist of Dos and Don't on Code Cables*, section “II. Content, point “8. Do outline in the **summary** the

key issue(s) addressed in the code cable and any action(s) required by the mission.”]

- In this code cable on UNMITER, no summary is required since the length of the code cable does not exceed two pages in length. [Refer to the *Checklist of Dos and Don't on Code Cables*, section “III. Formatting” point “17. Do include a **short “summary” at the start of the code cable if it is more than two pages in length.**” Note that in the re-write of the code cable, the body of the code cable exceeds two pages in length and a summary is therefore required.]

5) Is substantive guidance and analytical commentary included in paragraph 3?

- Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 express support for mission activities without providing substantive guidance or analytical commentary. [Refer to the *Checklist of Dos and Don't on Code Cables*, section “II. Content, points 8 and 1:
 - 8. Do, as a general rule, when providing guidance, describe the **strategic picture and include forward-looking recommendations.**
 - 1. Don't send a code cable with no substantive content or clear purpose/message, so as to merely be “seen” to be responding to a mission, for example, a code cable that restates information received from missions or thanks a mission for information received without adding any substantive content.]

6) Is it appropriate to split a paragraph between two pages?

- It is acceptable to continue a sentence mid-way onto the following page since a code cable is an internal form of communication.
- However, it is not acceptable for the final page to have only one or two lines plus the closing salutation and name(s) of the drafter(s). Where this case arises, the drafter should either:
 - (i) adjust the formatting of the code cable to fit those one or two lines plus the closing salutation and name(s) of the drafter(s) onto the previous page; or
 - (ii) move the entire last paragraph of the body of the code cable onto the final page, followed by the closing salutation and name(s) of the drafter(s). [Note that in the re-write of the code cable, the latter option was chosen].

7) Is the proper convention used for indicating the drafter(s)?

- The name of the main drafter(s) of the code cable must be indicated at the end of the code cable for a number of reasons including: (i) organizational transparency; (ii) to enable mission colleagues to follow-up on the

substance of the code cable; and (iii) to enable the “Code Cable Room” to follow-up with the drafter of the code cable (e.g., in case part of the annexes are missing) as they do not receive the internal DPKO-DFS routing slip where the name of the drafter is indicated.

- **Refer to** the *Checklist of Dos and Don't on Code Cables*, section III. Formatting. Point 21:

“21. Do **identify the main drafter(s)** at the end of the code cable using the following convention: [Drafted by [Surname], [Department]/[Office or Division]/[Service or Section or Unit]] to help with working-level follow-up. For example:

(a) [Drafted by Smith, DPKO/OO/ELAD]; or

(b) [Drafted by Jones, DPKO/OO/AMED and Bergson, DFS/FPD/FPOS].”

- Note that the organizational units are listed from large (DPKO) to small (ELAD).
- Note that the smallest organizational unit mentioned is the regional division (i.e., ADI, ADII, ELAD or AMED) and not the Integrated Operational Team (e.g., Darfur IOT).
- **Refer to** the *Checklist of Dos and Don't on Code Cables*, section “III. Formatting. Point 22:
“22. However, in rare instances **where the identification of the drafter is not advised** (such as the exposure of the staff member(s) to undue pressure, difficulty or risk), do **omit** the name of the drafter and, if needed, also the name of the regional division/service/section, for example:
(a) [Drafted by DPKO/OO/AD]; or
(b) [Drafted by DPKO/OO].”
- In this particular code cable, the content of the code cable does not appear to warrant the omission of the drafters' names, and the term “UNMITER IOT” should be replaced with the names of the main drafter(s) instead. Note also that the name of the organizational unit should be stated from large to small i.e. it should be “DPKO/OO/ADII” and not “ADII/OO/DPKO”.
- **Refer to** the *Checklist of Dos and Don't on Code Cables*, section “III. Formatting. Point 23:
“23. Do add the name of the main co-drafter(s) where another DPKO/DFS office or UN entity has provided significant input into the draft code cable, for example:
(a) [Jones, DPKO/OO/AMED and Bergson, DFS/FPD/FPOS];
(b) [Drafted by Smith, DPKO/OO/ELAD and Selous, OLA].”
- Note that the following way of indicating consultation is not acceptable: [Jones, DPKO/OO/AMED **in consultation with** Bergson, DFS/FPD/FPOS].

CODE CABLE (Rewrite of previous))

ROUTINE

UNCLASSIFIED

TO: BUCKE, UNMITER, TERRANA

INFO: PASCOE, UNATIONS, NEW YORK

FROM: LE ROY, UNATIONS, NEW YORK

DATE: 22 November 2008

NUMBE

R:

SUBJE Meeting with Facilitation Team

CT:

Summary: Welcomes the expected Swanson-Dean meeting; stresses the importance of the preparatory steps required; shares thoughts on the desired outcomes of the meeting.

1. Thank you for your CDN 23 of 20 November regarding the above. We are very pleased to learn that the anticipated meeting between President Swanson and Richard Dean is expected to take place on 25 November. As you know, it has been our view that a meeting at that level is a prerequisite for any meaningful movement on the implementation of the All Inclusive Agreement.

2. Given the high stakes involved, we agree that every effort should be made to create a propitious environment for a positive outcome. This will require intensive preparations prior to the meeting and we welcome your efforts to prepare the ground in collaboration with the Regional Political Cooperation Organization. We also fully

support your participation in this important meeting.

3. In this regard, agreement on a clear and focused agenda, as well as on expected outcomes will be essential. Similarly, participation in the meeting should be as limited as possible. It will also be important to avoid "negotiations" or open-ended discussions that would unnecessarily extend the process. Instead, both sides should aim at reaching a common and definitive understanding on the overall political framework that would lead to the expeditious implementation of the All Inclusive Agreement.

4. In this context, agreement on the modalities for the inclusion of members of the Rebel Group (RG) in the national institutions, in particular the level and number of posts that could be provided to the RG leadership within the Government, would be a significant step forward. The provision by President Swanson of the necessary guarantees for the safe return of Dean and other RG leaders would also be very helpful.

5. In turn, RG should be encouraged to put forward realistic demands and to undertake to proceed with the implementation of the All Inclusive Agreement in good faith and without any further preconditions. Accordingly, discussions on a Military Compensation Package, or other issues that may further delay the implementation of the All Inclusive Agreement, should be avoided. In addition, both

sides should also aim to agree on a new, realistic timeline for the implementation of the All Inclusive Agreement.

6. We would be grateful to be kept closely informed of the preparatory steps undertaken with the Regional Political Cooperation Organization, the Facilitation Team, and Regional Initiative representatives. You may also wish to enlist the support of key donors, in particular those who have leverage over RG. Finally, we would appreciate your views on how we could support your efforts from this end, if necessary.

Best regards.

[Drafted by Parker and Okala, DPKO/OO/ADII]

Exercise: Scanning/Discussion of the Checklist for Code Cables



With a partner, scan the **Checklist of Do's and Don'ts on Code Cables** to find the following information (note that for ease of reference, the Checklist section and item number that addresses each question are included):

Page 1 Purpose

- 1) What are some possible purposes of (i.e., reasons for writing) code cables? (I, items 1,2,3)
- 2) Do you need to answer every code cable? (I, item 5)
- 3) Where should you write the purpose of your code cable? (I, item 4)
- 4) Are code cables used for routine, administrative matters or working-level interaction? (I, "Don't", item 1)

Page 2 Content

- 5) Should a code cable include only straight reporting of a situation or should it also include analysis and guidance? (II, items 1, 2)
- 6) Roughly how many ideas should each paragraph contain? How many sentences should each paragraph contain? (II, item 5)
- 7) What information should be contained in the code cable summary (if a summary is needed)? (II, item 8)

Pages 3, 4, 5 Formatting

- 8) Where can you find the official DPKO-DFS code cable format? (III, item 1)

- 9) Does every code cable need a summary at the top? (III, item 17)
- 10) In what circumstances should a drafter not be identified? (III, item 22)
- 11) In general, what is the maximum length of a code cable? (III, item 24)

Page 5 Language, Tone, Style

- 12) What are some features of style the Checklist recommends? (IV, item 1)
- 13) What is recommended if negative feedback must be conveyed? (IV, item 5)

Page 6 Consultation procedures

- 14) Is it possible to send a code cable without consulting other relevant parties first? (V, item 1)

Page 7 Urgency designations

- 15) In which cases should the urgency designation “Immediate” be used? (VI, item 1)
- 16) In which cases should the designation “Most Immediate” be used? (VI, item 2)

Discussion questions

- 17) Question #5 (above) asks if a code cable should include straight reporting or guidance for the mission. When guidance is offered, should it be general or specific (i.e., should specific instructions be offered or general guidelines?)
- 18) Question #14 (above) asks if the drafter must consult with before sending the code cable. In making time to consult does time and meeting deadlines become an issue?
- 19) Question # 13 asks about the tone of a code cable. If several code cables containing the same important request go unanswered, how can the writer indicate the necessity of receiving a response while maintaining an appropriate tone?

CHECKLIST OF DOs AND DON'Ts ON CODE CABLES

FOR DPKO POLITICAL AFFAIRS OFFICERS

I. Purpose

Do

1. Use a code cable for **formal communications** with peacekeeping operations **that require the attention of senior management, both in DPKO/DFS and in the field.**
2. Use a code cable where the information is to be kept **within the UN system** and needs to be **shared with** colleagues **in peacekeeping operations**, as well as **UN entities with code cable facilities.**
3. Use a code cable, inter alia, for the following **purposes** (or a combination thereof):
 - (a) To provide operational, political or strategic guidance to the mission;
 - (b) To recommend action(s) or positions;
 - (c) To make or respond to a request;
 - (d) To convey or request information;
 - (e) To transmit correspondence and documentation;
 - (f) To approve travel/leave request from a Head of Mission.
4. State the **purpose** of the code cable in the **first paragraph.**
5. Use your judgement when deciding whether an incoming code cable requires a **response**. If it does, decide whether the content warrants a response by code cable or whether it could, instead, be sent by other means, such as e-mail or fax.

Don't

1. Don't use a code cable for routine, non-sensitive administrative matters (e.g., non-sensitive personnel issues for Professional- and General Service-level personnel) that could, instead, be included in a fax or e-mail.
2. Don't use a code cable for routine, working-level interaction with the mission of a non-sensitive nature (e.g., to share information on routine meetings and events or to consult on draft, working-level documents). These should be transmitted by other means, such as e-mail.

II. Content

Do

1. As a general rule, when providing guidance, describe the **strategic picture** and include **forward-looking** recommendations.
2. Provide political updates that include **analysis and commentary**, not only a description of the positions of Member States or a chronicle of events.
3. In providing information on **Security Council consultations** relating to a mandate renewal, **flag significant changes in the positions of Member States**.
4. Take into account **gender issues**, as appropriate, by considering whether:
 - (a) The views, options and recommendations expressed are likely to discriminate negatively against women/girls as compared to men/boys;
 - (b) There are opportunities for empowering women and enhancing their contribution to implementing the mission's mandate;
 - (c) The mission has been asked whether the specific priorities of women/girls have been taken into account or whether they have consulted with gender experts and women's organizations in reaching their policy decisions;
 - (d) A code cable asking for inputs for a report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council requests sex-disaggregated data and an analysis of the gender-related concerns in all sections of the report, as well as a specific section on gender equality.
5. As a general rule, keep to **one idea per paragraph**.
6. Check the **accuracy** of the information (dates, places, locations, facts) included.
7. Adjust **level of specificity/detail** in the code cable depending on the purpose.
8. Outline in the **summary** the **key issue(s)** addressed in the code cable **and any action(s) required** by the mission.
9. **Keep requests for clarification** or additional information **to a minimum**. Whenever possible, make such requests by other means, such as e-mail.
10. When requesting information and action from a mission, be clear as to **what** information/action is required, **to whom** it should be sent at Headquarters, by **when** and **how** (by code cable, e-mail, etc.).

Don't

1. Don't send a code cable with no substantive content or clear purpose/message, so as to merely be "seen" to be responding to a mission, for example, a code cable that restates information received from missions or thanks a mission for information received without adding any substantive content.

III. Formatting

Do

1. Use the **official DPKO-DFS format** for a code cable available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/On my computer/DPKO & DFS Templates/DPKO-DFS Code Cable Template).
2. **Address** outgoing code cables drafted by OO **FROM** the **USG/DPKO**.
3. Where appropriate, **address** the code cable **jointly FROM** the USG/DPKO and USG/DPA (e.g., policy issues that apply to both DPKO- and DPA-led missions).
4. In special circumstances requiring, for instance, critical instructions to the field on major policy and related issues, **address** code cables from the **SG**.
5. As a general rule, **address** outgoing code cables **TO Head(s) of Mission**.
6. Address outgoing code cables **TO the Head of Mission even if this person is outside** the mission area, for example, on travel or annual leave.
7. Address outgoing code cables **TO** an outgoing or departed **Head of Mission until the Officer-in-Charge** has been formally **appointed**. Once the Officer-in-Charge has been formally appointed by the USG/DPKO, code cables should be addressed to this person.
8. Address outgoing code cables TO the Head(s) of Mission at both duty stations in the case of **Headquarters located in two countries** (e.g., UNMEE) and at **both the operational and political headquarters**, where appropriate (e.g., UNOMIG), for example:
 - (a) ENNIFAR, UNMEE, ADDIS ABABA
ENNIFAR, UNMEE, ASMARA
 - (b) ARNAULT, UNOMIG, SUKHUMI
ARNAULT, UNOMIG, TBILISI
9. **INFO copy DFS on all outgoing code cables** drafted by DPKO so that missions know that DFS is aware of the issue. Similarly, all outgoing code cables drafted by DFS should be copied to DPKO. This rule does not apply to strictly confidential code cables, where DFS or DPKO are only to be copied if appropriate.
10. **INFO copy DPA** on code cables dealing with political issues (e.g., meetings with Member States, Security Council matters) and all other issues (e.g., support, military, police) where there are specific political implications or a risk of impacting on the UN bilateral relationship with a Member State.
11. **INFO copy the head** (generally USG or equivalent) of the **relevant UN entity with code cable facilities**, as appropriate (e.g., DPA, OCHA, OHCHR, UNDP, OLA). An updated list of UN entities with access to code cable facilities can be obtained from the Code Cable Room of DM (ext: 3-6312 or 3-6313).
12. In **integrated missions**, **INFO copy** the head of UN agencies, funds and programmes and Secretariat departments **on substantive code cables** relevant to their mandates and programmes.

13. When INFO copying **OHCHR**, always copy both the Geneva and New York office, for example:
ARBOUR, UNATIONS, GENEVA
ARBOUR, UNATIONS, NEW YORK
14. **Delete the “INFO” row when not used.**
15. Under “TO”, “INFO” or “FROM”, use the following **naming convention**: surname, mission acronym, name of the capital city (e.g., CHOI, UNOCI, ABIDJAN). Include relevant diacritical marks (e.g., Ì, Ä, Ø, Ñ) on capitalized surnames (e.g., MØLLER, UNFICYP, NICOSIA), including accents in French. A list of Heads of Mission is regularly updated and available from OUSG/DPKO.
16. Use the English code cable format when drafting a **code cable in French**; the format, including naming conventions, should be in English, but the text of the code cable should be in French.
17. Include a **short “summary” at the start** of the code cable if it is **more than two pages** in length.
18. **Number all paragraphs**, except where the code cable has only one paragraph.
19. End the code cable with a paragraph containing **comments or observations**, where appropriate.
20. Generally **end a code cable** with “Best regards”. However, where the code cable requires action by the mission, you may instead end with, for instance, “Many thanks” or “Many thanks and best regards”.
21. **Identify the main drafter(s)** at the end of the code cable using the following convention: [Drafted by [Surname], [Department]/[Office or Division]/[Service or Section or Unit]] to help with working-level follow-up. For example:
(a) [Drafted by Smith, DPKO/OO/ELAD]; or
(b) [Drafted by Jones, DPKO/OO/AMED and Bergson, DFS/FPD/FPOS].
22. However, in rare instances **where the identification of the drafter is not advised** (such as the exposure of the staff member(s) to undue pressure, difficulty or risk), do **omit** the name of the drafter and, if needed, also the name of the regional division/service/section, for example:
(a) [Drafted by DPKO/OO/AD]; or
(b) [Drafted by DPKO/OO].
23. Add the name of the main co-drafter(s) where another DPKO/DFS office or UN entity has provided significant input into the draft code cable, for example:
(a) [Jones, DPKO/OO/AMED and Bergson, DFS/FPD/FPOS];
(b) [Drafted by Smith, DPKO/OO/ELAD and Selous, OLA].
24. As a general rule, keep the maximum **length of the body** of a code cable to **4 pages**.
25. As a general rule, keep the maximum **length of attachments** to the code cable to **18 pages**.

Don't

1. Don't add the word "OUTGOING" before "CODE CABLE".
2. Don't replace the "INFO" row with the words "COPY" or "CC".

IV. Language, tone and style**Do**

1. Be **short, concise** and **to the point**.
2. Write in the **first person plural** (**We** understand that...) unless you are referring to a personal initiative or event (e.g., a meeting or upcoming mission) that directly involves the USG/DPKO, in which case, use the first person singular ("I briefed the Council on ...").
3. Use a **formal tone** in a code cable, since a code cable is a formal means of communicating with peacekeeping operations.
4. Use a **respectful tone** when providing negative feedback to a mission or suggesting an alternative course of action.
5. Whenever possible, **balance negative feedback** with positive feedback or offers of assistance, for example:
"We think that...is not the most effective way forward. We would suggest instead that the mission...We are ready to liaise with UNDP in New York to facilitate the release of staff to assist you with the assessment."
6. Use **gender-sensitive language** (chairperson, not chairman; spokesperson, not spokesman; to operate/to staff, not to man).
7. When indicating time in a code cable, use the **12 hour clock** and state the time zone where appropriate, for example:
(a) "Please provide inputs by 10 a.m. (New York time)";
(b) "The meeting will be held at 3 p.m. (Monrovia time)".

8. **Refer to previous code cables** by their numbers and dates and a short, one sentence description of their content, for example:
 - (a) “Further to our code cable 1454 of 22 April 2007 regarding the Security Council consultations on UNMIK on 1 April 2007...”;
 - (b) “Re your code cables CNC-325 of 10 January 2008, CNC-339 of 11 January 2008 and CNC-441 of 15 February 2008 relating to the upcoming high-level AU meeting in Addis Ababa to be held in March”.
9. In the text, **refer to DPKO/DFS officials by their surnames only** but refer to officials from other UN entities in the normal way, for example, “Mulet briefed the Council....” but “Mr. Pascoe briefed the Council...”.
10. **Write out lesser known acronyms** in full the first time they are used (e.g., names of DPKO/DFS offices and units, technical peacekeeping terms such as Technical Assessment Mission (TAM)).
11. Use **acronyms for familiar terms** (e.g., mission names, for DPKO and DFS, commonly used job titles (e.g., USG, ASG) and acronyms of UN entities).

Don't

1. As a general rule, don't exceed 2 or 3 sentences per paragraph.
2. Don't restate or quote extensively the content of incoming code cables from the mission.

V. Consultation procedures

Do

1. Always **consult** the relevant DPKO/DFS office(s) and other relevant parts of the UN Secretariat, agencies, funds and programmes on the content of your code cable, as appropriate. Consultation is **mandatory**. Indicate who was consulted on the routing slip by ticking the relevant box(es) and adding the initials of the person(s) consulted. Reflect unresolved differences arising from the consultation process in the routing slip and, if possible, recommend a way forward. When no other office or entity was consulted, this needs to be explained in the routing slip.
2. Share **draft unclassified** code cables with other colleagues **in either hard copy or electronically** (e-mail, MARS).

VI. Urgency designations for outgoing code cables

Do

1. Use “**Immediate**” for code cables that require the attention of, or a response from, the mission within the **same day**.
2. Use “**Most Immediate**” for code cables where **immediate attention is absolutely imperative, irrespective of the hour of day or night**.
3. Use “**Most Immediate**” on outgoing code cables **very sparingly**. A member of the mission’s senior management team, including the Head of Mission, may be woken up in the middle of the night to attend to the cable.
4. When setting deadlines, allow the mission a **reasonable amount of time to respond** to a request.
5. Send information on **Security Council consultations** relating to mandate renewal the **same day** as the meeting, whenever possible.

Don’t

1. Don’t use “URGENT” or “PRIORITY”.

VII. Urgency designations for incoming code cables

Do

1. Reply to, or act on, incoming code cables marked “**Immediate**” **within the same day**. These cables are transmitted before a regular cable and are delivered to the addressee’s office as soon as possible during working hours and up to 10 p.m. New York time, if the designated recipient is still there. Otherwise, the cable is delivered in the morning of the next working day.
2. Reply to, or act on, incoming code cables marked “**Most Immediate**” **upon receipt**. These are transmitted before all other cables and delivered to the addressee or read to him/her over the telephone immediately upon receipt – at any time of the day or night.

VIII. Sensitivity designations

Do

1. To indicate sensitivity of content, mark the code cable either as **“Unclassified”**, **“Only/Confidential”** or **“No Distribution/Strictly Confidential”**.
2. Use the designation **“Unclassified” whenever possible**. Use the designation **“Unclassified”** for “information or material whose unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected not to cause damage to the work of the United Nations” (Secretary-General’s Bulletin on information sensitivity, classification and handling (ST/SGB/2007/6)).
3. Use the designation **“Only/Confidential” sparingly**. The sensitivity marker “Confidential” is applied to “information or material whose unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the work of the United Nations” (Secretary-General’s Bulletin on information sensitivity, classification and handling (ST/SGB/2007/6)).
4. When responding to an **“Only/Confidential”** code cable, always **mark the response** with either **“Only/Confidential”** or **“No Distribution/Strictly Confidential”**, as appropriate.
5. Use the designation **“No Distribution/Strictly Confidential” with extreme caution**, as it carries significant implications with regard to organizational transparency. The sensitivity marker “Strictly Confidential” is applied to “information or material whose unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to or impede the conduct of the work of the United Nations” (Secretary-General’s Bulletin on information sensitivity, classification and handling (ST/SGB/2007/6)).
6. When responding to a **“No Distribution/Strictly Confidential”** code cable, always **mark the response** with **“No Distribution/Strictly Confidential”**.
7. Ensure that the **same sensitivity designation** is used **both on the code cable and the routing slip**, for example, if a code cable is marked “Only/Confidential” then the routing slip should be marked “Confidential”.

Don’t

1. Don’t use the term **“EYES ONLY”** or **“EYES ONLY – NO DISTRIBUTION”** on code cables.
2. Don’t use the terms **“ONLY”** or **“NO DISTRIBUTION”** on their own without the additional terms **“Confidential”** or **“Strictly Confidential”** respectively.

IX. Submission and clearance procedures

Do

1. **Print** the code cable and its attachments **single-sided**.
2. Check to see if your outgoing code cables from the USG/DPKO can be **signed by an authorized staff member at a lower level**, typically the ASG/OO or the Regional Directors. Whether the code cable needs to be signed at a higher or lower level than the USG/DPKO depends on the substance of the code cable (see related “DPKO/Office of Operations Guidance on Signature on Outgoing Communications”, available on the UN Peace Operations Intranet).
3. Place all **attachments** under the code cable on the **right-hand side** of the folder. These will be transmitted together with the signed code cable.
4. Attach **reference** materials (e.g., the mission’s incoming code cable to which the code cable is responding) on the **left-hand side** of the folder. These will not be transmitted with the signed code cable.
5. Submit code cables to **OASG/OO by 3 p.m.** and **OUSG/DPKO by 4 p.m.** to ensure timely review and signature.
6. For **urgent** code cables, mark the routing slip either “**Immediate**” or “**Most Immediate**”. Then **follow up** with both OASG/OO and OUSG/DPKO to reinforce the urgency.

X. Distribution procedures

Do

1. **Send signed** code cables to missions by cryptofax **via the Code Cable Room**. Before 5.30 p.m., signed code cables are placed in the pigeon hole of the relevant OO regional division. The drafter’s Administrative Assistant is then responsible for dispatch to the Code Cable Room. After 5.30 p.m., dispatch is done by the Duty Secretary in OASG/OO.
2. **Share signed, unclassified** code cables with other authorized colleagues in either **hard copy or electronically** (e-mail, MARS).
3. **Share signed, “Only/Confidential” and “No Distribution/Strictly Confidential”** code cables either in hard copy, through cryptofax or by relaying the content over a secure phone line.
4. Note that incoming and outgoing **unclassified code cables** are **distributed widely** within DPKO/DFS, in accordance with a standard distribution list maintained by OUSG/DPKO, and to other Secretariat departments (DM, OLA, DPA, OCHA, DPI, DSS, DSS), the EOSG and Spokesperson’s Office, in accordance with a standard distribution list maintained by the Code Cable Room. This automatic distribution is in addition to the named addressees on the code cable.
5. Note that “**Only/Confidential**” and “**No Distribution/Strictly Confidential**” code cables are **distributed** in accordance with **standard distribution lists** maintained by the Office of the Head

of Mission in peacekeeping operations, the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer in the UN Logistics Base at Brindisi (UNLB) and the OUSG/DPKO for DPKO and DFS.

6. Note that **“Only/Confidential” code cables are distributed to** all of the **following Office of Operations staff**, in addition to other authorized DPKO and DFS staff:
 - (a) The ASG/OO
 - (b) The Director of the relevant regional division
 - (c) The relevant OO officer(s), as determined by the Director of the relevant regional division.
7. Note that at DPKO/DFS Headquarters **“No Distribution/Strictly Confidential” code cables are distributed to** all of the **following DPKO/DFS staff**:
 - (a) USG/DPKO
 - (b) ASG/OO/DPKO
 - (c) Addressee of the code cable
 - (d) USG/DFS, as appropriateFurther photocopies cannot be made. The ASG/OO may show his hard copy of a “No Distribution/Strictly Confidential” code cable to the relevant OO officer for follow-up purposes only.

Don't

1. **Don't share signed “Only/Confidential” or “No Distribution/Strictly Confidential” code cables with other authorized colleagues by e-mail (including encrypted e-mail) or MARS.**

Exercise: Composing a Code Cable

You and a colleague are tasked with writing a response to a code cable concerning a possible upcoming meeting between Mr. Kat and Mr. Byrd, leaders of opposing sides in the conflict in Chaseland.

This is the first time the two have come close to agreeing on a date to come to the negotiating table to consider signing the End-of-Conflict Agreement. In the past, whenever the two leaders seemed ready to settle a meeting date, Mr. Byrd would suddenly claim he had to fly off to an urgent meeting elsewhere and so could not commit to a meeting with Mr. Kat.

The problem, as your team sees it, is that Mr. Byrd fears that meeting with Mr. Kat is a trap set by Mr. Kat's Stealth Front. As you and your team believe such fears are unfounded, your task is to guide your colleagues in the Mission in reassuring Mr. Byrd of Mr. Kat's sincerity in coming to the negotiating table to find a way to end the conflict, and sign the End-of-Conflict Agreement.

Work with a partner to compose the code cable to the Mission team. In your code cable, you may use the beginning sentence and include the phrases listed below, as well as the information further below:

Re your code cable CCN-77 relating to the possible upcoming Kat-Byrd meeting in Chaseland, we would like to stress the importance of this development

It is essential that a meeting date be set that both parties can agree to

United Office for Chaseland (UOCL) in New York is ready to offer its support in arranging the meeting...

It is important to reassure Mr. Byrd that...

The UOCL team feels confident that...

Please advise Mr. Byrd that Mr. Dawg, Very Special Envoy, will be in Chaseland 5—10 January and able to participate in a meeting should it be arranged during that time

Encourage Mr. Byrd to take advantage of the presence of Mr. Dawg and set a meeting date with Mr. Kat during this period.

United Nations



Nations Unies

FACSIMILE

Date:

Reference:

TO: Mr./Ms. First name Surname, Title, Mission Acronym, City ATTN: Mr./Ms. First name Surname INFO: Mr./Ms. First name Surname	FROM: First name Surname, Title, Office or Division, Department
FAX NO: TEL NO:	FAX NO: TEL NO:
SUBJECT:	
<p>Total number of transmitted pages including this page:</p> <p>1. Faxes are used to transmit a variety of non-sensitive correspondence, both within Headquarters and between Headquarters and the field. Faxes can either serve to transmit documents, such as copies of legal or financial reports, memoranda and letters, or they can stand alone as working documents. While there is no limitation on their use for the transmission of documents, faxes should not replace as working documents the specific types of correspondence (i.e., letters, memoranda and notes verbales) outlined in the Correspondence Manual.</p> <p>2. Faxes should be written in Times New Roman, font size 12, in single spacing, with double-spacing between paragraphs. The first line of each paragraph should be indented 0.5 in. If there is more than one paragraph, each paragraph should be numbered. Please use the <i>Numbering</i> style in the styles drop down box located in the top menu.</p> <p>3. For additional instruction and information, see the Office of Operations' "Checklist of Dos and Don'ts on Facsimiles (Faxes)".</p> <p>Best regards, First name Surname</p>	
Drafted by: Through:	Authorized by:

Exercise on Evaluating a Fax



Look at “Fax – Sample 4” and then work with a partner to answer the following questions. (note that for ease of reference, the Checklist section and item number that addresses each question are included)

- 1) When do you use a fax, to communicate with a Member State? (I, item 1, a, c, d)
- 2) Should confidential information be sent by fax? (I, item 1 b)
- 3) When is it appropriate to number the paragraphs on a fax? (II, item 3)
- 4) If the writer is very familiar with the fax content, can s/he send the fax without consulting other DPKO-DFS offices or UN entities? (I, item 6)
- 5) When should the “Attn” and “Info” lines be filled in? (II, item 2)
Where should the name of the drafter appear? (II, item 5)
- 6) In your experience, what type of faxes can be signed by the Integrated Operational Team Leader or Regional Director in OO?
When should a fax be signed instead by the ASG/OO or USG/DPKO? (II, item 7)

United Nations



Nations Unies

FACSIMILE Date: 25 January 2008

Reference:

<p>TO: H.E. Mr. Jean-Maurice Ripert, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations</p> <p>H.E. Mr. Thomas Matussek, Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations</p> <p>H.E. Mr. Vitaly Churkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations</p> <p>H.E. Sir John Sawers, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations</p> <p>H.E. Mr. Zalmay Khalilzad, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations</p> <p>ATTN:</p> <p>INFO:</p>	<p>FROM: Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations</p>
<p>FAX NO:</p> <p>TEL NO:</p>	<p>FAX NO: 1 (212) 963-9222</p> <p>TEL NO: 1 (212) 963-8079</p>
<p>SUBJECT: Georgia - meeting of the Group of Friends</p>	
<p>Total number of transmitted pages including this page: 1</p>	

I am pleased to invite you to a meeting with Mr. Jean Arnault, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, to exchange views on the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict in view of the upcoming Security Council consultations. The meeting will take place on Monday 28 January at 5 p.m. in Room S-3727A.

Best regards,

Jean-Marie Guéhenno

Fax – Sample 4

Drafted by: Akylbai Eleusizov

Authorized by:

Through:

CHECKLIST OF DOs AND DON'Ts ON FACSIMILES (FAXES)

FOR DPKO POLITICAL AFFAIRS OFFICERS

I. Purpose and content

Do

1. Use a fax, inter alia, for the following **purposes**:
 - (a) For urgent communications to Permanent Missions to the UN, regional inter-governmental organizations, regional peacekeeping organizations and entities with unreliable e-mail;
 - (b) For non-confidential, administrative and operational matters addressed to peacekeeping operations (instead of a code cable);
 - (c) For invitations to Permanent Missions to the UN to meetings or other events;
 - (d) To transmit urgent, official communications (e.g., memos, notes, letters or notes verbales) and documentation.
2. Use a fax to send information regarding a **Member State visit** to a peacekeeping operation **below** the **Ambassadorial level**. For visits at the Ambassadorial level and above, send the initial information by code cable and subsequent, working-level, technical information by fax.
3. As a rule of thumb, **respond in the same format**, i.e., if you receive a fax, draft your answer in a fax format.
4. Send follow-up letters to confirm transmitted faxes dealing with matters with **legal and financial implications**.
5. When transmitting a letter from a senior UN official by fax, also send the **original letter by mail**.
6. Always **consult** the relevant DPKO/DFS office(s) and other relevant UN entities on the content of the fax, as appropriate. Consultation is **mandatory**. Indicate who was consulted on the routing slip by ticking the relevant box(es) and adding the initials of the person(s) consulted. Reflect unresolved differences arising from the consultation process in the routing slip and, if possible, recommend a way forward. When no other office or entity was consulted, this needs to be explained in the routing slip.

Don't

1. Don't use a fax as a substitute for a letter or note verbale.
2. Don't send confidential or strictly confidential information by fax.

II. Formatting, language, tone and style and clearance procedures

Do

1. Use the official **DPKO-DFS format** for a fax. This is available in Microsoft Word on your computer (/File/New Document/On my computer/DPKO & DFS Templates/DPKO-DFS Fax Template).
2. When sending a fax to a senior official in a peacekeeping operation, fill in the fields "**Attn**" and "**Info**" to ensure that the fax is routed to the right person(s) within the mission. The field "Attn" typically contains the name of the working-level person who is expected to take action on the content of the fax.
3. When there is **more than one paragraph**, **number** all **paragraphs** ("Numbering" style in the drop down box).
4. Include the name of the **addressee at the end of the fax** after the closing salutation, for example:
"Best regards,
Edmond Mulet"
5. Ensure that the **name and initials** of the **drafter** appear on the fax to facilitate working-level follow-up.
6. Keep it **short, clear and concise**.
7. Use your **judgement** when deciding whether a fax (drafted by a DPKO Political Affairs Officer) should be **signed** by the **Integrated Operational Team Leader, Regional Director in OO**, the **ASG/OO or USG/DPKO**. This will depend on the nature of the content and on the context.

Lesson three



Language tip: Prune the excess words

Exercise on stylistic balance

The FOG Index

Using a diplomatic tone

Focus on letters

Lesson three – Language Tip:

Prune the excess words

“We can and should prune words that are not really necessary. The international reader has to read thousands of words a day. If his reading time can be cut by half an hour, that means half an hour gained.”

-from *A Guide to Writing for the United Nations*, by W.H. Hindle

In the sample sentences below, notice which words have been “pruned” from the sentence b:

1a) It is difficult to explain the reason for the delay in the completion of the investigation.

b) It is difficult to explain why the investigation was delayed.

2a) It is now incumbent upon the Organization to set priorities on its tasks within the parameters of its goal expectations.

2b) The Organization must turn to top-priority tasks to reach its goals

3a) It is imperative that the parties find a way to put an end to the conflict

3b) The parties must find a way to end the conflict.

Exercise on Stylistic Balance



Reduce verbiage and increase clarity by using parallel structure.

Sentences and phrases should have “stylistic balance”. This means that each part of the sentence or item on a list should bear the same (grammatical) structure.

Consider stylistic balance (parallel structure) in the following sentences. Rewrite as necessary:

Example (unbalanced)

He was told to collect data and that he should write a report.

→ Rewrite (parallel):

He was told to collect data and to write a report.

- 1) They were advised to contact all managers and that support staff should be alerted too.
- 2) The team recommends the following:
 - (a) Organization of local committees to foster community involvement
 - (b) Compile a list of names of influential community members
 - (c) Preparing a schedule of meetings to assign projects
- 3) Staff members can obtain the following:
 - (a) Discounts on local hotels and residences
 - (b) They can enter the Museum of Modern Art for free
 - (c) Get reduced entrance fee for cinema

- 4) The proposals were accepted by the Committee members and they subsequently directed Organization staff to lay groundwork for their implementation.
- 5) The job involves preparing speeches, writing reports and you must also take notes at conferences.
- 6) The Director asked her secretary to write the report quickly, accurately and in a detailed manner
- 7) The French, the Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese....

Too many words become obstacles to our understanding



As we have seen in some of the examples above, “wordiness” can often complicate a message and confuse the reader. Have you ever found yourself reading the same message two or three times—because excess words obscured the meaning?

Bureaucratic language can sometimes over-complicate even the simplest instructions.

Some years ago, a journalist named Sue Russ wanted to satirize the tendency of governments to use “inflated language” in their documents. Russ thought that straightforward ideas were often weighed down by unnecessary, multi-syllabic terms. To satirize this, Russ showed that even something as simple as a chocolate chip cookie recipe could be inflated beyond recognition by bureaucratic language.

Now let’s look at journalist Sue Russ’ simple cookie recipe written in “Bureaucratese”...

A Bureaucrat's Guide to Chocolate Chip Cookies



After procurement actions, de-containerize inputs. Perform measurement tasks on a case-by-case basis. In a mixing-type bowl, impact heavily on brown sugar, granulated sugar, and softened butter. Coordinate the interface of eggs and vanilla, avoiding an overrun scenario to the best of your skills.

At this point in time, leverage flour, baking soda and salt into a bowl and aggregate. Equalize with prior mixture and develop intense and continuous liaison among inputs until well-coordinated. Associate key chocolate and nut subsystems and execute stirring operations.

Within this time frame, take action to prepare the heating environment for throughput by manually setting the oven baking unit to a temperature of 190 degrees Celsius (375 degrees Fahrenheit). Drop mixture in an ongoing fashion from a teaspoon implement onto an ungreased cookie sheet at intervals sufficient enough apart to permit total and

permanent separation of throughputs to a maximum extent practicable.

Position cookie sheet in a bake situation and survey for eight to ten minutes or until cookie action terminates. Initiate coordination of outputs within the cookie rack function. Containerize, wrap in red tape and disseminate to authorized staff personnel on a timely and expeditious basis.

Did you know that there is a mathematical formula that can measure the “readability” of a piece of writing? The *Fog Index* can tell you how clear – or how foggy – your writing is.

The Fog Index



To express the magnitude of an earthquake, you can use either the Richter scale or the Mercalli scale. For wind velocity, it's the Beaufort scale. For speeds faster than sound, it's the Mach scale. And there's even a scale to measure the readability of ordinary English prose.

Devised by philologist Robert Gunning, the Fog Index sounds like a way to rate the morning haze. But it's actually a precise mathematical measurement of the effort it takes to read and make sense of—any given passage of text. The Fog Index (or F.I. for short) is calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{F.I.} = \frac{\text{total number of words}}{\text{total number of sentences}} + \frac{\text{number of "hard words"} \times 100}{\text{total number of words}} \times 0.4$$

In Fog Index terms, any words with three or more syllables is “hard” – with three exceptions: proper names (Dostoyevsky, Mississippi), compounds of short words (down-and-out, man-about-town) and words in which the third syllable ends in –ed (arrested, inherited). Now, with a little help from our pocket calculator, let's consider the following statement from the brochure of a well-known computer company:

Today's advancements in educational management, combined with rapid growth in student enrolment in schools, has emphasized the need for data processors to be used in establishing and maintaining a students records data base, required for providing attendance and academic mark-reporting data to satisfy several disciplines.

This single sentence contains 46 words, 14 of them “hard” ones. Therefore, its Fog Index is

$$\text{FI} = \frac{46}{1} + \frac{1400}{46} \times 0.4 = 30.5$$

The higher a passage's F.I., the "worse" it is, and the harder to understand. Any passage with an F.I. higher than 20 is pretty tough sledding.

By comparison, consider the F.I. of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address. Its ten (10) sentences contain a total of 272 words, 18 of them "hard" ones like devotion, dedicate, and consecrate. Therefore, its F.I. works out to be

$$FI = \frac{272}{10} + \frac{1800}{272} \times 0.4 = 13.5$$

A Fog Index of 13.5 is just about right for a speech to be delivered outdoors. (Compare Nelson Mandela's and Barack Obama's inaugural speeches with Fog Indexes of 14.2 and 12.9 respectively.)

The use by all these politicians of rolling three-syllable words boosts the Fog Index to just a bit higher than it should be. To be absolutely sure you are getting your message across, you should keep your Fog Index down to around 10 or 11. But that really isn't hard. The Fog Index of the paragraph you're now reading is a mere **6.8**.

Applying the Fog index

A US journalist, Sue Russ, once satirized the tendency of bureaucratic writing to use inflated words to convey simple ideas. (At the time, she was satirizing US government documents.) Ms. Russ wanted to show that even something as simple as a recipe for chocolate chip cookies could be inflated beyond recognition when put into the hands of bureaucratic writers.

Below we can see the Fog Index applied to a paragraph of the "Bureaucrat's Guide to Chocolate Chip Cookies":

The Fog Index Applied



Let's apply the Fog Index to the excerpt below:

After procurement actions, de-containerize inputs. Perform measurement tasks on a case-by-case basis. In a mixing-type bowl, impact heavily on brown sugar, granulated sugar, softened butter and shortening. Coordinate the interface of eggs and vanilla, avoiding an overrun scenario to the best of your skills.

(excerpt from *A Bureaucrat's Guide to Chocolate Chip Cookies*)

$$\text{FI} = \frac{45}{4} + \frac{12 \times 100}{45} \times 0.4$$

$$11 + 266 = 277 \times .4 = 30.08$$

Rewrite of above excerpt (using shorter words, shorter sentences):

Gather the ingredients, and measure them into a bowl according to the instructions. Mix vigorously brown sugar, granulated sugar, softened butter and shortening. In a separate bowl, mix the eggs and vanilla.

$$\text{FI} = \frac{32}{3} + \frac{7 \times 100}{32} \times 0.4$$

$$10.9 + 21.8 \times 0.4 = 13.9$$

Let's apply the Fog Index to the sentence below:

In view of the fact that the crisis was ongoing the decision was reached by the team and called for the implementation of the new procedure with a view to streamlining operations. F.I. = 20

Now apply the Fog Index to this *rewrite* of the above sentence:

In view of the ongoing crisis, the team decided to implement the new procedure to streamline operations. F.I. = 8.8

Try the Fog Index calculation on your own writing. If you have trouble finding the time to do the calculations by hand, try these web sites* that do the math for you - and also provide some editing advice:

<http://www.nlpmax.com/Tests/FogIndex.aspx>

<http://www.panix.com/~dhf/fog.html>

http://www.online-utility.org/english/readability_test_and_improve.jsp

*(As we know, web sites change. You can also find other “calculator” web sites search using the keywords “Fog Index”.)

Letters from the S-G's office

Non-honourific Secretary-General letter

Look at the following two sample letters below from the Secretary-General's office. The letter below is 'non-honourific'. The letter that follows is 'honourific'. What elements of the format are different in each letter?

January 2008

Dear Mr. Swing,

As you conclude your assignment as my Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I would like to express my sincerest appreciation for more than six years of outstanding service to the United Nations which began with your appointment as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara in 2001.

The United Nations and the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) owe you a debt of gratitude for your tireless efforts and steady leadership of the largest and most complex United Nations peacekeeping operation. With the support of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), the Congolese people were able to participate in the first democratic national elections in over forty years, and continue to make progress in the difficult transition to peace and stability. The efforts of MONUC, under your leadership, have helped to unite a deeply wounded country and begin the long-term task of building democratic institutions.

The United Nations and the people it serves have been fortunate to benefit from your intimate knowledge of the DRC and your diplomatic skill. Your dedication to peace in the DRC will long be remembered by its people and by those who served with you. Allow me to extend to you my very best wishes for every success in your next endeavours.

Yours sincerely,

Name

Title

Mr. William J. Swing
Special Representative of the Secretary-General
for the Democratic Republic of Congo
Kinshasa

9 January 2007

Excellency,

Para. 1

I would like to express my appreciation for your Government's consistent support to the peace process in Terrana. The efforts of the Regional Peace Initiative on Terrana and the Facilitation of the Terrana Peace Process have been instrumental in the significant progress achieved towards peace and stability in the country.

Para. 2

I would also like to pay tribute to your personal engagement, which led to the successful conclusion of negotiations between the Government of Terrana and rebel faction Goribaba-RG, and the signing of the All Inclusive Agreement in Peacetown on 23 July 2006.

Para. 3

However, despite all efforts, no progress has yet been achieved in the implementation of the Agreement and I am concerned by the impasse, which has resulted in the suspension of the Agreement's Verification Mission since 8 December last year.

Para. 4

I trust you share my view about the urgent need to bring this final phase of the peace process to an expeditious and successful conclusion. This will be essential, in order to minimize the risk of a return to instability in Terrana and to allow progress in the national reconciliation and reconstruction efforts that are vital for the consolidation of peace in the country.

Para. 5

While the primary responsibility for addressing the current impasse lies with the Terranian parties, I nevertheless believe that a timely intervention of the Agreement's guarantors is required to help both parties overcome their differences, build confidence, and agree on an overall political framework that would pave the way for the implementation of the Agreement.

His Excellency
Mr. Mark Polo
President of Republic of Sumora
Capitolia

I count on your leadership, and that of Presidents Kariuki and Johnson, to whom I am addressing similar letters, to move this process forward. For my part, I wish to assure you of the commitment of the United Nations to support your efforts. I have asked my Executive Representative for Terrana, Ms. Murada, to work closely with the Regional Peace Initiative on Terrana and the Facilitation, in close collaboration with the Regional Political Cooperation Organization, on any regional initiative to end the current impasse in the Terrana peace process.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

BAN Ki-Moon

Exercise on reviewing a letter from the Secretary-General (Terrana)



A letter from the Secretary-General's office to a Head of State

Look at the example of a letter from the Secretary-General called “Letter - Terrana”. With the members of the group, discuss the following questions:

A. Principle of writing, language, tone and style

Salutations

1) Who is the recipient of the letter? What is the opening and closing salutation? How do the opening and closing salutations differ from a letter from the Secretary-General to a senior United Nations official such as a Head of Mission?

First paragraph

2) What is the purpose of the letter? Underline the single sentence that is used to express the purpose of the letter.

Second paragraph

3) How does the letter become more specific in the second paragraph, i.e., describing the appreciated act? Underline the phrase that describes the appreciated act.

Third paragraph

4) How does the letter “get down to business” and show what still needs to be achieved? What “transition word” is used to show that content of the letter is moving in another direction?

Fourth paragraph

5) What tactful phrase is used to point out what needs to be done in the situation (without “telling” the recipient what to do, i.e., giving an order?)

Fifth paragraph

6) What qualifying clause (i.e., qualification) introduces the main sentence? How does the paragraph end on a positive note?

Sixth (final) paragraph

7) What phrase is used to express confidence in the recipient? What phrase offers help/commitment? How does the final paragraph end on a positive note?

B. Formatting and UN editorial conventions

8) When is it appropriate to divide words at the end of a line? For instance, this is done in paragraph 6 with the name of the organization “Regional Political Cooperation Organization.”

9) Can abbreviations be used in letters from the Secretary-General?

10) When should pages be numbered?

11) What information is included in the address of the recipient?

12) How does this differ from the information included in the address of a recipient who is not a Head of State?

Blunt vs. Diplomatic Language

Language has the capacity to express criticism and give advice in a range of ways. Formal letters are careful to express criticism and advice diplomatically.

Look at the list of “Some Diplomatic Phrases”. Work with a partner and choose the phrase that could transform the blunt phrase on the left to a diplomatic one:

Blunt style	Diplomatic style
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The situation in Terrana is obviously horrible. You've got to do something to stop it.	I trust you share my concern about the current situation in Terrana and the urgent need to find a way forward.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ok, you've tried a lot of things to end the crisis, but nothing has worked and nothing is happening now.	?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You're the leader. You've got to think of something.	?

Some diplomatic phrases **excerpted from the Checklists** **(It's not what you say but how you say it...)**

Give recommendation(s) in a direct but diplomatic manner, for example:

“You may wish to consider the following options...” **(very formal—perhaps in an Secretary-General letter)**

“I would recommend...because...” **(general-formal)**

Whenever possible, balance negative feedback with positive feedback or offers of assistance, for example:

“We think that...is not the most effective way forward. We would suggest instead that the mission...We are ready to liaise with UNDP in New York to facilitate the release of staff to assist you with the assessment.”

Use gender-sensitive language

chairperson, not chairman; spokesperson, not spokesman; to operate/to staff, not to man.

Express criticism in a direct but diplomatic manner, for example:

“I trust that you share my view about the urgent need to...”. **(very formal—Secretary-General letter)**

“ Perhaps your office/team/ shares our concern about...”; **(general-formal)**

Balance requests for action with offers of UN assistance or reassurance of support, as appropriate, for example:

“I count on your leadership to... I would like to assure you of the commitment to support your efforts. I have asked my Special Representative to work closely with...”. **(this is very formal— could go in an Secretary-General letter)**

Instead of writing:

We have reviewed your data and found your conclusion to be erroneous **(this is blunt and closes down the discussion)**

Write:

We have reviewed your data but have come to a different conclusion. See our analysis/calculation, etc. below: **(this is tactful and furthers discussion)**

Using a Diplomatic Tone

The tone of S-G letters shows a high level of formality and diplomacy. However, it's important to keep in mind that a tactful tone can be important in *all* types of communications to colleagues at *all* levels, especially when providing feedback.

A blunt, critical tone that offends the recipient is likely to impede the flow of communication. It is best to give feedback that is professional in tone and allows the facts to speak for themselves. Consider the difference between example sentences, 'a' and 'b' below:

- a) We find the revisions you made to the agreement unacceptable.
- b) We find the revisions to the agreement inconsistent with our prior understanding.

Which of the above do you prefer? Which conveys more information?

With a partner, rewrite the sentences below to make the tone more diplomatic and professional:

- 1) We have checked your calculations and, as we suspected, you are wrong.
- 2) When you finally get us the information we requested, we may actually be able to issue the report.
- 3) We met with your office in good faith, but you never sent us the material we need for the report and are still waiting for that.
- 4) The information in your report falls far short of the content agreed upon in our meeting last fall.
- 5) Your group has not shown itself worthy of the trust our department put in you.

Questions on Checklist for Letters from the Secretary-General and Other Senior Officials

Work with a partner and scan the Checklist for the following answers to the questions below (note that for ease of reference, the Checklist section and item number that addresses each question are included):

I Purposes of Letters from the Secretary-General

- 1) What are some purposes of Secretary-General letters? (I, items 1, 2)
- 2) What are some purposes of Secretary-General letters to inter-governmental and regional organizations? (I, item 3)

II Purposes of letters from USG and ASG

- 3) What are some purposes of letters from the USG and ASG? (II, item 1)

III Content

- 4) What is a way that content of a Secretary-General letter differs from content of a USG or ASG letter? (III, items 2, 3)

IV Formatting of Secretary-General letters

- 5) Is the same format used for all Secretary-General letters regardless of recipient? (IV, items 1, 2,)
- 6) How do the opening and closing salutations differ for a Secretary-General letter to a Head of State or an Ambassador, and a Secretary-General letter to the head of an international organization or NGO? (VI, item 2)
- 7) Can the names of peacekeeping missions be abbreviated in Secretary-General letters? (VII, item 5)
- 8) Which words can never be divided at the end of a line? (VII, item 1)
- 9) Are there any other points from the Checklist you/your partner would like to highlight?

CHECKLIST OF DOs AND DON'Ts ON LETTERS FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND OTHER SENIOR UNITED NATIONS OFFICIALS

FOR DPKO POLITICAL AFFAIRS OFFICERS

I. Purposes of letters from the Secretary-General

Do

1. Use letters from the SG to the **President of the Security Council**, inter alia, for the following **purposes**:
 - (a) To **inform** Security Council members on **significant issues and senior mission appointments** including, for example:
 - (i) Latest and significant developments on a conflict situation that require the Security Council's attention outside of the SG's standard reporting cycle;
 - (ii) An intention to appoint a Head of Mission or Force Commander to a peacekeeping operation or a Special/Personal Envoy. The Head of Mission can be a Special Representative, Executive Representative, Chief of Staff, Force Commander or Chief Military Observer.
 - (b) To request **guidance** from, **action** by, or **agreement** of the Security Council on an issue(s) relating to a peacekeeping operation **outside of the SG's standard reporting cycle**, for example:
 - (i) When the Secretariat wishes to propose a change in the strength, composition or deployment on the ground of the military and/or police components of a mission, after the submission of an SG report and prior to the drafting of the next one;
 - (ii) When authorization is sought for a significant departure from an existing Security Council mandate;
 - (iii) When the Security Council is requested to extend the mandate of the mission for a stated period of time (i.e., a "technical roll-over"). This typically occurs when additional time is required by Security Council members to seek agreement on a new mandate for a Mission. Other reasons may include, for instance, when ongoing talks, whose outcome may have crucial implications for a mission's future mandate, are expected to be concluded shortly, but only after its current mandate expires.
 - (c) To transmit a **list of Member States contributing troops and/or police** both at the start of a mission and after significant changes occur to this list during the life cycle of a mission.
 - (d) To submit a **report specifically requested** by the Security Council.

2. Use letters from the SG to **Heads of State, Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) or Ministers for Foreign Affairs** for the following purposes:
 - (a) When a **major event** occurs in the mission area, a letter from the SG should be immediately prepared to the Government concerned. Major events that require an immediate official reaction from the SG include:
 - (i) Inauguration of a new Head of State or Government (only for Member States hosting DPKO-led missions);
 - (ii) Death of Head of State or Government (only for Member States hosting DPKO-led missions);
 - (iii) Attacks on or deaths of multiple peacekeeping personnel due to hostile action. (For civilian personnel only, coordinate closely with the Department of Safety and Security (DSS) and with Permanent Missions to the UN, as appropriate.) (Note that correspondence relating to deaths of individual peacekeeping personnel is governed by the SOP on Notification of Casualties (NOTICAS).)
 - (b) Issues and decisions that require the **highest level of authority** in the UN and, where applicable, where intervention is specifically required from the Head of State or Government. These may include:
 - (i) Critical events relating to a country/region hosting a peacekeeping operation, for example:
 - A critical political juncture in a peace negotiation;
 - A deterioration in the security or humanitarian situation;
 - Significant impediments to the implementation of the mission's mandate.
 - (ii) Invitations to high-level meetings and events involving the SG.
 - (c) To thank a Head of State or Government **following an SG visit** to the country (only for Member States hosting a DPKO-led mission).
3. Use letters from the SG to **inter-governmental and regional organizations** (e.g., African Union, ECOWAS) as well as **non-State actors** (e.g., international NGOs, international financial institutions, armed groups), for example, to address issues of strategic-level cooperation and coordination between a non-State actor and the UN peacekeeping operation.
4. Use letters from the SG to **heads of peacekeeping operations**, for example, to thank a departing Head of Mission or to respond to issues raised by a Head of Mission and directed at the Secretary-General.

II. Purposes of letters from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations

Do

1. Use letters from the USG/DPKO or ASG/OO, inter alia, for the following **purposes**:
 - (a) To address operational, political and strategic issues affecting peacekeeping operations and within the purview of DPKO/DFS.
 - (b) To transmit correspondence and documentation, for example, to transmit a report prepared by a peacekeeping operation to a sanctions committee.
 - (c) To thank an individual or entity.
2. As a general rule, ensure that all letters addressed to the USG/DPKO receive an answer. However, in so doing, use your **discretion** when deciding whether a letter addressed to the USG/DPKO **warrants a written response**. Alternative means of responding include a meeting, telephone conversation, e-mail correspondence, etc.

III. Content

Do

1. Be clear about the **purpose and key messages** in the letter before drafting. This can be discussed beforehand with relevant colleagues and managers.
2. Ensure that SG letters are more **strategic** in nature, with minimal detail, and that they contain a clear message or purpose.
3. Include **more detail and more technical** content in letters from the USG/DPKO or ASG/OO, as appropriate.
4. In SG letters to Heads of State, Heads of Government or Ministers for Foreign Affairs, include:
 - (a) Expressions of **support or congratulations**;
 - (b) Expressions of **concern or requests for action**;
 - (c) Provide **information**; or
 - (d) A combination of the above, as appropriate.
5. In all SG letters to the President of the Security Council, before the closing salutation, add the following **formulaic sentence**:

"I should be grateful if you could bring the matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council."

6. In SG letters to the President of the Security Council regarding **senior UN appointments**:
 - (a) Include a formulaic reference to the Security Council resolution that established the mission or requested such an appointment;
 - (b) Provide the nationality of the proposed and departing UN official;
 - (c) Express appreciation - in a single line - for the work of the departing UN official;
 - (d) Include a formulaic sentence requesting that the matter be brought to the attention of the Security Council (see point 5 above).Attach the CV of the proposed official, but do not make reference in the letter to the CV or its content.
7. Take into account **gender issues**, as appropriate, by considering whether:
 - (a) The views, options and recommendations expressed are likely to discriminate negatively against women/girls as compared to men/boys;
 - (b) There are opportunities for empowering women and enhancing their contribution to implementing the mission's mandate;
 - (c) Requests for action reflect the specific priorities of women/girls in the host country;
 - (d) Expressions of support explain what the UN can do to support the specific priorities of women/girls in the host country.
8. Request the **peacekeeping operation to answer** a letter addressed to the SG or USG/DPKO, when appropriate.
9. Request the **peacekeeping operation to produce a draft or inputs** for a letter from the SG or USG/DPKO, when appropriate.
10. Always **consult** with relevant DPKO and DFS offices, other UN entities (e.g., DPA, UNDP, OCHA, OHCHR, OLA) and the relevant **peacekeeping operation(s)** on the content of the letter, as appropriate. Consultation is **mandatory**. Indicate who was consulted on the routing slip by ticking the relevant box(es) and adding the initials of the person(s) consulted. Reflect unresolved differences arising from the consultation process in the routing slip and, if possible, recommend a way forward. When no other office or entity was consulted, this needs to be explained in the routing slip.

IV. Formatting of letters from the Secretary-General

Do

1. Use the **official format** for a **letter from the SG to the President of the Security Council**. This is available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New/Templates/On my computer/DPKO & DFS Templates/DPKO-DFS SG Letter President SC Template).
2. Use the **official format** for a **letter from the SG to government officials** (honorific). This is available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New/Templates/On my computer/DPKO & DFS Templates/DPKO-DFS SG Letter Hon Template).
3. In the signature block, write the **surname of the Secretary-General in block capitals**, followed by his first name, as follows: "BAN Ki-moon".
4. Draft SG letters to **Heads of State, Heads of Government or Ministers for Foreign Affairs** either in **English, French or Spanish**. The language of correspondence of each Member State is given in the book of *Permanent Missions to the United Nations* ("Blue Book") and available at: <http://missions.un.int/protocol/>.
5. Draft SG letters to the **President of the Security Council** either in **English or French**, as appropriate.
6. Print SG letters on the **corresponding language letterhead** (available in English, French or Spanish).
7. Use **white**, water-stamped, **Secretary-General letterhead** for all letters **except letters to Heads of State**, which should be printed **on cream-coloured**, embossed, water-stamped, **Secretary-General letterhead**. Secretary-General letterhead is available from the Correspondence and Records Management Unit (CARMU), OUSG/DPKO. (CARMU generic e-mail: dpko-ousg@un.org)
8. Print the first page only on white Secretary-General letterhead and print subsequent pages on white **Secretary-General "continuation page" paper** without a letterhead, not regular, white printing/photocopying paper.
9. Print the first page only on cream-coloured Secretary-General letterhead and print subsequent pages on cream-coloured Secretary-General **"continuation page" paper** without a letterhead.
10. Put **page numbers** on SG letters that are three or more pages in length. Numbering should start at 2, be typed without dashes (2 not -2-) and be centred at the top of the page.
11. Use the correct **spacing** when drafting SG letters, for example, use six single spaces between the closing salutation and signature block.

V. Formatting of letters from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations

Do

1. Use the **official DPKO-DFS formats** in Microsoft Word on your computer for letters from the USG/DPKO and ASG/OO/DPKO: one template is for honorific letters (e.g., to a Permanent Representative) and one is for non-honorific letters (e.g., to the Head of an NGO) (File/New Document/On my computer/DPKO & DFS Templates/DPKO-DFS Letter Hon Template or DPKO-DFS Letter NonHon Template).
2. Draft USG/DPKO and ASG/OO letters to **Permanent Missions** to the UN either in **English, French or Spanish**, as appropriate. The language of correspondence of each Member State is stated in the book of *Permanent Missions to the United Nations* ("Blue Book") and available at: <http://missions.un.int/protocol/>. Draft **all other** letters from the USG/DPKO and ASG/OO either in **English or French**, the working languages of the Secretariat.
3. Print the first page only of USG/DPKO and ASG/OO letters on **white**, water-stamped, **United Nations letterhead** (with the address) **and** print subsequent pages on white, **"continuation page" paper** (with a letterhead but no address), not regular printing/photocopying paper. The same letterhead is used for letters in English or French.

Don't

1. Don't, as a general rule, address a letter from the USG/DPKO or ASG/OO to a Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs. Instead, such letters should be addressed from the SG and submitted for his signature.
2. Don't use honorific titles for UN civilian officials (e.g., "Ambassador" or "Dr."). The title "Dr." should only be used for a UN official who is a medical doctor.
3. Don't amend the formatting of the signature block; maintain the signature block centred under the complimentary closing, and don't amend the spacing between the complimentary closing and the signature block.
4. Don't repeat the address block on the second page, when the letter exceeds one page in length.
5. Don't copy ("cc:") internal DPKO/DFS officials. The Administrative Assistant of the person signing the letter will, instead, ensure that the relevant internal DPKO and DFS officials receive a photocopy of the signed letter.

VI. Formatting of all letters

Do

1. Use correct and up-to-date **names and titles** of officials. These can be found by consulting the following lists provided by the Protocol and Liaison Services (<http://missions.un.int/protocol/>):
 - (a) List of Permanent Representatives to the UN;
 - (b) List of Heads of State, Heads of Government and Ministers for Foreign Affairs;
 - (c) List of Senior Officials at the UN.
2. Use the appropriate **opening and closing salutations**, depending on whether the letter is addressed to a person with ambassadorial rank (honorific) or to others (non-honorific), for example:
 - (a) For a Permanent Representative, use the honorific “Excellency,”...”Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.”
 - (b) For the head of an international organization or NGO, use the non-honorific:
“Dear Mr./Ms. [Surname]”...”Yours sincerely,”.
3. For **government officials**, include the recipient’s name, title and **city** in the address.
4. For **others**, include the recipient’s name, title, **full street address and country** in the address.

VII. Language, tone and style

Do

1. Be **brief, concise** and **clear**.
2. Consider beginning a letter from the USG/DPKO **on behalf of the SG** with:
“On behalf of the Secretary-General, I have the honour to...”.
3. Express **criticism in a direct but diplomatic** manner, for example:
 - (a) “I am sure that you share my concern...”;
 - (b) “I trust that your leadership will prevail in this situation.”;
 - (c) “I trust that you share my view about the urgent need to...”.
4. **Balance requests for action** from a Head of State with offers of UN assistance or reassurance of support, as appropriate, for example:
“I count on your leadership to...For my part, I wish to assure you of the commitment of the United Nations to support your efforts. I have asked my Special Representative to work closely with...”.

5. Express criticism and requests for action using **positive statements**, for example:
“I trust that you will uphold the rights of the internally displaced persons in the camps to a safe and secure environment.”
6. Use **gender-sensitive language** (chairperson, not chairman; spokesperson, not spokesman; to operate/to staff, not to man).
7. Refer to **dates** using day/month/year convention, for example, 4 January 2007. However, in the body of the text, the year can be omitted if it falls within the same calendar year as the date of the letter.
8. In USG/DPKO and ASG/OO letters, **write out** peacekeeping **acronyms** in full the first time they are used (e.g., names of DPKO/DFS offices and units, technical peacekeeping terms such as Technical Assessment Mission (TAM)).

Don't

1. Don't ever divide the words “Secretary-General” and “United Nations” at the end of a line. Instead always write them on the same line, for example:
Secretary-General
United Nations
2. Don't, as a general rule, divide proper names, names of organizations and countries, numbers, titles or dates at the end of a line. Instead, write them on the same line, for example:
Mr. Smith
the Democratic Republic of the Congo
22 August 2007
3. Don't use the possessive in the form of an “s” and apostrophe (e.g., s') with the words United Nations (e.g., write “United Nations goal” or “goal of the United Nations”, not “United Nations' goal”).
4. Don't ever, in SG letters, abbreviate the words “Secretary-General” and “United Nations”.
5. Don't use, in SG letters, abbreviations nor peacekeeping acronyms (e.g., DPKO, TAM). However, when organizations have long names, acronyms can be used after first usage. In these cases, the first usage should be followed by the acronym in parentheses.

VIII. Submission and clearance procedures for letters from the Secretary-General

Do

1. For all letters from the SG to government officials, attach a **transmittal letter from the SG's Chef de Cabinet** to the Permanent Representative(s) concerned.
2. For all transmittal letters, use the **same date and the same language** (English, French or Spanish) as in the SG letter.
3. For all SG letters, include an internal **transmittal note from the USG/DPKO** to the SG's Chef de Cabinet. The transmittal note should include a short background rationale to explain the need for a letter from the SG.
4. **Respond immediately to letters** to the SG from a Head of State, Heads of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs **that the EOSG considers to be a priority**.
5. For **urgent** letters from the SG, make sure the internal transmittal note for the SG's Chef de Cabinet is marked "**Priority**" and the routing slip marked "**Most Immediate**". Then **follow up** with both OASG/OO and OUSG/DPKO to reinforce the urgency.
6. Submit all draft letters from the SG **to OASG/OO on regular, white printing/photocopying paper**. Once cleared by OASG/OO, the latter will print the letter onto the **relevant Secretary-General's letterhead**.
7. **Submit** the draft letter from the SG, as well as any draft transmittal letter from the Chef de Cabinet to a Permanent Representative, to the EOSG either **on a floppy disk or CD-ROM** in case they require minor changes (e.g., to the date).
8. Provide all relevant **supporting documents** with the draft letter from the SG. This typically includes the incoming letter addressed to the SG.
9. For draft letters from the SG to the President of the Security Council submitted in French, **provide the original draft in English when available**. This will facilitate prompt transmission to Security Council members, the majority of whom work in English. French texts require translation into English before they are circulated to Council members.
10. Submit **urgent letters from the SG to the EOSG by 6.30 p.m. at the latest** on the date that they are to be signed by the SG. This means that the letter needs to be submitted to OASG/OO by 3 p.m. and OUSG/DPKO by 4 p.m.
11. Give DPA's Security Council Secretariat Branch (SCSB) **advance warning** that an **urgent letter from the SG to the President of the Security Council** is with the EOSG for signature. This will assist the SCSB which may have to locate the President of the Security Council outside of regular office hours in order to obtain

- his/her approval of the urgent letter, prior to its release to Security Council members.
12. Note that drafters are to **remain on standby**, together with their Administrative Assistant, until the SG has signed the letter. Required editing changes are to be done by the drafter/Administrative Assistant. The EOSG will make editorial changes only in extremely urgent cases.
 13. Submit **letters from the USG/DPKO to OASG/OO by 3 p.m. and OUSG/DPKO by 4 p.m.** to ensure timely review and signature.
 14. For **urgent** letters from the USG/DPKO or ASG/OO, mark the routing slip either **“Immediate” or “Most Immediate”**. Then **follow up** with both OASG/OO and OUSG/DPKO to reinforce the urgency.

IX. Dispatch procedures

Do

1. Note that once the EOSG, OUSG/DPKO or OASG/OO contacts the drafter to notify him/her that the **letter** has been signed, the **drafter** should **request** his/her Administrative Assistant to **pick up** the letter **and** arrange for its **dispatch** in the appropriate envelope.
2. Use a white, water-stamped Secretary-General envelope for all SG letters except letters to Heads of State or Government which should be sent in an A4, cream-coloured Secretary-General envelope. Both white and cream-coloured Secretary-General envelopes are available in English, French or Spanish.
3. Use regular UN envelopes for all other letters, including transmittal letters from the Chef de Cabinet that accompany SG letters.
4. Before delivering a signed SG letter to the President of the Security Council to DPA's Security Council Secretariat Branch (SCSB) for onward transmission to the President, ascertain with the ASG/OO, USG/DPKO or EOSG if the letter should be circulated as an official document of the Security Council and advise SCSB accordingly.

Lesson four



Language tip: prefer active sentences over passive ones

Exercise on changing sentences from passive to active

Review of editing techniques

Focus on note verbales

Lesson four – Language Tip

Where possible, prefer active sentences over passive ones

Positive rule three

A third positive rule would be to use verbs in the active rather than the passive voice whenever possible. United Nations writers, like other official writers, seem to prefer the passive voice to the active, no doubt because of the everlasting bureaucratic fear that a direct statement may lead to trouble. This bureaucratic caution carries over into areas where it is not needed. The United Nations Journal has provided many thousands of instances.

Day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, it says that "a statement was made by the representative of Blank" when it could have said that "the representative of Blank made a statement". Occasionally, it confounds the issue by combining active and passive in the same sentence, as in "The Chairman made a statement regarding the statement made at the previous meeting by Mr. X". Such "statements" do not mean much in either passive or active form, but at least the latter is shorter, easier to read, and suggests that somebody did something rather than that something was done to something by somebody. To return to a previous point, the dynamic is generally preferable to the static.

-from *A Guide to Writing for the United Nations*, by W.H. Hindle

Passive constructions vs. Active constructions



“If you can say a thing directly, then say it directly.”

Consider when and whether you need to use a passive construction.

Organizational documents often use passive constructions. **Sometimes there are good reasons for this. It may be that an action is more important than the person or authority that implements it, as in the sentence below:**

“Smoking is prohibited in this area”

instead of

“The law prohibits smoking in this area”

It may be obvious that it is the law that prohibits smoking, so the writer doesn’t need to write it because the question of who has prohibited smoking is obvious (the law, the local rules or other authority).

Another reason a writer may use the passive is to pay heed to personal or political sensitivities, as in the sentence below:

“It was stated that...”

However, sometimes writers use passive constructions merely out of habit – perhaps because they have so often read documents that contain an excess of passive constructions. This can create the tendency to choose the passive form automatically—even when an active sentence might be clearer.

Consider the *italics portion* of the sentences below:

The decision was reached by the team and called for the implementation of the new procedure with a view to streamlining operations.

Consider transforming the above sentence to the active below:

The team decided to implement the new procedure...

Exercise: change the passive sentences below to active ones



Example:

The topic was discussed by the committee, which was requested by the staff to report the results of the discussion.

Rewrite: The staff requested that the Committee report the results of its discussion of the topic.

- 1) Participation in the conflict resolution session was agreed to by all parties.
- 2) A meeting was called by the Chief of the section and all staff were requested by the Chief to attend.
- 3) A decision to change the procedure was made by the Committee and its implementation was handled by the Administration.
- 4) It was stressed by the Government of Arcadia that the efforts by the Government of Terrana to meet the high expectations of its citizens should be supported by the international community.
- 5) The extension of the mandate as well as the recommendations by the Secretary-General for a gradual drawdown was supported by Council members.
- 6) Staff movements were designated by the Capital Master Plan and many of them were carried out by various departments beginning in 2009.

Review

Applying editing techniques



Keeping in mind the editing tips we have reviewed, revise the sentences below. You may consult the “Quick Tips for Editing” to remind yourself of the different transformations that are possible:

Tell which type of transformation you are making: are you guided by a concern for passive-active, noun-to-verb, parallel structure, heavy phrase to single (or fewer) word(s), etc.

- 1) Managers are directed to arrive at the conference room at 9 a.m. and the support staff should get there at 10 a.m.
- 2) An agreement was made by all committee members to change the set of procedures prior to the next annual meeting.
- 3) In view of the fact that the crisis was ongoing, the decision was reached by the team and called for the implementation of the new procedure with a view to streamlining operations.
- 4) The new policy should help bring about a change that is gradual and one that facilitates better communication among staff members.
- 5) Through the implementation of the new procedure, the office can streamline operations and accelerate the flow of work.

Note Verbale Guidelines

Department/Office or Division/Year/Number

The Secretariat of the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent Mission of _____ to the United Nations and has the honour to _____.

A note verbale is always used to reply to an incoming note verbale and is typically used for the exchange of information between the United Nations and Governments or Permanent Missions to the United Nations.

Notes verbales are written in Times New Roman, font size 12, except for the reference line, which is written in font size 10. The line spacing should be single, spacing between paragraphs should be double, and the first line of each paragraph should be indented 0.5 in. The left margin should be aligned with the beginning of the note verbale number. Print the first page only of a note verbale on **white**, water-stamped, **United Nations letterhead** (with the address) and print subsequent pages on white, “continuation page” paper (with a letterhead but no address), not regular printing/photocopying paper. The same letterhead is used for notes verbales in English, French or Spanish.

All notes verbales must have a reference number, which appears in the upper left corner of the letterhead paper, one space to the right of the word **Reference**. Ensure that a reference number has been assigned by the Correspondence and Records Management Unit (CARMU), OUSG/DPKO (dpko-ousg@un.org) prior to submitting the draft note verbale for approval/initialling by a DPKO official. This is the main drafter’s responsibility. Notes verbales initialled by DFS officials are assigned a reference number by OUSG/DFS. Under no circumstance is a note verbale to be sent out without a reference number.

Ensure that the note verbale is initialled (not signed) above the date by the authorized official (at the USG, ASG, or D-2 level).

Close the note verbale with the following paragraph:

The Secretariat of the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Mission of _____ to the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

For additional instructions and information, refer to the Office of Operations’ “Checklist of Dos and Don’ts for Notes Verbales”.

Initials of writer

Date

Exercise on Evaluating a Note Verbale



- 1) Is there a conventional opening and closing salutation (e.g., “Dear Mr. _____”?)
- 2) What is the purpose(s) of the communication expressed? Underline the purpose(s).
- 3) From whom and to whom is this note verbale written?
- 4) Is a note verbale ever written in the first person (i.e., “I am writing to...”)?
In whose name is a note verbale written?
- 5) Underline some words that help express the formal tone of the note verbale.
- 6) Is a note verbale signed? Who can approve a note verbale?
- 7) In which languages can a note verbale be drafted?
- 8) What type of letterhead is used for a note verbale?

Note Verbale – Sample 1

DPKO/OUSG/2007/223

The Secretariat of the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations and has the honour to refer to the Maritime Task Force (MTF) of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

The Secretariat wishes to express its gratitude to Germany for extending its contribution to UNIFIL until 31 August 2008 and for providing its valuable leadership of the MTF until 29 February 2008. This significant commitment, which shows the importance Germany attaches to a successful implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), is much welcomed and appreciated.

As there is an immediate need to further support the MTF, due to an unexpected shortfall of contributions, the Secretariat would be grateful if Germany would consider expanding its current contribution with additional maritime assets. A supplementary commitment to the MTF with patrol boats and/or a frigate for the entire period of the current operational phase, until 29 February 2008, would be highly appreciated.

The Secretariat of the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

Initials of writer

18 September 2007

Maintain your use of the third person throughout the note verbale



Be careful to continue use of the third person throughout your note verbale. It is not always easy, as we see in the case below. Are all the sentences in the first person? Work with a partner to make the appropriate adjustments in the segments **in bold**:

DFS/Year/

The Secretariat of the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent Mission of Terrana to the United Nations and has the honour to refer to the recent meeting on provisions for medical evacuation services to its peacekeepers in the United Nations Mission in Arcadia.

The Department of Field Support is concerned that **we receive a** response by the 30 July deadline so **we can** start evacuating patients to the hospitals in Tulka as intended.

Please be informed that to facilitate approval by the Mission **we must** receive all responses by the deadline. If there are other outstanding issues that are militating against Mission approval, kindly **let us know so our office** may undertake appropriate actions. If, however, there are no such actions required, **we wish** to request that the Mission expedite the approval of the documents.

The Secretariat of the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Mission of Terrana to the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

initials of writer

6 July 2009

Questions on Note Verbale Checklist

Work with a partner to answer the following questions. (note that for ease of reference, the Checklist section and item number that addresses each question are included):

I. Purpose and Content

1. What are some purposes of a note verbale? (I, item 1)
2. Generally speaking, how long should a note verbale be? (I, item 8)

II. Formatting

3. In what languages can a note verbale to a Permanent Mission be drafted? (II, item 2)
4. What can you do if you need an urgent official translation? (II, item 3)

III. Language, Tone and Style

5. Is a note verbale written in the first person (e.g., "I am writing to...")? (III, item 2)
6. What are the correct opening and closing salutations of a note verbale? (III, items 3, 4)
7. Can you write a note verbale in the name of a department (e.g., DPKO or DFS)? (III, item 2)

IV. Submission/Clearance

What can you do when dispatching a large number of notes verbales to Member-States? (IV, item 6)

CHECKLIST OF DOs AND DON'Ts ON NOTES VERBALES

FOR DPKO POLITICAL AFFAIRS OFFICERS

I. Purpose and content

Do

1. Use a note verbale, inter alia, for the following **purposes**:
 - (a) To exchange information between the UN and Governments or Permanent Missions to the UN, for example, to request contributions of uniformed personnel or matériel for a peacekeeping operation;
 - (b) To request, or acknowledge receipt of, information and documents;
 - (c) To transmit information regarding meetings or other events;
 - (d) For other requests or acknowledgements to Governments relating to the substantive work of DPKO/DFS.
2. As a rule of thumb, **respond in the same format**, i.e., if you receive a note verbale, reply using a note verbale.
3. As a rule of thumb, use a **note verbale instead of a letter if**:
 - (a) The content is technical and straightforward;
 - (b) The content does not need to be attributed to a specific UN official;
 - (c) A rapid response is required to an incoming note verbale.
4. Use a note verbale to communicate **identical information to a number of Member States**, for example, to request nominations from over 25 Member States for senior positions in peacekeeping operations (e.g., Force Commander, Police Commissioner, Military Chief of Staff).
5. When consulted on notes verbales requesting **contributions of police or military personnel, or nominations** of candidates for senior police or military positions in peacekeeping operations, ensure that:
 - (a) **Specific language** is included underlining the UN goal of **increasing the representation of women** serving as uniformed peacekeeping personnel;
 - (b) **Eligibility criteria and job descriptions** for senior police or military positions include specific language on gender equality under the competency of “professionalism” and “leadership”;
 - (c) **Specific language** is included on the need for candidates for senior police or military positions to have an exemplary prior record on **conduct issues**.

6. Always **consult** the relevant DPKO/DFS office(s) and other relevant UN entities on the content of the note verbale, as appropriate. Consultation is **mandatory**. Indicate who was consulted on the routing slip by ticking the relevant box(es) and adding the initials of the person(s) consulted. Reflect unresolved differences arising from the consultation process in the routing slip and, if possible, recommend a way forward. When no other office or entity was consulted, this needs to be explained in the routing slip.
7. Include **facts** rather than opinion.
8. Keep it **short**: as a general rule, a single page.

Don't

1. Don't use a note verbale to communicate with other organizations in the UN system.
2. Don't use a note verbale to communicate with non-State actors.
3. Don't use a note verbale for complex, substantive content that could, instead, be transmitted by letter.

II. Formatting

Do

1. Use the official **DPKO-DFS format** for a note verbale. This is available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/On my computer/DPKO & DFS Templates/DPKO-DFS Note Verbale Template).
2. Draft a note verbale to a Permanent Mission either in **English, French or Spanish**, as appropriate. The language of correspondence of each Member State is given in the book of *Permanent Missions to the United Nations* ("Blue Book") and available at: <http://missions.un.int/protocol/>.
3. For **urgent** notes verbales in **French or Spanish**, first contact the Documents Control Section/CPCS/DGACM (ext. 3-6579) to check whether they can do an urgent, official translation. If this is not possible, arrange for an **in-house translation** by a colleague.
4. Ensure that a **reference number** has been **assigned** by the Correspondence and Records Management Unit (CARMU), OUSG/DPKO prior to submitting the draft note verbale for approval/initialling by a DPKO official. This is the main drafter's responsibility. Notes verbales initialled by DFS officials are assigned a reference number by OUSG/DFS. (CARMU generic e-mail: dpko-ousg@un.org)
5. Ensure that **one reference number** is assigned **per initialled note verbale, even when identical content** is being addressed to several Member States.

6. Ensure that the note verbale is **initialled** (not signed) above the date by the authorized official (at the USG, ASG or D-2 level). When sending the same note verbale to several Member States, ensure that **all** originals are initialled.
7. Ensure that **routine** notes verbales are initialled by the **Regional Director/OO** and use your **judgement** when deciding whether other notes verbales should be **initialled** by the **ASG/OO or USG/DPKO**. The latter will depend on the nature of the content and context.
8. Print the first page only of a note verbale on **white**, water-stamped, **United Nations letterhead** (with the address) and print subsequent pages on white, "continuation page" paper (with a letterhead but no address), not regular printing/photocopying paper. The same letterhead is used for notes verbales in English, French or Spanish.

Don't

1. Don't sign a note verbale.
2. Don't put the name of a UN official in the signature block of a note verbale.

III. Language, tone and style

Do

1. Keep the **tone** formal and impersonal.
2. Write in the **third person** singular in the name of **the Secretariat**, namely: "The Secretariat is of the view that...".
3. Address notes verbales **to the Permanent Mission** (not to the Permanent Representative).
4. Use the **opening salutation** as per the official DPKO template for a note verbale: "The Secretariat of the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent Mission of [] to the United Nations and has the honour to ...".
5. Use the **closing salutation** as per the official DPKO template for a note verbale: "The Secretariat of the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Mission of [] to the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration."
6. Use **gender-sensitive language** (chairperson, not chairman; spokesperson, not spokesman; to operate/to staff, not to man).
7. Refer to **dates** using day/month/year convention, for example, 4 January 2010.

Don't

1. Don't write in the name of a Department (e.g., DPKO or DFS).

IV. Submission, clearance and dispatch procedures

Do

1. Submit notes verbales to **OASG/OO by 3 p.m. and OUSG/DPKO by 4 p.m.** to ensure timely review and signature.
2. For **urgent** notes verbales, mark the routing slip either “**Immediate**” or “**Most Immediate**”. Then **follow up** with both OASG/OO and OUSG/DPKO to reinforce the urgency.
3. Note that it is the responsibility of OO to **dispatch** all notes verbales **with attachments**. (The Correspondence Unit of DGACM/DM does not dispatch notes verbales with attachments.)
4. For **urgent** notes verbales, with or without attachments, ensure that the Administrative Assistant in **OO dispatches** the notes verbales.
5. For **urgent** notes verbales, ensure that the Administrative Assistant in OO **faxes** a copy to the Permanent Mission and **arranges for** the Permanent Mission **to pick up the original**. If no pick-up has occurred after 1 or 2 working days, the original should be sent by mail.
6. When **dispatching** notes verbales with or without attachments **to a large number of Member States** (e.g., over 25), consider asking the Electronic Messaging Unit of DM (“**Communications Centre**” (ext: 3-6312 or 3-6313)) **to fax** them to the relevant Permanent Missions. The OO Administrative Assistant should send the originals by mail.
7. For **non-urgent** notes verbales, **consider** sending them to the **Correspondence Unit** of DGACM for translation and dispatch, **if** the following three conditions are met:
 - (a) The **content is identical**;
 - (b) There are **no attachments**;
 - (c) It is to be sent to **a large number of Member States** (e.g., over 25).
8. **Submit to the Correspondence Unit** (ext. 3-6760 or 3-6761):
 - (a) The original, initialled note verbale and two photocopies;
 - (b) An electronic (soft) copy of the note verbale, by e-mail to: correspondenceunit@un.org; and
 - (c) A completed “Correspondence Unit Worksheet” (available from the Correspondence Unit).The Correspondence Unit will ensure translation into the appropriate language(s) and **dispatch** to Permanent Missions **within** approximately **7-10 working days**.
9. Ensure that the correspondence unit **worksheet** submitted is an **original** (no photocopies allowed) from the **current** year, **signed** by a correspondence officer in DPKO/DFS and indicates the **drafter’s details** (name, dept., room, extension).

Lesson five



Language tip: use short sentences, shorter, familiar words

Use of prepositions in common expressions

Guidance on capitalization

Focus on talking points

Lesson five – Language Tip

Use short words, short sentences



In warding off those enemies of simplicity and clarity, some positive rules may be of help.

Positive rule five: use short words, short sentences

A fifth positive rule, especially applicable in the United Nations, would be that short words, short sentences and short paragraphs are to be preferred to long words, long sentences and long paragraphs whenever possible.

Short words are better because they are more likely to be understood by a multilingual readership. Short words familiar to the reader are better still. There is no need to call a cocktail a "rooster's caudal appendage", accurate as that description may be, because cocktails are familiar in the United Nations.

Short sentences are better because they allow the reader to pause and absorb the idea or fact a sentence is intended to convey. The practice of short sentences also combats the tendency to hedge direct statement around with subordinate clauses.

Short paragraphs are better for three reasons. Visually, they are less forbidding than long paragraphs. Psychologically, the practice of short paragraphs acts as a brake on the writer who tries to string too many ideas or facts together and thereby confuses both himself and his readers; one idea to one paragraph is a good rule of thumb. In debate, short paragraphs make for ease of reference.

-from *A Guide to writing for the United Nations*, by W.H. Hindle

Shorter alternatives to frequently appearing words



“The bigger the vocabulary, the more various ideas one can get across with it – the more shades and intensities of meaning. The big vocabulary also needs the little word...So do not forget the little things ...”

--from *The Complete Stylist and Handbook*, by S. Baker

accompany	go with
appear	look, seem
arrive	come
attempt	try
cause	make, bring about
cease	stop
continue	keep (on)
discover	find
locate	find
place	put
possess	have
prepare	get ready, get set for
receive, obtain	get
relate	tell
remain	stay

remove	take off
respond	answer
request	ask for
return	go back
secure	get
depart	leave, go
implement	carry out, put in place
postpone	put off
cancel	call off
raise	bring up

Don't forget the little things...

Using the correct preposition

Prepositions are little words that can have a big impact. Prepositions can alter the meaning of the verb or adjective it accompanies. Quiz yourself by inserting the appropriate preposition in the space below:

Exercise on Preposition Practice



- 1) I apologize ____ being absent ____ the meeting last week.
- 2) The Achievement Prize will be awarded ____ a member ____ our department.
- 3) I am writing to advise you ____ a recent change ____ the procedure.
- 4) The staff counselor is ready to advise you ____ the decision regarding the new post.
- 5) It is hoped that the new policy will bring ____ positive changes.
- 6) He is tired ____ working overtime ____ two weeks straight.
- 7) He is tired ____ doing nothing but filing papers day ____ and day ____.
- 8) He is disgusted ____ the unfairness ____ the new policy.
- 9) He is quite familiar ____ the work of that department.
- 10) The representative insisted ____ the reinstatement ____ the agreement.
- 11) He is devoted ____ carrying out the reforms.
- 12) He must limit the number of requests ____ three per month.

Common Adjectives and Verbs with Prepositions



absent from

according to

accuse of

acquainted with

adapt to

adequate for

advise of (inform)

advise on (counsel)

afraid of

agree to (+verb)

agree with (+noun)

agreeable to

allergic to

anxious about

apologize for

apparent to

apply for

appropriate for

approve of

ashamed of

available to

award to

aware of

graduate from

base on

believe in

bring about

bring on

capable of

care for

certain of

collect from

combine with

committed to

composed of

conceal from

conceited about

concentrate on

confidence in (have)

confuse with

conscious of (be)

consist of

contribute to

convince of

cooperate with

critical of

decide on

plan on

dedicated to

depend on

deprive of

devoted to

difficult for

difficulty in

disapprove of

disgusted with

doubtful about

eligible for

enter into

engage in

engaged to

equipped with (+noun)

equipped to (+verb)

essential to

export to

familiar with

famous for

fond of

foreign to

glance at

gossip about

grateful to
hide from
homesick for
hope for
hopeful of
identical to
import from
impressed by
incapable of
independent of
insist on
instead of
intent on
interested in
interfere with
jealous of
known for
limit to
loyal to
matter to
married to
name after
need for (noun)
obtain from
opposed to
patient with
perfect for
persist in

pleased with
prepare for
present at
prevent from
profit from
prohibit from
relevant to
responsible for
rich in
satisfied with
short of
similar to
suitable for
superior to
supply with
talent for
talented in
technique for
thankful for
thoughtful of
tired from (physical)
tired of (emotional)
tolerant of
typical of
understanding of
unfamiliar with
unfit for
upset about

Don't forget the little things...

Editorial conventions: which terms are capitalized?

Every organization establishes an editorial standard regarding which terms are to be capitalized. Quiz yourself by identifying which words in the sentences below need to be capitalized (according to the Organizational editorial convention). You may check yourself by consulting the *Correspondence Manual* pages that follow the exercise.

Exercise on Capitalization



Please correct the capitalization in the following sentences.

1. The organization will cooperate with the local government to develop a policy.
2. The Holy See is a permanent observer to the United Nations.
3. The secretary of the second committee will advise us of the decision.
4. The Western part of the United States will be affected by the new policy.
5. The western powers have formed an alliance.
6. The second world war ended in 1945.
7. The Representative of Spain called for support of the proposal.
8. The Fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly took place in 2000.
9. The training is open to both general service and professional staff.
10. Reference is made to Resolution 686 in the agreement.

..from the UN Correspondence Manual

(a full electronic version of the Correspondence Manual can be found on ISEEK)

C. Capitalization in English

8. Use initial capital letters sparingly, according to the general rules set out below.

Use initial capitals

(a) To mark beginnings:

(i) The first word of a sentence;

(ii) The first word of a subsidiary part of a sentence set out

as a subparagraph or item on a list;

(b) For proper nouns and adjectives and for recognized geographical names;

(c) For the first word in titles of books, periodicals and United Nations publications, regardless of what part of speech it may be, and for all other words except articles, conjunctions and prepositions in the text and in footnotes;

(d) For the first word, for proper nouns and other words that normally have them:

(i) In titles of books in bibliographic lists;

(ii) In titles of articles and unpublished papers;

(iii) In titles of United Nations documents issued with a mast-head;

(iv) In headings that are not in full capitals;

(v) In legends on figures and maps;

(e) For all words except articles, conjunctions and prepositions in titles of series of documents;

(f) For the official titles of persons, councils, commissions, committees, Secretariat units, organizations, institutions, political parties and the like;

(g) For the title of posts in the personnel hierarchy

(First Officer, Principal Officer), but not for the designation of functions;

(h) For the names of special rooms, halls and buildings

(the General Assembly Hall);

(i) For the names of organized movements

(the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries);

(j) For chapters, sections, articles and similar divisions of texts.

9. The following examples, frequently found in United Nations documents, show the use of initial capital letters or lower-case letters in United Nations practice:

Act, of a legislative body

when citing the title of a specific act

Administration

In specific references, when used in the sense of “Government”

administrative instruction

advisory opinion (of the International Court of Justice)

agenda, agenda item, agenda item 24

annex, an annex, annex III, the annexes to the report

appendix, an appendix, appendix IV, the appendices

Arabic language and type

Arabic numerals

article, an article, article 3

But: Article when making a general or specific reference to
an Article of the Charter of the United Nations and the Statute
of the International Court of Justice

chairpersons

of the Main Committees of the General Assembly, to establish a drafting
committee whose chairperson would report ...

But: Chairperson of the Fifth Committee

chapter chapter II

But: Chapter when making a general or a specific reference to a Chapter of
the Charter of the United Nations and the Statute of the International
Court of Justice

chargé d'affaires

But: Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Andorra to the United
Nations

commission(s)

regional commissions

But: Commission (when used as a short title of a specific body that has already been mentioned), Economic Commission for Africa
committee(s)

the committees of the General Assembly

But: Committee (when used as a short title), the Main Committees of the General Assembly
conference

But: Conference (when used as a short title of a specific conference that has already been mentioned), the World Conference on Human Rights
conference room, conference room paper

But: Conference Room 4
constitution

a written constitution, the constitutions of many States

But: Constitution in a specific reference to the Constitution of a State, a specialized agency and the like, for example, article 28 of the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia ... as provided in the Constitution of the World Health Organization

consultant

continent, for example, the continent of Africa

continental shelf

Contracting Party

in the text of treaties, conventions and the like, otherwise lower case
convention

But: Convention, in citing the title of a specific instrument, for example, the Convention on the Rights of the Child

council

But: when using it as a short title, as noun or adjective, for example, Council resolution 1979/81

Dag Hammarskjöld Library (Auditorium, Building)

decade

But: First United Nations Development Decade, Decade for Women

Declaration

when citing the title of a specific declaration made at the government or international agency level

Decree when citing the title of a specific decree

delegation, a delegation, the delegation

demarcation line

department

in general references, for example, one of the three departments of the Secretariat dealing with the question; the government department concerned

But: Department in specific references, for example, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Commerce of the United States Government

document

in general or specific references

draft

earth in general references

But: Earth, in reference to the planet in, for example, texts relating to outer space; for example, artificial Earth satellites

east, eastern (geographical)

East, Eastern (political), for example, East-West dialogue

executive heads, of the specialized agencies

executive secretaries of the regional commissions

But: Executive Secretary of ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP or ESCWA

expert a group of experts

But: the Group of Experts on Global Warming

extrabudgetary

(XB may be used in budget documents)

financial regulation (rule) 3.5

But: Financial Regulations (Rules) of the United Nations

foreword

funds-in-trust

General Service

category of the staff of the United Nations

government

local or municipal government, a system of government, a change of

government, government-owned, government agency, a government

department

But: Government (when representing a State, as a noun only) the Government

of India, that Government, the Government concerned, the metropolitan

Government, any Government wishing to participate

group

But: Group of 77, Group of African States

hall

But: (the) General Assembly Hall, in this Hall

head of a delegation or Government, head of State

headquarters

the headquarters of ESCAP, the Commission headquarters building

But: the Headquarters of the United Nations, the Headquarters Building when

referring specifically to the United Nations building in New York

hemisphere

northern, southern, eastern, western

information centres

information circulars

information services

international civil service,

international civil servant

interregional adviser

introduction

in the introduction to his report, he stated that ...

introductory note

island(s) the island of Cyprus

But: the Cayman Islands

language proficiency examination

language training programme

law including all references to the profession of law

But: Law in citing the title of a specific legal instrument

liaison officer

member(s)

an individual member of a committee, a State member of a United Nations organ, for example, members of the Security Council, a member of a specialized agency or any other organization, also a non-member State

But: States Members of the United Nations, a State not a Member of the United Nations

Note: “States Members of the United Nations or members of agencies in the United Nations system ...”

note a note by the Secretary-General

number

But: No. (only when followed by a number or used as an abbreviation for number)

Supplement No. 2 (The plural form is Nos.)

Some points

of style

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observer the United Nations military observer in San Salvador

But: Observer (a person appointed to attend a meeting without the right to vote)

office, term of office

But: Office (with official titles) for example, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Office of the Iraq Programme

Organization

when referring specifically to the United Nations

parliament

unless referring specifically to a legislative body that is actually called
“Parliament”

part in general reference, for example, as stated in part one of the report

But: Part One as a heading

party in general or specific references, for example,

the States parties to the Treaty

But: Party when using it in a formal text such as the text of a treaty, for example, the Parties to the present Convention, and when referring to a specific political Party, for example, the Conservative Party, the Socialist Party

permanent member of the Security Council

But: Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations

Permanent Observer Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations

Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations

personal representative of the Secretary-General, in general references

pledging conference

But: Fourth Pledging Conference for the World Food Programme

plenary in general and specific references

But: Plenary Meetings in references to the body of documents in the Official Records

Power in general or specific references to a State, for example, a great Power; also when used adjectivally in that sense, for example, a three-Power agreement

preamble

But: Preamble in general or specific references to the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations

preface

President of the General Assembly, of a United Nations council, of a State or of a recognized international or national body

Professional

category of the staff of the United Nations, for example, staff in the

Professional category and above

programme

in general references

But: Programme in references to a separately constituted body, for example,

the World Food Programme

purposes and principles

of the Charter of the United Nations

question the question of Western Sahara

rapporteur

in general reference

But: Rapporteur of the Second Committee

region except when part of the title of an administrative division of a State

regional adviser

regional commission

regular budget

(RB may be used in budget documents)

regulation

regulation 2.1 of the Staff Regulations

report report of the Secretary-General

representative

a representative, the representative of France, the personal representative

of the Secretary-General, the senior ... representative

But: Special Representative of the Secretary-General (as a title)

Permanent Representative of Algeria

resident coordinator

resident representative

the resident representative of UNDP has the responsibility...

But: capitalize in specific references, for example, the Resident

Representative of UNDP in Turkey, Ms. ...,

Resident Representative of UNDP in Chile

resolution

room

rule rule 104.5 of the Staff Rules

rules of procedure

secretariat

of the Military Staff Committee, secretariat of a specialized agency or

other organization

But: Secretariat in general or specific references to the Secretariat of the

United Nations

secretary in general references

But: Secretary in specific references, for example, the Secretary of the Second

Committee

Some points

of style

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section in general or specific reference, for example, section 3 of the budget

But: Section in the official title of a Secretariat unit

seminar in general references

But: Seminar, for a specific seminar with an established title

session the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly,

the eighteenth special session

south, southern

geographical use

But: South (political and economic use): North-South dialogue

specialized agency

staff members of the United Nations

staff regulation (rule) 4.5

But: Staff Regulations (Rules) of the United Nations (a title of a publication)

State in both general and specific references to a country

or to a specific state in a federation, for example, the State of New York

subcommission(s)

subcommittee(s)

But: Subcommittee and Subcommittee when used as short title of a specific body already mentioned

Territory in a general or specific reference to a
Non-Self-Governing Territory or Trust Territory
transition

countries with an economy in transition

Treaty in citing the title of a specific instrument; otherwise lower case
trusteeship

under trusteeship

trust funds

volume in general and specific references

war during the world wars, the cold war, the threat of a third world war

But: First World War, Second World War

west, western

geographical use (except in ECA terminology, West Africa
to denote the subregion)

But: Western (political or economic use), the Western Powers

working group

in general reference

But: Working Group when referring to a specific group with an
established title

working paper

in general and specific reference, for example, working paper No.

Talking points

Audience:

- Representatives of Member States
- Senior UN officials, such as SG, DSG, USG/DPKO, ASG/OO
- Peacekeeping operations;
- Other UN entities
- Intergovernmental Organizations
- Non-UN entities, NGOs, cultural organizations, etc.

Purpose:

- To thank a person/entity for a particular contribution, action or ongoing support
- To convey information or to offer assistance
- To request information or action
- To prepare senior UN officials for issues interlocutor(s) may likely raise



Exercise on Talking Points

With a partner, look at the sets of talking points your instructor has provided.



Questions regarding purpose, audience, content

1. What are the two purposes of these talking points? Where are they indicated? Do the talking points achieve those purposes?
2. Consider the audience – is there enough background information for the speaker? Where is the background information indicated?
3. Are the talking points written in the first-person, first-person plural, or the third person? Which of the latter choices is most appropriate for a set of talking points?

Questions about language, tone and style

4. Are the talking points “speaker-ready”, i.e., would it be easy for a speaker to pick them up and use them easily in his/her presentation?

Questions about formatting

5. Do the talking points follow the guidance in the Checklist for Talking Points? Has the drafter used the ‘talking points’ template?

Sample Set of Talking Points

Look at the sample set of talking points below. Read through the points. To focus attention, take turns reading them aloud with your partner. Then, discuss the points in terms of the accompanying questions:

Unclassified

Talking Points for USG Le Roy's meeting with
Michael von der Schulenburg, ERSG/Resident-Coordinator, United Nations
10 February 2010

UNMIL/Liberia

- *To discuss the forthcoming debate in the Security Council on transitions*
- *To seek assistance in identifying Sierra Leonean stakeholders to participate in the workshop on transition planning in Liberia*

On 15 September 2009, in its resolution 1885 (2009), the Security Council approved the third stage of UNMIL's drawdown. The final withdrawal will commence after the national elections in 2011. UNMIL's strategic goal is to help Liberia achieve a steady state of security in which its police and armed forces are able to operate independently before the Mission's final withdrawal. The building of the armed forces of Liberia with US and ECOWAS assistance is making steady progress, but the development of the police force has been slowed down by lack of support from donors in areas of building police infrastructure in the counties, vehicles and communications equipment. President Sirleaf Johnson has agreed to our proposal to start the transition planning and the planning for handing over security responsibilities to national authorities now. The process will start with an experience-sharing workshop where lessons learnt from Sierra Leone, Timor Leste and Burundi will be considered.

Security Council consultations on transition and exit strategies

- **I'm pleased you have joined us for the debate. The Presidency is keen to see more explicit and earlier preparations for the drawdown and exit of UN peacekeeping. I believe the Secretary-General will emphasize that security, political and socio-economic dimensions of peace are interwoven and cannot be addressed in isolation.**
- **In my statement, I will focus on the trends in peacekeeping, the challenges we face as we work to ensure that the departure of a peacekeeping operation is neither premature nor indefinite and, above all, achieved in a manner that is not disruptive to the country's continued peace consolidation process.**

- From your experience in Sierra Leone, you will be able to speak to what early drafts of the PRST referred to as the "new generation of integrated peacebuilding offices", as well as reflect on the current and potential role of the PBC and, in particular, what types of advice it could be providing to the Council on peacebuilding mandates.
- While the Secretary-General's report on peacebuilding focused on the "immediate aftermath of conflict," Sierra Leone is nearing the period in which we face a different challenge: when peacebuilding ends and long-term development resumes.

Experience-sharing for transition planning in Liberia

- The UN's strategic goal is to have Liberia to achieve a steady state of security in which the police and armed forces are able to operate independently before UNMIL withdraws after the 2011 elections.
- President Johnson Sirleaf has accepted our proposal to start planning for the transition, particularly the handover of security responsibilities to national authorities now. This process has many similarities with the transition from UNAMSIL to UNIOSIL in Sierra Leone.
- In order to prepare, we plan to facilitate the sharing of experience from such countries as Sierra Leone, as well as Burundi, Timor Leste and other cases, through a workshop to be held in Monrovia in March-April.
- We would appreciate your advice in identifying stakeholders from Sierra Leone who had participated in the transition planning there in 2004 – 2005, and who could contribute to the workshop. We also plan to invite some UNIPSIL and UNCT staff who worked in Sierra Leone at that time.

Guided Questions on Talking Points Checklist



Work with a partner to answer the following questions. (note that for ease of reference, the Checklist section and item number that addresses each question are included):

I. Purpose

1. What are some purposes of a set of talking points?

II. Content

2. What is KISS? How should the writer tailor a set of talking points?
3. What should be included in the background of a set of talking points?
4. When should if-asked points be included and how should they be formatted?

III. Talking points for the Secretary-General

5. How can we characterize talking points to be prepared for the SG?
6. For SC luncheons, what should the talking points seek to do?

IV. Talking points for USG and ASG

7. How do you allow for sufficient flexibility in talking points for the DSG, USG/DPKO and ASG/OO?

8. How many talking points should there be for each topic?

IV. Formatting

9. Where can you indicate background information?
10. How much space should be devoted to background information?
11. Should sub-headings be used in talking points? Why or why not?

V. Language, Tone and Style

12. What should be the style of language in talking points?
13. Should points be written in bullet phrases or full sentences?
14. With meetings/calls with French-speaking interlocutors where DPKO is in the lead, what language should be used in the background? In the greeting? In the first and last points? In the other points?

CHECKLIST OF DOs AND DON'Ts ON TALKING POINTS FOR THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND OTHER SENIOR UNITED NATIONS OFFICIALS

FOR MEMBERS OF INTEGRATED OPERATIONAL TEAMS

I. Purpose

Do

Use talking points for the SG, DSG and other senior UN officials during meetings and/or telephone conversations, inter alia, for the following **purposes**¹ (or a combination thereof):

- (a) To convey information or offer assistance;
- (b) To request information or action;
- (c) To thank a person or entity for a particular contribution, action or ongoing support;

II. Content

Do

General

1. **KISS** – Keep it Short, Simple and Sharp. The more pointed talking points are, the more likely they will help achieve the objective(s) of the conversation.
2. **Tailor** talking points to the **objective(s), type and expected length** of the conversation, as appropriate. For this purpose, clarify the objective with EOSG Scheduling Office, OUSG/DPKO, OASG/OO, note taker(s) present at related meeting(s), counterparts from UN entities and/or Permanent Missions to the UN, as appropriate. Only contact Permanent Missions about upcoming meetings once the SG has approved the meeting.
3. State up to **three specific objective(s)** at the beginning of the talking points, except for generic talking points. Indicate what the senior UN official should or could achieve through the meeting/call.
4. Include **targeted messages** and **targeted questions** that help the senior UN official achieve the objective(s) of the meeting/call.

¹ As appropriate, you may consider using talking points as an additional tool to help generate, validate or shift thinking of senior UN officials on a particular issue. A copy of the final talking points may indicate whether you were successful.

5. **Prioritize talking points** by putting the most important bullet point **first** in order to keep the meeting/call focused and make it productive.
6. For meetings on politically sensitive and/or complex issues (especially with interlocutors whose positions thereon have yet to be determined), **anticipate possible scenarios** and prepare talking points accordingly.
7. Include relevant **gender-related issues and priorities**, as appropriate.
8. Include in the background only the **most recent and relevant developments** and/or elements that are **specific** to the interlocutor and the objective of the meeting/call. Also consider adding what the interlocutor may plan to achieve.
9. Include **“if asked” points** if you anticipate that the interlocutor may ask about issues which the senior UN official would not necessarily raise him/herself but should have a prepared response to.

Talking points for the SG

10. Draft talking points that are **strategic** and **forward-looking**, aimed at keeping the peace process on track or the security regime intact.
11. For **generic talking points**, think about key messages the SG could share with a **variety of interlocutors** in order to help achieve UN priorities.
12. For SG meetings with **UN interlocutors**, such as SRSGs/Heads of Missions and Force Commanders, consider providing **broad and open-ended statements or questions** to launch the discussion rather than to script the conversation, e.g., “what are your expectations for the upcoming quadripartite meeting on security issues?”
13. For **Security Council luncheons**, seek to engage and **elicit views** from Security Council members to promote **two-way communication** rather than one-way information sharing, unless it is necessary to state a concern or draw attention to a particular development.
14. For SG meetings **away from Headquarters**, attach supporting documentation, such as relevant statistics on financial contributions to the UN budget or a peacekeeping profile, if relevant.
15. Whenever the **SG and USG/DPKO** are scheduled to meet with the same interlocutor, **choreograph the talking points** in such a way that the SG would cover big-picture issues and the USG/DPKO would speak about operational and/or tactical issues, as relevant.

Talking points for the DSG, USG/DPKO and ASG/OO

16. For the **DSG**, draft talking points that focus on conveying the **position of the UN** on an issue or the UN’s response to a problem, while maintaining a **broader perspective**.

17. For **DSG, USG/DPKO and ASG/OO**, as a general rule, draft **broad and open-ended statements or questions** to launch the discussion rather than a detailed script to allow for greater flexibility at the meeting/call, e.g., “I would like to seek your views on co-hosting the donor’s conference on Afghanistan”.
18. For **USG/DPKO and ASG/OO**, include a mix of **strategic** (why), **operational** (what) and/or **tactical** (how) elements, as relevant.
19. Include talking points on topics that you consider a **priority** even though they are not the primary focus of discussion.
20. For the **USG/DPKO and ASG/OO**, include in the background information relevant **biographical data** of first-time visitors, as well as relevant information about the **origin of the meeting request**, including, for example, why the interlocutor is in New York.
21. Only if relevant, include in the background information **facts and figures** regarding troop/police strength, areas of deployment and/or statistics on financial contributions to the UN budget; alternatively, attach a peacekeeping profile.

Don’t

1. As a general rule, don’t recycle talking points unless the objective of the meetings/calls and interlocutors are similar.
2. For SG/DSG talking points with English-speaking interlocutors, don’t waste a bullet point on pleasantries or ice-breakers, e.g., “I wish to thank you for hosting this meeting”. Such short polite conversations will take place automatically. Instead, focus on conveying important messages in a limited number of bullet points.
3. For SG/DSG talking points, don’t include overly technical or micro-level details. Instead, indicate that the USG/DPKO or ASG/OO is available to provide further details.
4. For Security Council luncheons, don’t include any background information in the talking points themselves. If needed, attach a separate background note.

III. Consultation procedures

Do

1. **Always consult** with relevant DPKO/DFS offices, other UN entities, and the relevant peacekeeping operation(s) on the content of mission-specific talking points with a view to generating an “integrated” set of talking points. The IOT is responsible for consolidating inputs from thematic and functional areas on **mission-specific issues**.

2. When **in the lead** on a set of talking points, keep the **objective(s)** of the meeting/call in mind when consolidating, revising and editing inputs from other submitting office(s) and/or department(s). If in doubt, consult submitting office(s) and/or department(s) in order to preserve the necessary nuances. If you did not retain input in whole or in part, inform them why. For SG/DSG talking points, produce **“UN” talking points** which reflect the collective views of the UN, rather than **“departmental” talking points**, reflecting the views of an individual department.

IV. Formatting of talking points for the Secretary-General

Do

1. For SG talking points for **meetings in New York and away from Headquarters, as well as Security Council luncheons**, use the **official DPKO-DFS format** available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/Templates-On my computer/DPKO&DFS Templates/SG Meeting TP).
2. For SG talking points for **telephone conversations**, use the **official DPKO-DFS format** available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/Templates-On my computer/DPKO&DFS Templates/SG TP-Phone Call).
3. For separate **background information**, use the **official DPKO-DFS format** available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/Templates-On my computer/DPKO&DFS Templates/SG Meetings Background Template).
4. Organize talking points under **subheadings by topic** to support the coherence of the conversation.
5. As a general rule, limit the number of talking points to a maximum of **four per topic** and limit individual bullets to **five lines or less**.
6. Limit the **background information** to **one paragraph per topic**. If the background exceeds this limit, attach it on a **separate page**.
7. For “if asked” points, put the words **“if asked”**, **the topic and the background**, as needed, within square brackets. Use boldface for both the topic and the words “if asked”, and also underline the latter. For example:
8. **[If asked: Unilateral declaration of independence. The Secretary-General may be asked for his position in the event of a UDI.]**
9. **On this aspect, I would assess the situation as it unfolds.**
10. Use **clear names to label** the electronic files of talking points, specifying whether the document is a talking point, a background note or a profile. Include the name of the interlocutor, country and date of the meeting/call.

V. Formatting of talking points for other senior United Nations officials

Do

1. For **DSG** talking points, use the **official DPKO-DFS format** available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/Templates-On my computer/DPKO&DFS Templates/DSG Talking Points Template). However, when the DSG holds a meeting or makes a call **on behalf of the SG** in his absence, use the **official DPKO-DFS formats** you would normally use for SG talking points.
2. For **DSG** talking points, use **regular typeface for the background information** instead of italics. Use boldface for the talking points.
3. For talking points for the **USG/DPKO and ASG/OO**, use the **official DPKO-DFS format** available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/Templates-On my computer/DPKO&DFS Templates/USG Talking Points Template).
4. For talking points for the **USG/DPKO or ASG/OO**, limit the **background information** to a maximum of **two paragraphs per topic**. If the background exceeds this limit, put it on a **separate page**.
5. As a general rule, limit the number of talking points to a maximum of **four per topic** and limit individual bullets to **five lines or less**. Limit the length of the talking points to a maximum of **two pages**, i.e., a maximum of half a page per topic or mission.
6. Organize talking points under **subheadings by topic** to support the coherence of the conversation.
7. For “if asked” points, put the words “**if asked**”, **the topic and the background**, as needed, within square brackets. Use boldface for both the topic and the words “if asked”, and also underline the latter. For example:
*[**If asked: Unilateral declaration of independence. The Secretary-General may be asked for his position in the event of a UDI. [...]**]*
 - **On this aspect, I would assess the situation as it unfolds.**

Don't

1. Don't use bullet points in the background section of talking points.

VI. Language, tone and style

Do

1. Write in **direct, punchy and straightforward language** so that the talking points can be spoken easily and naturally.
2. Write the **bullet points** in **full** sentences and in the **first person**, e.g., “I am concerned about...”, “We strongly believe that...”. The background section will be in the third person.
3. Provide **detail or nuance when necessary** but ensure that the message or request is still clear.
4. Keep the tone **diplomatic and tactful**, without being long-winded or patronizing.
5. Think carefully about your **choice of words**. Ensure that the words are effective, but be mindful of how they could be received, e.g., rather than “I *expect* that you will continue to support this dialogue”, consider “I *count* on your continued support for this dialogue”.
6. Use **gender-sensitive** language (chair or chairperson, not chairman; spokesperson, not spokesman; police officers, not policemen; to operate/to staff, not to man).
7. In the background information, use **proper nouns** rather than pronouns to refer to interlocutors, i.e., “The Secretary-General is expected to raise the issue of....”, rather than, “You are expected to raise the issue of...”.
8. Write out in **full names or titles** the first time they occur in the text, followed by the **abbreviation in parentheses**.
9. Provide the **meaning of uncommon non-English** terms in parentheses, for example: *brassage* (process aimed at integrating former armed groups into regular armed forces of the DRC by creating mixed units).
10. For SG talking points during **meetings with French-speaking interlocutors** where DPKO is in the lead (i.e., host country representative or Minister of Defence of a TCC), draft the **greeting, introductory remarks, the main (first) topic and closing points in French**. Provide the English translation in parentheses immediately after the relevant bullet points.
11. **Always** draft **background information** for meetings/calls with French-speaking interlocutors in **English** and provide French translations for key concepts.
12. When indicating the time of the meeting/call, use the **12-hour system** as follows:
h: mm a.m. or p.m.

Don't

1. Don't divide dates, figures, names of people or places, titles, UN expressions, such as "Secretary-General", "United Nations", "Security Council", "General Assembly", etc., at the end of a line. Instead write them on the same line, for example:
2. "I welcome your generous support and that of Secretary of State, Ms. Hillary Clinton..."
3. Don't use acronyms or abbreviations in the title and (sub)headings of the talking points.
4. Don't use acronyms or abbreviations in the possessive form, e.g., "UNOMIG's Chief Military Observer". Instead write "the Chief Military Observer of UNOMIG" or "the UNOMIG Chief Military Observer".

VII. Submission and clearance procedures for talking points for the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General

Do

1. After **clearance by your Regional Director**, submit talking points **electronically** to OUSG/DPKO for further clearance, **copying OASG/OO**. In case you need to revise talking points that had been submitted previously, highlight text to be added and strikethrough text to be deleted.
2. Submit talking points **by the deadline provided by OUSG/DPKO**. Remember to factor in time needed for internal consultations and clearance.
3. If you recommend that the SG make a **call**, submit suggested talking points in **hard copy**. Attach them to the note addressed to the Chef de Cabinet, recommending that the call be made. **Copy** ("cc:") the **chief of the scheduling office** in the EOSG on the note to ensure prompt action, as follows: "cc: Mr. Yoon".
4. In addition, provide an electronic version of the talking points and the note to OUSG/DPKO, copying OASG/OO, for follow-up purposes.

Don't

1. Don't submit talking points for DPA-led topics directly to DPA unless they have been cleared by OUSG/DPKO.

VIII. Submission and clearance procedures of talking points for the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General

Do

1. After clearance within your Division, submit all talking points for USG/DPKO **electronically to OUSG/DPKO** by the deadline provided, usually the day prior to the meeting. Copy OASG/OO for information. Remember to factor in time needed for internal consultations and clearance.
2. Submit all talking points for ASG/OO **electronically to OASG/OO** by the deadline provided.

Don't

1. Don't submit hard copies of talking points to OUSG/DPKO or OASG/OO, except if attached to a note recommending that the SG make a call (see VII 3 above).

IX. Security classifications

Do

1. Mark talking points for the **SG and the DSG** as “**Confidential**” in the top right-hand corner. Mark them as “Strictly Confidential” in accordance with guidance provided in the Secretary-General's Bulletin on information sensitivity, classification and handling (ST/SGB/2007/6).
2. Use the **same sensitivity marking** on both the **note** to the Chef de Cabinet transmitting talking points for a telephone call by the SG and the **talking points** themselves.
3. As a general rule, mark talking points for the USG/DPKO and ASG/OO as “**Unclassified**”.
4. Mark **sensitive** talking points for the USG/DPKO and ASG/OO as either “**Confidential**” or “**Strictly Confidential**”, in accordance with the Secretary-General's Bulletin on information sensitivity, classification and handling (ST/SGB/2007/6). Use the designation “Confidential” and “Strictly Confidential” only sparingly.

Lesson six



Language tip: questions to ask yourself before writing

Use of subjunctive sentences for making recommendations

Three rules for clear writing, with exercise

Checklist on Secretary-General Reports

Sample Secretary-General Report with exercise

Writer's Checklist

Quick tips for editing

Lesson six – Language tip

Accuracy, clarity and conciseness, and consistency are fine words, finer and rarer things. How are they to be achieved in United Nations Documents?

The first step to this end consists in giving thought, before writing, to why you are going to write, what you are going to write, and how and for whom. (p. 6, Hindle)

If you keep your audience in mind as you draft your report, you will find it easier to decide what to include and what to omit, how to organize the material, and what tone to adopt. Before you prepare any document, it is crucial to be aware of the political and operational context in which it is being prepared.

In the case of multiple readers, keep your primary reader foremost in mind. However, do consider the chain of readers as you draft, including your managers and senior leadership of the department, who will clear and/or approve your reports. Adopt a tone and style that is most likely to satisfy everyone.

Ask yourself the following questions before you begin to write:

- Who requested the report?
- What questions does the audience want addressed in this report?
- Is this a new report on the subject area or part of a series?
- How much background information will the audience need?

- *A Guide to Writing for the United Nations*, W.H. Hindle

Determining Purpose and Recognizing Audience



Purpose

Your report should not be a mystery. Your *purpose* is the primary reason that you are writing this report, the major point you want to make. An explicitly stated purpose sentence, stated at or near the beginning of the report, helps the reader(s); it lets them know why they are reading and what to expect.

The process of coming up with a purpose statement (or sometimes paragraph, for a long report) helps you clarify the purpose in your own mind and keeps you on track as you draft. You might try writing out your purpose on a piece of paper and attaching it to your computer to serve as a reminder while you compose.

Some types of writing do not require an explicit purpose statement (e.g., meeting notes). However, as the writer, you should always have your purpose clearly in mind.

Equally important is to ensure that your report fulfils its stated (or understood) purpose. The real objective of most reports is to bring about *action*, e.g., to obtain troop contributions to a peacekeeping mission. Your arguments and recommendations should be constructed with this objective in mind. Having a clearly worded purpose statement at the beginning of the document is only a first step: the organization and content of the entire report must then achieve that purpose.

Types of United Nations Reports



Reflection: Review the stated audience and purpose(s).
Do you agree with these items?
Would you omit any of them? Would you add any?

Reports of the Secretary-General on peacekeeping operations

Audience:

- Security Council;
- General Assembly, in particular Members of the Fifth Committee;

Purpose:

- To inform the audience about
 - (i) the situation in a country/region in which the Council declared its readiness to authorize the establishment of a peacekeeping operation;
 - (ii) progress made by the peacekeeping operation towards its establishment and/or mandate implementation;
 - (iii) a specific aspect of a peacekeeping operation; or
 - (iv) an emergency situation;
- To request the audience to bring their influence to bear on key stakeholders;
- To request guidance from, action by, or agreement of the Security Council on recommendations of the Secretary-General related to the establishment of a new operation, change in strength of military and or police components, or renewal, modification or termination of an existing mandate;
- To establish an official record of the evolution of a peacekeeping operation for legal, operational and historical reasons.

Three Simple Rules for Clear Writing



1. State a fact or an idea **directly** and **simply**.
2. Be **concise**. Avoid overly wordy sentences and long paragraphs.
3. Use **action-oriented** language. Use *active voice* rather than *passive voice*. Avoid nominalizations.

Sometimes reports can contain overly-long sentences and paragraphs and not reflect the rules for concise writing stated above.

Consider the sentence below (sentence a) and its more concise rewrite (sentence b):

sentence a

Following broad global consultations, both guidelines and a official report for the PPD were developed and jointly issued by DPK, the Office of the Special Representative, and UNTIR. for children and armed conflict (OSRSG CAAC), and UNICEF in May 2010. They provide detailed

guidance for the implementation of the MRM and are applicable to all peacekeeping missions implementing the mechanism.

sentence b (rewrite)

Following broad consultations, DFT, along with the Office of the Special Representative, and UNTIR, developed and jointly-issued guidelines and an official report for the PPD. These provide detailed guidance for implementing the mechanism.

What differences do you notice in the rewritten sentence b?

Sentence length in reports

Ideally, a Secretary-General report should contain a variety of sentence lengths. While formality and complexity of information may require some sentences to be long, beware of writing unnecessarily long sentences — which over-use of the passive constructions can produce.

Exercise with subjunctive sentences



In reports, we generally need to make recommendations and often use subjunctive sentences for this purpose (to propose, express urgency or formally request). Work with a partner and exercise your knowledge of the subjunctive below:

:

Some examples of propositional phrases followed by subjunctive:

We recommend/propose/suggest that...	...you move quickly.
It is proposed/recommended/suggested that...	...he seek advice.
It is important/essential/crucial/imperative that...	...we join forces.
We request that...	...it be decided soon.

Write the correct form of the verbs provided in the blank spaces:

1. **(be)** It is crucial that lapses in communications systems _____ addressed.
2. **(arrive)** It is essential that he _____ on time for the meeting.
3. **(NEG: arrive)** It is important that he _____ late.
4. **(understand)** It is imperative that we all _____ the warning system.
5. **(understand)** It is imperative that each staff member _____ the warning system.
6. **(apply)** We recommend that he _____ for the post.

7. **(NEG: grant)** We recommend that the office _____ the transfer request at this time.
8. **(meet)** Our team proposes that the committee _____ to discuss the matter next week.
9. **(passive: represent)** The report proposed that all parties _____ in the negotiations.
10. **(NEG passive: change)** The team suggested the procedure _____ until the end of the year.

Subjunctive

FORM

Use the simple form of the verb. (Ex. The simple form of the verb "to go" is "go.") The *subjunctive* only looks distinct as a verb form in certain situations and tenses.

USE

The *subjunctive* is used to emphasize urgency or importance or potential. It is used after certain expressions (see below).

Examples:

- I suggest that he **attend** the meeting.
- Is it essential that we **be** there?
- Don recommended that you **join** the committee.

NOTICE /EVIDENCE

The *subjunctive* is only evident in certain situations and tenses. In the examples below, the *subjunctive* is not noticeable in the *you* (2nd person) form of the verb, but it is noticeable in the *he/she/it* (3rd person) form of the verb.

Examples:

You try to attend the meetings often.	YOU-FORM OF "TRY"
It is important that you try to attend the	SUBJUNCTIVE FORM OF "TRY" LOOKS THE

meetings often.	<i>SAME.</i>
He tries to attend often.	<i>HE-FORM OF "TRY"</i>
It is important that he try to attend often.	<i>SUBJUNCTIVE FORM OF "TRY" IS APPARENT HERE.</i>



Verbs Followed by the Subjunctive

The *subjunctive* is used after the following verbs:

to advise (that)
to ask (that)
to command (that)
to demand (that)
to desire (that)
to insist (that)
to propose (that)
to recommend (that)
to request (that)
to suggest (that)
to urge (that)

Examples:

- Mr. Smith **asked that** Ms Kelkin **submit** her findings before the end of the month.
- Donna **requested** Frank **come** to the conference.
- The Chairperson **insists that** conference attendees **be** on time.

The *subjunctive* is used after the following expressions:

It is best (that) It is crucial (that) It is desirable (that) It is essential (that) It is imperative (that)	It is important (that) It is recommended (that) It is urgent (that) It is vital (that) It is a good idea (that)
--	---

Examples:

- **It is crucial that** you **be** there before Tom arrives.
- **It is important** she **attend** the meeting.
- **It is recommended that** each hiker **take** four litres of water along on the desert trek.

Negative, *Continuous* and *Passive* Forms of *Subjunctive*

The *subjunctive* can be used in negative, *passive* and *continuous* forms.

Negative Examples:

- The boss insisted that Sam **not speak** at the meeting.
- The department asked that employees **not receive** personal phone calls during business hours.
- I suggest that you **not accept** the job without renegotiating the conditions of service.
- It is desirable that the new manager **not be** from an external source.

Passive Examples:

- Jake recommended that Susan **be hired** immediately.
- I requested that I **be allowed** to take part in the negotiations.
- The opponent demanded that the vote **be recounted**.
- We suggested that they **be admitted** to the Organization.

Continuous Examples:

- It is important that you **be standing** in a visible spot when he gets off the plane.
- It is crucial that a car **be waiting** for the official when the meeting is over.
- I propose that we all **be listening** for any areas for compromise.

Use of subjunctive in reports: exercise



Often reports that make recommendations include subjunctive sentences. Look at the mission report of the next page. Read through the mission report and underline the subjunctive sentences:

SUBJECT: Mission to Arcadia City and Oceantide: needs assessment of transportation facilities

Purpose and Mandate for Mission

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of the present state of the transportation infrastructure of Arcadia following the recent civil strife between the Government –supported National Arcadia Forces (NAF) and the rebel Arcadia Liberation Alliance (ALA). The UN Emergency Mission in Arcadia (UNEMA) Infrastructure Assessment Team has undertaken this mission under the authority of Security Council resolution 7A, which mandates the Organization to provide the necessary resources to enable the distribution of foods and medicines to continue. The mission took place from 1 October to 1 November 2003. After carrying out this phase of the assessment, mission to evaluate possible assistance in reconstructing damaged transportation infrastructure, UNEMA Team has made suggestions in its report, some of which are presented below. This report is the first in a series.

Scope of Mission

2. Team #1 from the Department of Infrastructure Assessment has evaluated the transportation facilities of the area throughout the capital, Arcadia City, and also of the key roads to the port city of Oceantide. The team has assessed roads, bridges, and numbers of helicopters needed to transport goods. Based on its findings, it recommends remedies to facilitate the flow of vital goods.

3. Below is a description of the current security situation evaluation list of key facilities, followed by the recommendations of Team # 1:

Current Security Situation

4. At the 2 August Meeting for the UNEMA Peace Initiative, both NAF and ALA agreed to a cease-fire. Thus far, both sides have respected the agreement and the continuing talks indicate the cease-fire will hold.

(a) Roads

Many key roads needed for the transportation of food, medicines and essential personnel are no longer functional. These roads have sustained severe damage as a result of the recent strife. The main roads leading to and from the airport are so badly damaged that vehicles cannot pass through. In addition, fallen trees and buildings block their way.

RECOMMENDATION: it is crucial that a team of 20 additional workers be

sent to repair roads and clear the area so that normal traffic can resume as quickly as possible. Two specialists must be sent to ensure that the traditional style of Arcadia's roads, a source of cultural pride and tourist revenue, are preserved.

(b) Bridges

Thanks to the successful intervention and respect for the cease-fire agreement, only one bridge, the "Arcadia Minor Bridge", suffered damage due to the recent strife. It was learned that rebels had used the remote area around the bridge as a base of operations; the bridge was severely damaged in the subsequent fighting. However, as this was a little-used bridge in a remote part of the city, its damage poses no immediate hindrance to the transport of vital goods. Before the outbreak of tensions, the "Arcadia Minor Bridge" was under repair. Its repair work has been temporarily suspended.

RECOMMENDATION: The team proposes that suspension of the repair work on the "Arcadia Minor Bridge" be continued. In this way, workers and other resources can be directed to repairing roads vital to the transport of key supplies.

© Helicopters

At the present time, UN helicopter flights carrying aid workers and other essential personnel are able to take off and land at both airports. The 15 available helicopters then transport passengers to their destinations in and around Arcadia City.

Northern Arcadia has two major airports, Arcadia International Airport, 15 miles east of Arcadia City and Oceantide Airport, located about 10 miles north of the main port. The team found that, although the civil strife caused the closing of both airports, the latter suffered virtually no damage to their facilities. As soon as major roads leading to the airports are repaired, the airports should resume full service and normal flight schedules.

RECOMMENDATION: The team urges that 10 more UN helicopters be made available until key roads leading to and from the airport are repaired. Goods destined for Oceantide may be delivered directly to the city's port from the neighboring country of Palomia.

Next assessment

5. The UNEMA Infrastructure Assessment Team continues to monitor the developing situation and is scheduled to make a second visit to Arcadia on 1 October, The Team will then make the second report in the series

Vocabulary exercise: some typical phrasings



Sometimes, in writing reports and other documents, writers may tend to use the same, familiar vocabulary again and again. It can be useful to practice incorporating some new and perhaps more sophisticated phrasings into our reports.

The box below has a list of some phrasings from some Secretary-General reports . Work with a partner and replace the underlined parts of the sentences (below the box) with an appropriate phrasing from the list in the box:

come to a near standstill	(may) prove insufficient to stem the violence
considerable challenges	pose considerable challenges
continue to plague	prompt widespread condemnation
detect the gravity of	with the onset of
efforts are underway	scale up
further progress has been halted	shouldering an increased share of
hamper efforts	together with
in the wake of	underway
major logistical hurdles	welcome development

example:

The incident elicited condemnation from many international partners

(the rewrite) The incident *prompted widespread condemnation from international partners*.

- 1) More progress is not possible due to shortage of funds.
- 2) Amidst increasing concern about safety, security precautions have been stepped up.
- 3) The major practical obstacles , together with lack of Government funds, present major difficulties.
- 4) If current trends are not reversed, ongoing political, military, humanitarian recovery efforts may turn out to be inadequate to curb the violence.
- 5) UN agencies and also non-governmental organization partners, have increased aspects of their operations in order to support the efforts.
- 6) Since the beginning of the heavy rains, displaced person and refugee returns continued at a steady but reduced rate.
- 7) The Government commitment to sharing the burden of an increased share of the cost is a positive change .
- 8) The patrols could not accurately gauge the seriousness of the situation.
- 9) These are the fundamental issues, which, if not addressed, could impede efforts to establish stability in the country.
- 10) Such are the problems that continue to create difficulty for the region.
- 11) Plans are currently being made to establish a Mission presence elsewhere in the region.

Questions on “Checklist for Reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the Peacekeeping Operations”



Work with a partner to answer the following questions. (note that for ease of reference, the Checklist section and item number that addresses each question are included):

Purpose

1. As a general rule, how should you draft reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the Peacekeeping Operations? (item 1)
2. What are some main purposes of Secretary-General reports? (item 2)

Content

3. In general, how should a Secretary-General report be structured? (item 2)
4. What should the writer ensure? (item 3)
5. How should the writer (as much as possible) represent present activities in a report? (item 4)
6. What should the report writer show concerning “mandate implementation”? (item 6)
7. What should the writer do concerning “inaugural reports”? (item 7)

8. What should the writer do in regard to “gender-related” concerns? (item 9, 10)
9. What should the write consider given the confidential nature of the report and the sensitive or confidential nature of some of the information? (item 16)

Formatting

10. What is the precise word limit? (item 2)
11. Does the word limit include annexes?
12. How should the report be structured? (item 3)

Language, Tone and Style

13. Should you make extensive use of passive constructions? (item 1)
14. How many ideas should be included in each paragraph? (item 2)
15. How should government officials be named? (item 9)
16. What are some examples of words that can be used to qualify an unverified report? (item 14)?

Observations

- 17) What advice is given on handling the “Observations” section? (items 23—30)
- 18) Look over the items in the different sections of the Checklist. What are some other important things to consider?

CHECKLIST OF DOs AND DON'Ts ON REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

FOR MEMBERS OF INTEGRATED OPERATIONAL TEAMS

I. Purpose

Do

1. As a general rule, draft reports of the SG to the Security Council on peacekeeping operations² **in response to a request** by the Security Council. As appropriate, draft a “special report” **at the initiative of the Secretary-General** on matters that are within his remit, such as the reconfiguration or relocation of a peacekeeping operation for operational or security reasons, e.g., the relocation of UNMEE.
2. Use an SG report, inter alia, for the following **purposes** (or a combination thereof):
 - (a) To **inform** Security Council members on a **(future or) existing peacekeeping operation(s)**, including:
 - (i) The situation in a country/region in which the Council has declared its readiness to authorize or has authorized a peacekeeping operation;
 - (ii) Progress made with regard to deployment and/or mandate implementation;
 - (iii) Latest and significant developments challenging or impeding deployment and/or mandate implementation, including to follow up on an emergency situation to which the SG had alerted the Council in a letter;
 - (iv) A specific aspect of, or a specific request relating to, a peacekeeping operation(s), such as benchmarks for a possible phased drawdown of an operation.
 - (b) To **recommend** to the Security Council a **course of action** related to:
 - (i) The establishment of a new peacekeeping operation or follow-on mission (“inaugural report”);
 - (ii) The renewal of an existing mandate (“mandate renewal report”);
 - (iii) The termination of an existing mandate prior to its expiration;
 - (iv) A change in strength, composition or deployment on the ground of the military and/or police components of a mission;
 - (v) Significant modification(s) of an existing mandate;
 - (vi) A combination of the above.

² For the purposes of this checklist, the term “peacekeeping operations” covers all peacekeeping operations and special political missions directed and supported by DPKO. The guidance contained therein is primarily applicable to multi-dimensional peacekeeping operations with progressive mandates.

(c) To request the Security Council to **intervene** with key stakeholders on specific political, policy and/or operational programmes and/or decisions in support of deployment and/or mandate implementation.

(d) To establish an **official record** of the evolution of a peacekeeping operation for legal, political, operational and/or historical reasons.

II. Content

Do

1. As a general rule, **structure** an SG report as follows:
 - (a) Introduction;
 - (b) Core sections, including sections on findings of a Technical Assessment Mission (TAM), recommendations of a TAM, and mission support aspects, as appropriate;
 - (c) Financial aspects/implications, as appropriate;
 - (d) Observations;
 - (e) Annexes.
2. **Core Sections**
 2. Report on main developments during the reporting period related to the **peace process and mandate implementation**, as well as operational matters related to **deployment**, as relevant.
 3. Ensure that the focus is on providing **information and analysis**, not opinions or recommendations, showing the Security Council “[...] what it needs to know, not what it wants to hear” (Brahimi report, A/55/305).
 4. As much as possible, present activities in a way that is **results-oriented** and shows **impact or action**. For example, when reporting on meetings, focus on actual outputs, such as agreements reached, rather than describing the process itself.
 5. Include in particular those events, activities and findings that help build up a **credible “story”** and provide justification for the recommendations you will make in the “observations” section. For example, a recommendation to increase the troop strength should be a logical extension of the finding that the security situation has deteriorated or that new threats have emerged.
 6. Show how **mandate implementation relates to the achievement of the envisaged end-state**, as well as the time horizon and benchmarks for achieving this end-state, as relevant.
 7. In “inaugural reports” seeking the authorization for the **establishment of a new mission**, include a separate section on the proposed **mandate**, identifying strategic priorities, **structure** and distribution of tasks, and an outline of the **mission concept**.

8. If you are reporting on a technical assessment mission (TAM), include separate sections on the **findings and on the recommendations of the TAM**, as appropriate. The content of these sections will depend on the objectives of the TAM (i.e., mission start-up, establishment of benchmarks, crisis response, etc.) and the phase of the mission's cycle during which the TAM is conducted (i.e., mission-start up, "steady state", transition or drawdown). As a general rule, report on information, obtained through direct and wide consultations with stakeholders, needed to formulate key strategic and operational requirements (**findings**), and identify proposed courses of action to fulfil those requirements (**recommendations**).
9. Reflect **gender-related concerns** and **child-protection issues** in all relevant core sections, such as security, rule of law, etc.
10. Further, if relevant, include a separate section on **gender equality** and key activities of the **gender component** within the mission and with national actors in support of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008). If relevant, also include a separate section on the **protection of children affected by armed conflict**³ in compliance with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005), including progress and challenges in ending child rights violations, as well as key activities of the child protection component within the mission. Specific sections on other cross-cutting themes can be included as well, as appropriate.
11. Report on those **mission support issues** which impact on the achievement of the mission's substantive objectives, especially when administrative challenges have a political background, for example, land contracts in Sudan.
12. Include a section on **staff security issues**, as per Policy Committee decision 2008/9/v, dated 19 February 2008.
13. As a general rule, report developments in **chronological order**.
14. Reflect the viewpoints of all parties in an **impartial** manner, while at the same time making clear the position of the UN, if relevant, to help the Security Council fully assess the issue and the objectives the Mission is trying to accomplish.
15. Be circumspect about naming **sources of information** if this is **sensitive**. However, do so when it is necessary to ensure the credibility of the report.
16. Keeping in mind the public nature of the report, consider sharing **sensitive or confidential** information with the Council during an **oral briefing** instead.

³ You may be requested to review "political" and/or "military" sections of draft thematic SG reports, covering, for example, issues related to children and armed conflict in a country that is also hosting a peacekeeping operation. Your role would be to ensure that the messages in those sections are consistent with those contained in the SG reports to the Security Council on the peacekeeping operation in that country.

17. Where possible, use **sex-disaggregated data** throughout the report to illustrate gender differences, gender participation and targeted support to women/girls and men/boys, as well as in the annexes to indicate the ratio of male and female uniformed personnel in the mission.
18. Adhere to the same **cut-off date** throughout the report, including the annexes.
19. As a general rule, **order** core sections in accordance with their importance for establishment and/or mandate implementation. Political developments and security aspects are usually among the first sections of any SG report.
20. Ensure that the **length** of the core sections is **proportionate** to the weight given to them in the mandate and the overall length of the report.

Financial aspects/implications

21. Include a section on “**financial aspects**” in “mandate renewal” reports and on “**financial implications**” in reports seeking authorization for the establishment of a new mission or modification(s) to an established mission with resource implications.
22. If the “financial implications” section is not finalized by the due date of the report, state that the cost estimates will be issued as an **addendum** to the report.

Observations

23. Reflect **larger strategic goals** for the mission and the peace process from the viewpoint of the Secretary-General, and use them to encourage progress by the Security Council and other relevant stakeholders.
24. Provide an **overall assessment** of mandate implementation to-date and of the prevailing situation in the country, with a focus on progress made, immediate and longer-term risks and opportunities, and steps needed to achieve the objectives of the peacekeeping operation.
25. Ensure that recommendations for action by the Security Council are **targeted, realistic, preferably time-bound and reflective of a longer-term vision**, bearing in mind the most direct impact on the situation on the ground and key stakeholders. While they are addressed to the Security Council, they will also target other relevant stakeholders, whose contributions to the desired end-state will be critical.
26. Point out the **risks** that action, lack of action or insufficient or untimely action may have for peace and security in the country/region.
27. Communicate a **limited number of key messages** in order to maintain focus.

28. In reports seeking modifications to the strength, mandate or structure of an established mission, **restate**, in the name of the Secretary-General, the main **proposed modifications as recommendations for action** by the Security Council. For example:
“Accordingly, I recommend that the Mission’s security components be reconfigured in line with the concepts outlined in paragraphs 28 and 29 of the present report, and that its troop strength be reduced by one company, to a total of 7,060, ...”.
29. Formulate key recommendations related to the mandate (new or to be modified) in such a way that they **could be used by the Security Council** in order to increase the likelihood of their inclusion in the resolution.
30. If appropriate, highlight the **outcome of consultations** held so far with Member States regarding proposed recommendations on a mission’s mandate.

Annexes

31. Include the **number of uniformed personnel contributions** by TCCs/PCCs (military observers, staff officers, contingents, individual police officers and formed police units), using sex-disaggregated data, for example, see S/2008/202.
32. Include a **deployment map**, as relevant. The deployment map always follows the annex(es) with the numeric strength of uniformed personnel contributions.
33. Include in further annexes as appropriate any **additional information relevant to the report**, such as a table with the breakdown of the financial implications or key outcome documents or agreements, or a more graphic presentation of information requested by the Security Council, for example, a consolidation plan with benchmarks and indicators of progress (e.g., S/2008/586, Annex I).

Don’t

1. Don’t include activities or developments that fall outside of the reporting period, in particular activities already covered in previous report(s) but on which no progress was made or activities that are planned but have not yet taken place. The latter could be included, however, in the “observations” section, if they support the larger strategic objective of the mission.
2. Don’t include routine activities or technical data unless they serve the purpose of the report, such as crime statistics in the context of an executive policing mandate.
3. Don’t report data without providing the context, recent baseline figures or points of reference, except in the annexes with military and police contributions. Instead, whenever possible, report on trends and patterns.

4. In the “observations” section, don’t include recommendations on topics that were not addressed in the core sections of the report.
5. In the “observations” section, don’t include details on matters, usually of an administrative nature, that are within the purview of the General Assembly (Fifth Committee) rather than the Security Council, for example seeking authorization for the proposed civilian strength of a new mission.
6. In the “observations” section, don’t include recommendations regarding the internal functioning or posture of the Mission or the Secretariat.

III. Consultation procedures

Do

1. While the first draft of the report is expected to reflect input from UN system partners on the ground, as appropriate, **always consult** formally with relevant DPKO/DFS offices, DPA, and any other UN entity concerned with a specific aspect of mandate implementation or the situation in the country. Consultation should be done through the membership of the **Integrated Mission Task Force (IMTF)** as per the IMPP Guidelines on the Role of the Headquarters. Also consult partners on the “observations” section after a broad outline of the latter has been agreed upon between your IOT and the senior mission leadership. This is important to ensure an integrated approach and acceptance of any implications emanating from the recommendations.
2. **Consult particularly closely with DPA** on reports that cover special political or peacebuilding missions directed by DPKO or that cover peacekeeping operations in countries where the SG appointed a Special or Personal Envoy, a Special Representative, Special Coordinator or Special Advisor reporting to DPA.
3. In case of **unresolved differences** arising from the consultation process, keep in mind that you need to provide a strong narrative to the Security Council that is **driven by the logic of peacekeeping**, whose success or failure in convincing the Council is ultimately DPKO’s responsibility.
4. **Balance** requests for amendments to the drafts with the need to comply with the **timeline** for the preparation of the report as well as the prescribed **word limit**.

IV. Formatting

Do

1. Use the **edited version of the previous SG report**, available in Word from the Official Documents System (ODS) at <http://ods.un.org/> as a template for layout and formatting only, such as masthead, font, numbering and indentation of paragraphs, etc. Use font size 12 instead of 10.
2. Ensure that the report does not exceed the prescribed **word limit**, which is set at **8,500 words**, including annexes (approximately 16 pages). If, on an exceptional basis, circumstances require the report to be longer, draft a memo from USG/DPKO to USG/DGACM requesting a **page-limitation waiver**, explaining the reasons for the request and providing the actual word count. Also attach the manuscript to facilitate the evaluation and timely processing of your request.
3. Identify chapter **headings** by roman numerals, first-degree **sub-headings** by capital letters and second-degree sub-headings by Arabic numerals. Limit the sub-headings to the second degree, for example:
 "III. Technical assessment mission
 A. Findings
 1. Security situation and threat assessment
 2. Status of implementation of the Mission's mandate
 3. Rebuilding the Liberian National Police
 B. Recommendations
 1. ..."
4. **Capitalize only the first word** in section headings, unless they include words or names that are usually capitalized.

V. Language, tone and style

Do

1. Draft reports that are clear, simple, concise, **action-oriented and well-organized**. Use the **active voice** as much as possible.
2. As a general rule, keep to **one major idea per paragraph**.
3. If appropriate, include **topic sentences** to prepare the reader for what follows, for example:
 "The Force continued to assist the International Committee of the Red Cross with the passage of persons through the area of separation. During the past six months, UNDOF assisted in the crossing of 637 students, 500 pilgrims, five civilians and one bride".
4. Ensure that ideas flow between paragraphs and sections and that **arguments are logical** and easy to follow.

5. As a general rule, write in the **third person singular**, for example: “the Mission continued its activities on...”.
6. Use the **first person singular (I)** when you are referring to a personal initiative or event that directly involves the SG or when it is preferable in the context to invoke the authority of the SG, in particular in the “observations” section, for example:
 - (a) “I met with the leaders in New York – Mr. Papadopoulos on 23 September and Mr. Talat on 16 October”.
 - (b) “I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of the Mission for 12 months, while retaining the responsibilities established in its prior resolutions”.
7. Use **gender-sensitive** language (chair or chairperson, not chairman; spokesperson, not spokesman; police officers, not policemen; to operate/to staff, not to man).
8. Use **correct names** for political parties, factions, rebel groups, local entities, etc., in the original language. Write them out in full the first time they occur in the report, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses.
9. Use both the **first and last name for government officials the first time** they are mentioned, e.g., “President Joseph Kabila”. Subsequently, use the last name only, e.g., “President Kabila”. At <http://missions.un.int/protocol/> you may find an up-to-date list of, inter alia,
 - (a) Heads of State, Heads of Government and Ministers for Foreign Affairs;
 - (b) Senior Officials at the UN.
10. When mentioning the **head of a UN entity**, use his/her **title only**, not his/her name, e.g., “the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations chaired the meeting...”, and not, “the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Alain Le Roy, chaired the meeting...”.
11. Ensure that the **names and spelling of places** correspond to those on the attached deployment map.
12. Refer to **dates** using dd Month yyyy convention, for example, 4 January 2007. You may omit the year when you report on events that happened in the same year as the report is being written. However, when you refer to the reporting period in the “introduction” section of the report, state the year explicitly.
13. Refer to the **actual year**, for example, “in 2007”, rather than “last year”.
14. Use the **conditional** or words like “reportedly”, “allegedly”, etc. to report facts or incidents that could **not be verified**.

Don't

1. Don't refer to activities of components in a mission. Instead refer to the mission as a whole to reflect its integrated nature, i.e., "UNMIS carried out an assessment of human rights in ..." rather than "the Human Rights Unit of UNMIS carried out...".
2. Don't use acronyms for the names of UN departments within the Secretariat, committees, commissions, government agencies, mechanisms, peace agreements, and concepts such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, etc.
3. Don't italicize non-English names of organizations, institutions, political parties or factions.
4. Don't start sentences with high numbers, e.g., not "1,235 civilians have been killed" but rather "A total of 1,235 civilians have been killed".
5. Don't use subjective language which expresses feelings or emotions, e.g., "the Mission feels that the rise in security incidents is due to...".
6. Don't use the possessive with names of governments or government officials, the United Nations, the Secretary-General, and acronyms, e.g., not "the Sudanese government" but rather, "the Government of Sudan"; not "France's Foreign Minister", but rather "the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France"; not "the United Nations' position", but "the position of the United Nations", not "MINURCAT's Force Commander", but "the Force Commander of MINURCAT" or "the MINURCAT Force Commander".
7. Don't abbreviate the "United Nations", the "Secretary-General", the "Security Council", the "General Assembly" and the "Economic and Social Council", even when used as an adjective or part of a compound, e.g., "the latest resolution of the General Assembly" rather than "the latest GA resolution". It is acceptable to use abbreviations in a table/chart when space is limited.

VI. Timeline

Do

1. Bearing in mind the reporting cycle determined by the Security Council, confirm with DPA/SCAD/SCSB the **slotting date**, as well as the **due date** of the report ("D-day"), i.e., the date that the report is due as listed in the programme of work of the Security Council. Also confirm the **date of scheduled meetings** of the Council on the item. As a general rule, the SG report is due five working days prior to the scheduled consideration of the item by the Council. Reports recommending a mandate extension, and thus requiring a meeting of the TCCs/PCCs, are due seven working days in advance of the scheduled consideration by the Council.

2. Use the following **indicative timeline** for requesting, revising, consulting, clearing and processing a report with a six-month reporting cycle⁴:
- (a) D-day minus 35 working days (request report):
 - (i) Consult the mission by email or phone regarding the due date of the first draft, and the proposed outline and messaging, in particular when the Security Council made a specific request regarding its content;
 - (ii) **Request the draft report** from the mission by code cable. Provide a clear deadline, confirm the outline of the report and ask for both hard and electronic copies of the draft report;
 - (b) D-day minus 21 working days (consultation on report):
 - (i) **Request**, via an email from the IOT Team Leader/Regional Director, **comments** from DPKO/DFS offices, DPA and other relevant UN entities, such as OCHA, UNDP/DOCO, OHCHR, DSS, etc. If required and as appropriate, revise the draft report prior to distributing it for comments;
 - (ii) Request, via an inter-office memo from USG/DPKO, the text of the “financial aspects”/“financial implications” section, as applicable, from the Controller (in DM/OPPBA, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts);
 - (iii) Request the military and police specialists on your IOT to update the deployment map and annexes on military and police contributions. The military specialists on the IOT should liaise with the Cartographic Section in DFS on the deployment map;
 - (c) D-day minus 18 working days (revision of report):
 - (i) Consolidate and **integrate comments** received, as appropriate;
 - (ii) Seek clearance from the IOT Team Leader/Regional Director;
 - (iii) Agree with the mission on cut-off date and send the draft report back to the mission for final comments and last updates.
 - (d) D-day date minus 15 working days (finalization of report):
 - (i) Consolidate and integrate further amendments, as appropriate, in particular new important developments;
 - (ii) Include the text received from DM/OPPBA without alterations;
 - (iii) Seek **final clearance** from the IOT Team Leader/Regional Director;
 - (e) D-day minus 13 working days (clearance of report by ASG/OO and USG/DPKO):

Submit the report first to the **ASG/OO and then to the USG/DPKO** for **clearance** and incorporate amendments, as needed (see “clearance procedures” below for details);
 - (f) D-day minus 9 working days (clearance of report by EOSG):
 - (i) Submit DPKO-approved report to **EOSG for clearance** (see “clearance procedures” below for details);

⁴ If the reporting cycle is shorter, i.e., every three months or every month, the timeline will need to be adjusted accordingly.

- (ii) In parallel, submit the DPKO-approved report to DPA/SCAD/SCSB for advance translation;
- (g) D-day minus 5 working days (processing of report by DPA/DGACM):
 - (i) Submit the EOSG-approved report to **DPA/SCAD/SCSB for processing**;
 - (ii) Request document symbol from DPA/SCAD/SCSB;
 - (iii) Be available to respond to queries from the editors and translators (see “submission procedures” below for details);
 - (iv) Send the EOSG-approved report by code cable to the mission for information; mark the cable as “ONLY/Confidential”;
- (h) D-day: the report is **available** to the general public in all official languages.

VII. Clearance and approval procedures

Do

1. Prior to seeking clearance, **proofread** the report to spot errors in spelling and grammar, as well as missing words.
2. As a rule, submit the report for **consecutive clearance** first by the ASG/OO and then by the USG/DPKO. Route the report to OUSG/DPKO through OASG/OO, so that the latter can track its status.
3. Allow **two working days each** for clearance by the ASG/OO and USG/DPKO.
4. To seek **approval from the EOSG**, attach a one-page transmittal note from the USG/DPKO to the Chef de Cabinet, which:
 - (a) Requests SG approval of the report;
 - (b) Provides a summary of the report, highlighting its key observations and recommendations;
 - (c) Draws attention to any potentially contentious issues and/or anticipated adverse reactions;
 - (d) Lists UN entities consulted;
 - (e) Explains the reasons for delay in case of a late submission;
 - (f) Informs about the slotting date and due date of the report, as well as the date of the consideration of the item by the Security Council;
 - (g) Requests SG approval of the briefer to the Council, if already known;
 - (h) Includes the name and contact details of the main drafter, so that EOSG could easily seek clarifications, if required;
 - (i) Includes the name and contact details of the person responsible for picking up the approved report from EOSG, after notification by the Political Unit, with a view to expediting submission to DPA/SCAD/SCSB for processing. Note that this person should be available after 6:30 p.m.
5. Allow **four working days** for approval by the EOSG.

6. In case of late submission to EOSG, advise the OUSG/DPKO of the **delay** so that it may **alert the Political Unit** in the EOSG.

Don't

1. Don't resubmit for approval by EOSG a modified version of an earlier approved report, unless unexpected developments require factual changes.

VIII. Submission procedures

Do

1. Email a copy of the DPKO-cleared report to DPA/SCAD/SCSB (chann@un.org and setiawan@un.org) for **advance translation** at the time when you submit the report to EOSG for clearance.
2. Submit the EOSG-approved report to **DPA/SCAD/SCSB** (chann@un.org and setiawan@un.org; hard copies of the report and the EOSG statement of approval to be delivered to Mr. Setiawan) for advance circulation to the Security Council and issuance in all official UN languages as follows:
 - (a) One hard and one electronic copy of the EOSG-approved report, double-spaced and with additions marked in bold and deletions in strike-through;
 - (b) One electronic copy of the clean text, double-spaced;
 - (c) The original hard copy of the EOSG statement of approval, usually hand-written on top of the first page of the EOSG-approved report ;
 - (d) Name and contact details of the main drafter, including cell phone number, so that editors and translators can easily seek clarifications, if needed;
 - (e) A copy of the signed memo from DGACM granting a waiver of word length, if applicable.
3. In case of anticipated **delayed submission** of the report to DPA/SCAD/SCSB, OUSG/DPKO will orally **alert the President of the Security Council** via DPA/SCAD/SCSB and advise of the report's expected submission date.

Don't

1. Don't delay the submission of a report because of the need to update it in view of new, unforeseen developments. Information on important developments could be shared orally with the Security Council after the issuance of the report.
2. When submitting the EOSG-approved report to DPA/SCAD/SCSB, don't use tracked changes or comments to show additions or deletions.

IX. Security classifications and handling procedures

Do

1. Treat the “**observations**” section as **confidential** until the report has been issued.
2. Note that DPA/SCAD/SCSB circulates to members of the **Security Council** an **advance copy of the final unedited report** in English (PDF file) as soon as it receives the EOSG-approved report for issuance as a document of the Security Council.

Don't

1. Don't share the text of a draft or approved report with Security Council members or other Member States prior to its official publication.

Exercise on sample Secretary-General Report (UNMIS)



Work with a partner and discuss the answers to the questions below:

- 1) Is legislative authority for the report included in the introduction? (as specified in Checklist item)
- 2) Is the purpose of the report indicated in the introductory paragraph? Underline the purpose.
- 3) Scan the SG report. Do you see the sub-headings (Introduction, Security Situation, Political Developments, Implementation of the Mission's Mandate, Financial Implications, Observations), represented in the report (as indicated in Checklist items 1 and 2 under "Content")?
- 4) How are the paragraphs labeled? Note the use of Roman numerals and Arabic numbers. Are the paragraphs numbered continuously throughout the report or by individual section?
- 5) Look at the first sentence under "Introduction". Could the sentence be reduced in length? If so, how would you suggest separating the sentence into shorter component sentences?
- 6) Note how each paragraph has a central idea (but one that is related to the main theme of the report). What is the central idea of paragraph 8, for example? What supporting details in paragraph 8 help to illustrate the central idea?
- 7) Note how some paragraphs (such as paragraph 3) begin with transitional phrases that help move the ideas forward and develop them by showing their relation to ones previously stated). Such phrases are "In addition", "In this context", "During the reporting period", "In response to", "In a positive development". Can you find one or two more examples of transitional phrases?
- 7a) In paragraphs 19 – 21, notice how the description moves from general to specific. What is the "umbrella sentence" that captures a

general sense of the situation? What word is used to refer to all the participating bodies? How does the description become more specific in subsequent sentences?

8) In paragraphs 44, 45, and 50 the text includes numbers. Note how the numbers are written. Are they written as figures or as words? With your partner, underline some examples and review the editorial rule for writing numbers.

9) In the “Observations” section (beginning at paragraph 77) of the sample report, note how the sentences balance encouraging words with words that state actions that need to be taken. With your partner, underline some examples of sentences (in paragraphs 77 – 81) that show this “balance”

10) In the ‘Checklist for Writing SG Reports’, item #56 states that the “Observations” section should discuss the topic at hand in terms of larger strategic goals of the Mission. With your partner, underline examples of this in the accompanying sample report.

11) In the ‘Checklist for Writing SG Reports’, item #59 indicates that the Observations section should indicate risks of possible actions taken or not taken. With a partner, find and underline some examples of this in the ‘Observations’ section of the sample report.

12) Note that “United Nations”, “Secretary-General”, and Security Council” are not abbreviated in reports. How are other abbreviations (such as abbreviations of missions) handled?

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1590 (2005), in which the Council requested that it be kept regularly informed of progress in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in the Sudan, and resolution 1870 (2009), in which the Council requested me to develop benchmarks (see annex) for measuring and tracking progress in the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), and to include in my report an assessment of progress made against those benchmarks, as well as any consequent recommendations regarding the configuration of the Mission. The report provides an assessment of the overall situation in the country since my previous report, dated 14 July 2009 (S/2009/357), as well as an update on the activities of UNMIS up to 15 October 2009.

II. Security situation

2. The security situation in Southern Sudan remains unstable, particularly in Jonglei, Upper Nile and Lakes States, where as many as 54 clashes resulted in the deaths of at least 316 people during the reporting period and represented major security and human rights concerns in Southern Sudan. On 2 August 2009, inter-tribal tensions erupted when a group of Murle attacked Lou Nuer villages in Akobo County (Jonglei State); during the attack 161 people were killed and 29 were wounded. The majority of those killed were women and children. On 23 August, 66 people were killed in a cattle raid between the Luac and Dinka tribes in the area of Rumbek (Lakes State), including 15 members of the Southern Sudan Police Service and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). In another cattle raid on 28 August, Lou Nuer tribesmen attacked a Dachuek village in Twic East County (Jonglei State), resulting in the deaths of 28 people, including seven SPLA soldiers, and the displacement of thousands of local civilians. On 4 September, suspected Shilluk tribesmen carried out an attack against a Dinka village north of Malakal (Upper Nile State), during which the entire village was burned to the ground and several people were abducted. On 18 September, approximately 1,000 Lou Nuer tribesmen from Wuror, Nyirol and Akobo Counties attacked Duk County, approximately 170 kilometres north of Bor, Jonglei State. The clashes reportedly resulted in 72 people being killed and 45 injured and the burning of 250 houses. On 3 and 4 October, Dinka and Mundari tribesmen clashed near Juba (Central Equatoria State), killing 23 people and displacing approximately 1,700.

3. In addition to the inter-tribal violence, on 2 October in Bentiu (Unity State) a clash between the SPLA soldiers guarding the Deputy Commander's compound and those guarding the headquarters of the local Governor left 18 SPLA soldiers and 3 civilians dead and 40 people wounded.

4. During the reporting period, UNMIS received reports of Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) attacks in Western Equatorial State, in particular near food distribution sites. On 12 August 2009, LRA reportedly carried out an attack on Ezo town (120 kilometres north-west of Yambio) during which 17 people were reportedly abducted. After that attack, 29 international staff members from United Nations and international non-governmental organization operations in the area were relocated, and United Nations operations were temporarily suspended.
5. Also in Southern Sudan, banditry and criminality were reported in Central and Eastern Equatoria States. On 28 August 2009, a United Nations truck was attacked near Torit (Eastern Equatoria State), without any casualties. In response to that and other incidents of banditry, the regional security management team established a policy of armed escorts for staff movement as from 31 August 2009.
6. In Southern Kordofan on 2 August 2009, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and Sudanese Armed Forces reportedly clashed in Babanusa, resulting in a number of deaths and injuries on both sides. According to a representative of the Sudanese Armed Forces, they lost two soldiers in the fight and five were injured. No report was received on JEM casualty figures.

III. Political developments

7. With fewer than 18 months remaining until the referendums, and with national elections scheduled for April 2010, delays in the implementation of key Comprehensive Peace Agreement benchmarks continue to be of serious concern.
8. As I noted in my report on elections in the Sudan (S/2009/391), substantial preparatory work remains to be done to ensure free, fair and credible national elections. While the National Elections Commission has completed constituency delimitation based on the census results, the National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) continue to disagree over the use of the census results for elections. The new National Security Bill of 2009, a critical step towards a credible electoral process, has yet to be passed. In addition, the Criminal Procedures Amendment Act, signed into force on 9 July 2009, allows state governors or district commissioners to impose restrictions on campaigning by political parties.
9. In addition to the outstanding issues with respect to election preparations, NCP and SPLM have not reached final agreement on the Referendum Act, which is now 27 months behind schedule. Substantive discussions between SPLM and NCP on referendums and post-referendum arrangements are overdue.
10. In a positive development, on 22 July 2009 the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague announced its decision on the Abyei boundary dispute, which both SPLM and NCP accepted fully. That decision constitutes a significant step in Comprehensive Peace

Agreement implementation and clears the way for further progress in implementing the Abyei Protocol.

11. The seventh Southern Sudan Governors' Forum was held in Juba from 10 to 15 August 2009, during which the Permanent Court of Arbitration award was discussed, together with the financial crisis, elections and referendums. Forum members were unanimous in their call for civilians in Southern Sudan to be disarmed, forcibly if necessary, by SPLM.

12. In response to an invitation from SPLM, the Chairman of the National Umma Party (NUP), Sadiq Al-Mahdi, led a high-level delegation to Juba from 3 to 6 September 2009 to discuss key national issues with SPLM. On 5 September, NUP and SPLM signed a Declaration of Principles outlining their common views on issues including democratic transformation, elections, the referendum, census results and Darfur. From 26 to 30 September 2009, approximately 20 Sudanese political opposition parties met in Juba to discuss key national issues, including the census, elections, reconciliation and development. At the conclusion of the conference, the parties stressed the importance of the Government's implementing democratic reforms ahead of the elections.

13. The tripartite mechanism, led by the Special Envoy to the Sudan of the United States of America and involving NCP and SPLM, met several times in Khartoum and Juba during the reporting period. That forum has provided an opportunity for the parties to recommit to the deadlines set out in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, including for elections, referendums, popular consultations and border demarcation.

14. With regard to senior political appointments, on 13 August 2009, President Omer Hassan A. Al-Bashir issued a presidential decree appointing the Chief of the National Intelligence and Security Service, Lieutenant General Salah Abdallah (Gosh), as a Presidential Adviser. In June 2009, President Al-Bashir had appointed Ghazi Salah Al-Deen as Presidential Adviser, with responsibility for Darfur and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

IV. Implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement

Abyei and border demarcation

15. NCP and SPLM have both accepted the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration on Abyei and have publicly stated their commitment to abide by and peacefully implement the decision. In this regard, the Presidency has appointed a boundary demarcation committee and reappointed the Abyei Area Administration and Council. UNMIS provided the parties with a base map and offered to provide logistical support for the demarcation process. However, the work of the Committee was significantly delayed owing to disagreements between its Northern and Southern members on the proceedings of the Committee and the way forward. The delays will

not only affect the demarcation process, but also have an impact on military redeployment and the conduct of the elections and referendums. It is important to note that the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration placed the Higlig oilfields outside the Abyei Area. SPLM accepted that aspect of the decision, but it has since challenged the course of the 1 January 1956 border, arguing that Higlig falls within Unity State in the South. The strategic importance of the Higlig oilfields may further complicate the border demarcation process.

16. In addition, the Misseriya leadership has expressed concerns about its future status under the Permanent Court of Arbitration decision and may refuse to cooperate with the implementation process. The Joint Integrated Unit in Abyei currently lacks the resources and support needed to secure the Abyei area and the Diffra oilfields, while the Abyei Administration is still in the process of recruiting a local police force to replace the Joint Integrated Police Unit. Financial support to the Abyei Administration is still outstanding after delays of more than one year. In a positive development, the Ministry of Finance has recently approved \$10 million from the unity fund for the construction of 21 kilometres of roads within Abyei town.

17. The end of the rainy season in October may lead to an increase in Dinka Ngok and Misseriya returns to the Abyei Area, which could lead to further disputes over land, water and other resources. The beginning of the dry season coincides with the Misseriya seasonal migration through the Road Map Area, creating additional resource demands and potential for conflict. A successful migration will help assuage Misseriya fears regarding the Abyei authorities' commitment to their grazing rights; on the other hand, significant problems or violence could dramatically harden resistance and create major new obstacles to the upcoming elections and referendums.

18. In this context, UNMIS and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) facilitated a Dinka-Misseriya peace conference, which was held in Abyei town on 1 July 2009. The conference adopted an 11-point resolution acknowledging the role of UNMIS in fostering inter-tribal reconciliation and laid the foundation for a continuous reconciliation process. Following the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration, Dinka Ngok and Misseriya leaders also met with senior NCP and SPLM leadership in Khartoum and Juba to discuss their concerns and find ways to promote peaceful coexistence.

Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States

19. In Southern Kordofan State, the parties have committed themselves to the integration of political, administrative, social, economic and security structures before 31 October 2009. A newly formed committee has been given the task of processing the integration of education workers from the former SPLM areas into the Kordofan State institutional structures. A similar committee is restructuring the State civil service. On 8 September 2009, the Governor of Southern Kordofan State dissolved the local Government and appointed new ministers, advisers and commissioners.

VI. Implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan

37. The present section contains information on the implementation of the mandate of UNMIS and progress made towards the benchmarks set out in the annex.

Good offices, conflict management, reconciliation and peacebuilding

38. Throughout the reporting period, my Special Representative maintained a constant dialogue with the Sudanese political leadership and key Sudanese and international stakeholders in the peace process.

39. On 22 July 2009, in anticipation of the Permanent Court of Arbitration decision on Abyei, my Special Representative met with the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Interior of the Sudan, the United States Special Envoy for the Sudan and several ambassadors in Abyei town as the decision was announced.

40. With insecurity increasing in Jonglei and Upper Nile States, UNMIS worked in close collaboration with the Government of Southern Sudan and the state governments to implement the Jonglei Stabilization Plan with a view to enhancing civilian protection activities in the region. As part of this approach, UNMIS established two temporary operating bases at Akobo and Pibor (Jonglei State) from 13 May to 24 July 2009, and discussions are ongoing regarding the possible use of additional temporary operating bases in the region. To address the problem of accessibility in areas without roads, numerous patrols have been launched by boat from Nassir, along the Sobat corridor. Additionally, UNMIS supported the efforts of the Southern Sudan Peace Commission to begin the peacebuilding process in Jonglei State with tentative plans for a forthcoming Lou Nuer-Murle peace conference.

41. UNMIS is supporting a reconciliation initiative between the Shilluk and the Dinka in Upper Nile State, including work with the Southern Sudan Peace Commission to implement a two-track approach: grass-roots peace initiatives and Juba-based reconciliation meetings with politicians and community leaders. UNMIS is also working closely with the 10 Southern states and the Government of Southern Sudan Bureau of Community Security and Small Arms Control to monitor civilian disarmament initiatives in an effort to avert a disarmament campaign that could exacerbate insecurity in Southern Sudan.

Military deployment and activities

42. As at 22 September 2009, 9,275 of the authorized 10,000 UNMIS military personnel were deployed in the Sudan, including 483 military observers, 193 staff officers and 8,599 troops. Regular operations continued throughout the reporting period, including the provision of support to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement ceasefire mechanisms and joint patrols of military observers and the parties' national monitors. The military component has begun working with

the Electoral Assistance Division to develop an elections security assessment and to determine the military's support requirements.

43. In July 2009, Operation Guardian was launched, which involved the redeployment of additional United Nations forces from Sectors II and III into Abyei to provide a strong United Nations presence during the period prior to and after the Permanent Court of Arbitration announcement. Those forces are currently in Abyei and they will redeploy to their original sites as additional troops are brought into the area in the coming months.

Police

44. As at 15 September 2009, UNMIS had deployed 93 per cent of its mandated police strength of 715 (666 police advisers, including 82 women) to 22 sites throughout the Mission area.

45. UNMIS police continued to train local police, in particular through the successful implementation of the UNMIS Police Training Package 2009-2010. During the reporting period, 2,236 police officers, including 317 women, were trained in effective police work, including in programmes in Kassala, El Obeid and Port Sudan. Training relating to gender and child protection, human rights and community policing has resulted in the improved performance of the Sudanese police in handling public complaints and in assisting vulnerable persons and juveniles. However, the absence of a clearly defined training policy or commitment to the training programme by the Southern Sudan Police Service and the Government of the Sudan police continues to pose challenges to an effective police presence in the region.

46. In order to assist the Southern Sudan Police Service in creating a climate of optimum resource utilization, better financial management and accountability, the United Nations police conducted the second phase of asset management training. The United Nations police also participated in the UNMIS Jonglei stabilization and conflict-mitigation measures through the deployment of police advisers in Pibor and Akobo.

47. Community policing training was extended to the Dar es Salaam, Wad al-Bashir and Jebel Aulia camps in Khartoum to bridge the gap between the internally displaced person community and the police and to promote security and safety in communities of internally displaced persons.

48. During the reporting period, the United Nations police developed and commenced election security training and support as approved by the Government of the Sudan police and the Southern Sudan Police Service. More than 160 United Nations police master trainers, UNAMID police trainers and five Language Assistants were trained in election security duties. Thus far, the Government has not formalized a request for 100 additional police officers to assist during the elections. As I stated in my report on elections (S/2009/391), it will be important for the Government of National Unity and the National Elections Commission to finalize and approve the budget and operational plan for the electoral process as a matter of urgency.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

49. The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme reached a key milestone on 9 August 2009 with the successful completion of the first demobilization exercise in Blue Nile State, during which 5,443 participants were demobilized. The fourth disarmament and demobilization operation was also launched on 5 August 2009 in Southern Kordofan. As at 31 August 2009, a total of 12,650 participants had been demobilized in the Sudan. All candidates received their reinsertion packages, including cash, non-food items and coupons for World Food Programme food rations for three months. The Northern and Southern Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commissions are currently examining the establishment of another joint disarmament, demobilization and reintegration office in Abyei with the assistance of the United Nations. Preparations for the reintegration of the demobilized persons in the Three Areas and Southern Sudan are ongoing.

Return and reintegration

50. With the onset of heavy rains in most areas of return and along principal return routes, internally displaced person and refugee returns continued at a reduced but steady rate. During the last quarter of 2009, a total of 8,142 spontaneous returnees have been tracked by the International Organization for Migration at a major transit hub in Kosti. The available estimates indicate that well over 1.9 million internally displaced persons have spontaneously returned to their places of origin since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, particularly in the Three Areas and Southern Sudan. However, inter-ethnic violence in particular has contributed to further displacement and, in some cases, secondary displacement of returnees. Limited absorption capacities have also increased competition for available resources. The number of internally displaced persons whose return was organized under the joint plan stood at approximately 9,100 individuals for 2009 and at over 91,000 cumulatively since 2005.

51. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that a total of 171,154 refugees had been repatriated through programmes organized and assisted by the Office, of whom 31,789 had arrived since the beginning of 2009. With the comparable number of spontaneous movements from the neighbouring countries, the total for all refugee returns since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement reached 327,984. Taking into account cumulative movements of internally displaced persons, including large-scale spontaneous returns, it was estimated that more than 2.4 million Sudanese (including spontaneous and organized returns) had reached their home areas in Northern and Southern Sudan by the end of July 2009.

Recovery and development

52. In Southern Sudan, the humanitarian situation has deteriorated sharply and inter-tribal violence and attacks by LRA have resulted in the displacement of approximately 250,000 people, including 25,000

refugees who have fled the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic since January 2009. The situation faced by communities affected by inter-tribal fighting in Upper Nile, Eastern Equatoria, Warrap, Jonglei and Northern Bahr El Ghazal has been further aggravated by high cereal and low livestock prices and poor rainfall during the rainy season. Consequently, as many as 1.5 million people are facing severe food insecurity between August and December 2009 and malnutrition rates are rising in some of the most vulnerable areas.

53. The current budgetary crisis in Southern Sudan, the result of falling oil prices and revenues and the global economic downturn, continues to hamper the anticipated transition from humanitarian to early-recovery programming. While United Nations agencies and partners continue to proactively respond to the evolving context — which includes working closely with the Government of Southern Sudan to develop a fiscal package in response to the budget crisis — the emergence of critical gaps in the provision of essential services remains a significant risk. United Nations agencies, together with non-governmental organization partners, have scaled up their operations in support of efforts by local authorities to stabilize the situation in affected areas. As part of this effort, United Nations agencies issued an emergency action plan to address the food gap, requiring an additional total amount of \$57,155,456. The United Nations country team is actively involved in mobilizing voluntary contributions to support efforts by local authorities to stabilize the situation in affected areas.

Human rights

54. On 20 August 2009, UNMIS and the Advisory Council for Human Rights of the Government of the Sudan co-chaired the third meeting of the Human Rights Forum in Khartoum. The Advisory Council presented its position on the pending appointment by the United Nations Human Rights Council of an independent expert on the situation of human rights in the Sudan. The appointment of commissioners to serve on the new National Human Rights Commission in Northern Sudan was also discussed. UNMIS emphasized that candidates must be selected in a transparent, inclusive and participatory manner. Concerns about lack of progress on other serious human rights issues, including the status of persons detained following the JEM attacks, harassment of human rights defenders and lack of access to prisons in Northern Sudan, were also raised.

55. The Press and Printed Materials Act came into force in Northern Sudan in July 2009. Despite the improvements made during the drafting process, and a 16 September announcement by President Al-Bashir that equal space be allocated to the media institutions of all political parties, concerns remain about serious restrictions on freedom of expression and the powers of the supervisory body, especially given the upcoming elections. New media laws for Southern Sudan are still pending approval by the National Legislature.

56. In addition, the large-scale loss of civilian life in parts of Southern Sudan and the Three Areas, discussed earlier in the present

report (see sect. III above), has been exacerbated by the lack of mechanisms at the local and State levels to address killings and other crimes.

57. Regarding the trial of former UNMIS staff member, Lubna Hussein, on 7 September 2009 the Northern Khartoum Criminal Court found Ms. Hussein guilty of “immoral or indecent dress” and imposed a fine of approximately \$250.

Rule of law

58. The National Assembly was in recess for the duration of the reporting period. UNMIS continues to monitor and support the legislative reform process, including through a comprehensive legislative tracking report, which will be updated regularly. Support for the drafting of the Referendum Bill is continuing to be provided through consultations with the members of the National Constitutional Review Commission.

59. As part of its assistance aimed at ensuring free, fair and credible elections, UNMIS conducted a workshop on the monitoring mechanisms of the National Elections Act 2008 for judges, prosecutors and police professionals. Four more election workshops are planned for 2009 on voter registration and judicial, civil society and security issues.

60. UNMIS provided advisory support to the Ministry of Legal Affairs and to the specialized committee of the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly on the Southern Sudan Police Bill. The Police Bill was passed by the Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly at the beginning of October 2009. In addition, UNMIS and UNDP completed an analysis of rule-of-law institutions in Jonglei State as part of the Jonglei Stabilization Plan.

61. In addition to ongoing support to the prisons in Omdurman, Ed Damazin and Port Sudan, a new project for the detention facility in Abyei is due to start, including the construction of two extra wards for women and juveniles as well as police training. Training support and co-location of advisers continues in eight states in the South.

Child protection

62. More than 200 children who were abducted during incidents of inter-tribal violence in Jonglei State since January 2009 have not been returned to their families. In August 2009, local police for the first time arrested suspected child abductors in Jonglei State and rescued 12 children from captivity. The children are currently being housed by the Pibor County Commissioner pending family identification and reunification in the Sudan and Ethiopia.

63. Efforts are under way by UNMIS and the United Nations Children’s Fund to secure the signing of an action plan by armed forces in the Sudan for the release and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups, as required by Security Council resolution 1612 (2005).

64. Despite the ongoing military operations against LRA, the armed group continues to abduct children in Southern Sudan. While state

authorities in Central and Western Equatoria have worked to prevent abductions, the cross-border transfer of children escaping from LRA remains a major challenge which will require substantial intergovernmental, inter-mission and inter-agency cooperation involving the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda and the Central African Republic.

Public information

65. UNMIS organized regular press briefings primarily focused on the humanitarian and security situation in Southern Sudan. International and local media were briefed on the rising insecurity, UNMIS interventions and humanitarian response efforts. A special press briefing for both Khartoum- and Juba-based media was organized on UNMIS support for elections.

66. Despite the increasing need for a nationwide independent broadcast media outlet, in particular in the lead-up to elections, United Nations-sponsored Radio Miraya has yet to be assigned an FM frequency in Northern Sudan. The UNMIS Public Information Office outreach unit launched a peace culture education programme in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Khartoum State, in July 2009, involving a series of activities centred around elections, civic education and Comprehensive Peace Agreement-related activities for senior school students. During the month of August 2009, the outreach unit conducted a three-day workshop on elections and the status of the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement for 125 government officials and civil society members in Kassala State.

67. UNMIS provided photographs and video footage to local and international media covering developments on Abyei and tribal conflicts in the South and carried out an information campaign in the Abyei area in collaboration with the Abyei Area Administration prior to the Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling.

Mine action

68. Since the beginning of its activities in the Sudan, UNMIS mine action teams have opened a total of 33,686 kilometres of road, cleared 54,170,814 square metres of land, destroyed 18,911 mines and 834,463 items of unexploded ordnance and provided mine-risk education to 2,832,710 people in affected areas and to internally displaced persons in camps and way stations.

69. With the rainy season limiting demining operations during the reporting period, the focus was on the recruitment and training of deminers and the prioritization of routes and areas to be cleared in the dry season, in collaboration with United Nations agencies, state governments, non-governmental organizations and UNMIS. During the reporting period two minefields at Al Lafa in Kassala State were demined; the site is to house 2,500 displaced persons who were affected by the conflict in the area. Mine action teams also completed a survey and clearance relating to a new access road for an official border crossing between the Sudan and Eritrea, as well as the clearance of minefields in Central Equatoria State.

Conduct and discipline

70. Compliance by all categories of personnel with the United Nations code of conduct and zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse remains very high. Three incidents of serious misconduct were reported during the period under review.

71. In partnership with national counterparts from the Ministries of Gender and Social Development in the South and non-governmental organizations, UNMIS organized two outreach campaigns in Southern Sudan, which were attended by more than 600 people. The campaign aimed to raise the awareness of local leaders, women, youth and civil society organizations regarding issues of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Gender

72. During the reporting period, an UNMIS-chaired coordination mechanism was established to coordinate activities in the area of women's participation in elections. The group includes representatives from the United Nations country team and UNAMID. UNMIS continued to provide technical support to ministries of the Government of National Unity and the Government of Southern Sudan, as well as at the state level, on the promotion of gender equality, gender mainstreaming and the mitigation of gender-based violence in the context of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008). UNMIS also provided technical assistance to the Unit for Combating Violence against Women of the Sudanese Ministry of Justice in preparing the draft National Action Plan on Violence against Women for the northern states of the Sudan.

HIV/AIDS

73. UNMIS continues to support the integration of HIV/AIDS awareness in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and has provided HIV/AIDS sensitization for over 1,250 United Nations peacekeepers. During the reporting period, HIV/AIDS regional committees provided HIV/AIDS awareness courses to 527 national participants, including police, schools, women and local communities.

Staff security

74. A principal focus of UNMIS during the reporting period was to support contingency planning in anticipation of the announcement by the Permanent Court of Arbitration on Abyei. An integrated security contingency plan was developed in preparation for the announcement in conjunction with that of the United Nations police and military, and additional security officers were deployed to the area to support United Nations agencies and international non-governmental organizations.

75. UNMIS also carried out electoral security assessment missions throughout the northern and eastern states of Sudan, including many areas with only limited or no United Nations presence to date. The findings of those missions will be used in support of the deployment

of election teams to assist local authorities with preparations for the 2010 elections.

VII. Financial aspects

76. The General Assembly, by its resolution 63/273 B, appropriated for the maintenance of UNMIS for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, an amount of \$958.4 million. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNMIS beyond 30 April 2010, the cost of maintaining the Mission until 30 June 2010 would be limited to the amounts approved by the General Assembly. As at 31 August 2009, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNMIS amounted to \$397.9 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at that date amounted to \$3,741.3 million. Reimbursement of troop-contributing Governments for troop- and contingent-owned equipment costs has been made for the periods up to 31 December 2008 and 30 September 2008, respectively.

VIII. Observations

77. While some progress has been made on the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, important benchmarks have not been reached. The key outstanding issues — most notably elections and the referendums — are highly sensitive and will have the greatest impact on Sudanese political life. Resolving those issues will require deep commitment and extraordinary efforts by the parties. In this regard, I am concerned about the quality of the dialogue between the two parties. The key to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement remains the relationship between NCP and SPLM, and the Agreement must be implemented in spirit as well as according to the letter if the immense work undertaken is to be sustainable. I encourage the parties to strengthen their partnership and work in good faith to overcome the final obstacles.

78. I welcome the renewed international attention focused on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which remains the cornerstone of peace, stability and democratic transformation in the Sudan. I encourage members of the international community to intensify their engagement with the parties and other key stakeholders in the crucial time remaining. I also encourage the international community to approach the Sudan as a whole and to take into consideration the link between progress on the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Darfur peace process.

79. I welcome the involvement of the Special Envoys in the task of the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the progress made in the tripartite mechanism involving the United States, NCP and SPLM. I also welcome the parties' commitments on a variety of issues and the momentum that the new initiative has created. Significant effort is needed from the parties if they are to meet their renewed commitments and the tight deadlines that have been agreed upon.

80. I congratulate the parties on the successful completion of the Abyei arbitration process, and welcome their commitment to cooperate on the peaceful implementation of the decision. I also note the engagement of UNMIS, the United Nations country team in the Sudan and the international community with the people of Abyei, helping to prevent violence from occurring in response to the decision. The potential for serious conflict in Abyei remains, however, and continued stability will require the parties to address a wide range of imminent challenges, including the demarcation of the Abyei Area; the formation of the Abyei Referendum Commission; the funding of the Abyei Area Administration; the realization of peace dividends; and the sustainable return of the displaced population. In this regard, the upcoming seasonal migration will be the first test. The parties must work towards eliminating any prospects of conflict to assure the local communities on both sides that borders do not have to be barriers and that peaceful coexistence is possible irrespective of the result of the Abyei referendum in 2011.

81. I am concerned that, in their current state of deployment, the Joint Integrated Units cannot fulfil their functions as foreseen in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, in particular with respect to neutrality, security and acting as a symbol of unity. On the contrary, the Joint Integrated Units have sometimes themselves been the source of conflict, as highlighted by the previous violent clashes between the two components in Abyei and Malakal. While one cause of the problem is underlying grievances in the communities where the Joint Integrated Units are deployed, inadequate living and training conditions have led to heightened tensions and a higher risk of further clashes. In addition to the work already being done by UNMIS and the donor community to alleviate some of those shortcomings and improve the dialogue on cooperation within the Joint Integrated Units, additional support from the international community and a firm commitment by NCP and the Government of Southern Sudan to bring the Joint Integrated Units up to the necessary standards is urgently needed.

82. Elections in the Sudan are a crucial benchmark in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. I stress that elections in the Sudan must be seen as part of a larger process of democratic transformation and therefore require a long-term commitment from all stakeholders. I am concerned that the ongoing dispute over the use of the census results threatens the success of the electoral process, and I urge the parties to come to a resolution on those issues through an exercise of political will.

83. Coming to an agreement on how to proceed with elections will also allow the parties to give the requisite attention to preparations for the referendums in 2011. These elections, first and foremost, must be credible in the eyes of the Sudanese people. In this context, concerted efforts must be made to ensure the meaningful participation of all groups in the Sudan, especially internally displaced persons and the populations in Darfur and Eastern and Southern Sudan. The challenges in this regard are primarily political — although technical and security-related matters must also be addressed — and I urge the

parties to take concrete steps at the political level to guarantee a credible electoral process and an accepted outcome.

84. I am increasingly concerned about the delays in preparations for the referendums in Southern Sudan and Abyei. The timeline of the referendums, and thus their quality and credibility, is at stake. I urge the parties to pass the required referendum bills. Furthermore, long-term peace and stability will not be possible without an agreement on the post-referendum arrangements. I urge the parties to engage in substantive discussions in this regard, irrespective of the outcome of the referendums in 2011.

85. Similarly, in order to continue supporting the work of the assessment and evaluation commissions in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States, progress must now be made on the popular consultation process and the outcomes must be addressed in accordance with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. This opportunity must not be missed.

86. The apparent targeting of unarmed civilians during the series of tribal attacks and counter-attacks this year is of grave concern, as are the reports of widespread proliferation of arms in Southern Sudan. I call upon the Government of Southern Sudan to strengthen its efforts to end recurring violence and to bring those responsible to justice. In addition, I call on the groups involved to find peaceful means of settling grievances. UNMIS has been working closely with the humanitarian community to address increased humanitarian needs and to facilitate dialogue with and between the opposing sides. The Mission remains ready to provide ongoing support within its mandate and capabilities. As members of the international community, we must continue to assist the Government of Southern Sudan to stabilize the humanitarian situation and build its capacity to manage conflict and provide stability in the region. Further, the urgent delivery of human, material and financial resources for relief operations, in particular food, is essential to ensure that malnutrition rates and related diseases do not increase the suffering of the already vulnerable displaced people. A humanitarian crisis, as a result of growing insecurity, risks undermining the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and reversing gains achieved in the South.

87. I remain concerned about the outstanding issues impeding the work of the Border Commission. The lack of resolution on these issues carries wide-ranging ramifications for the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement — most notably for elections and the referendums. I urge the parties to expedite this process in view of the implications for other crucial Comprehensive Peace Agreement benchmarks.

88. Despite the significant progress in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the United Nations faces a significant funding shortfall for the reintegration of the first caseload of 64,000 participants. Furthermore, the Northern and Southern Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commissions are struggling to meet their daily operational costs, which has the potential to slow down implementation on the ground. I appeal to the international community and the parties to ensure adequate funding

for all components of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

89. The coming 18 months will pose enormous challenges for the people of the Sudan, and how those challenges are met will largely determine the future of the country. The elections and the referendums are exceptionally difficult processes that will test the capacity of all stakeholders, and there is a significant risk that they could lead to further instability in the Sudan. But this moment is also an opportunity for the democratic transformation of the Sudan and, if the parties are able to overcome the current obstacles, the people of the Sudan can take a critical step towards the realization of political equality, economic development and human rights. Every effort is being made to ensure the success of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement going forward, but there are singular shortcomings that can be addressed only through substantial dialogue between the parties. I urge the Council, the international community and the stakeholders in the future of the Sudan to dedicate all of our efforts to ensuring that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement moves forward in a peaceful and sustainable manner.

90. Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to my Special Representative, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, all United Nations staff working in the Sudan and Member States, especially troop- and police-contributing countries and donors, for their determined efforts to support UNMIS and the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Writers' List of Check Questions



When reviewing/editing a piece of writing, ask yourself these questions:

1) Is the reason for writing **clear**?

Note: some typical reasons for writing are

to inform

to report

to request

to recommend

to provide feedback

to provide an update

to assess

Note: this doesn't mean you have to abruptly launch into the topic in the first sentence—you can begin by setting a context, e.g., 'I am writing regarding the Global Economic Initiative...')

2) Is the **form** (code cable, note verbale, letter, memo, fax, note) the appropriate one for the given communication?

3) Is the **format** appropriate?

4) Do sentences have **stylistic balance** (i.e., parallel structure)?

5) Are there any **extraneous words** that could be deleted? (e.g., “basically”, “substantially”, “there is”, “there are”)

6) Are there any **heavy phrases** that could be transformed into light phrases or single words (e.g., “in view of the fact that” = “since”)?

7) Are there too many “**concept nouns**”? Could any of these nouns be transformed into verbs for a better ‘flow’ to the writing?
(e.g., “We do not have the intention of further participation in this programme” = “We do not intend to participate further...”)

8) Are there any “**emotionally charged**” words that might be replaced by neutral words (e.g., “inaccurate” might be replaced by “inconsistent with”)

9) Are there any **vague** references that might be made more specific (e.g., ‘in due course’ might be replaced with a specific date/time frame)?

10) Could information in several sentences be **consolidated/combined** into one or two sentences?

11) Could some **passive** sentences be transformed into active ones?

Quick Tips for Editing



Wherever possible, change:

nouns into verbs

By the elimination of this process-----*By eliminating this process*

passive into active

The decision was reached by the team -----*The team decided*

heavy phrases into light phrases (or single words)

In view of the fact that -----*Since*

“unbalanced” phrases into parallel structures:

He was told to collect the data and that he should also analyze it----- *He was told to collect the data and to analyze it*

adjective phrases into single words

a process that is ongoing----*an ongoing process*

overly long sentences into shorter ones

Although in 2006, all parties agreed to participate in a conflict resolution process, they have yet to come to the negotiating table, so many key issues remain unresolved ----- *In 2006, all parties agreed to participate in conflict resolution process. However, as they have yet to come to the negotiating table, many key issues remain unresolved.*

Supplementary Exercises



Tone and perspective

Use of “to” and “in order to”

Use of “many of which”, “many of whom”

Transition words and phrases

Rules and exercise for writing numbers

Review slides on editing tips

Tone and perspective



What is the difference in tone between the pairs of sentences below:

- 1) a) Last year's funds have been exhausted.
b) Last year's funds have been expended.
- 2) a) The amendments to the agreement are unacceptable.
b) The amendments to the agreement are inconsistent with the prior agreement.
- 3) a) Your office has not yet sent any response to our department's repeated requests.
b) It does not appear that our office has received a response to the request in CCC1 (5 January), CCC2 (15 January), and CCC3 (15 February).
- 4) a) As the leader, you need to find an effective strategy.
b) I count on your leadership to find a way forward.
- 5) a) You will receive the requested documents within two weeks
b) Our office will send the requested documents within two weeks.

Guidance on the Use of “to” and “in order to”



“In order to” and “to” can often be used interchangeably. As the more concise version, “to” is, in many cases, the preferred one, as in the examples below:

(a) The team held a meeting in order to discuss the new policy.

(b) The team held a meeting to discuss the new policy. (more concise)

However in some cases, the formal quality of “in order to” is needed, as in the case below:

(c) “We the people of the United States of America, in order to form a more perfect Union...”

“in order to” is also preferred if a sentence already contains several infinitives in succession:

(d) We need to study other cultures, to understand them on their own terms in order to interact successfully.

In negative sentences, only “in order not to” can be used (and not replaced with a more concise form):

(e) In order not to forget the points of their discussion, he made careful notes.

Exercise on the use of “to” and “in order to”



Work with a partner and decide whether “to” or “in order to” is the more appropriate choice in the sentences below.

- 1) We will need to practice the new procedure, to test it in a number of contexts, and to get feedback from different sources _____ determine its effectiveness.
- 2) He went to the conference _____ solicit support for his proposal.
- 3) _____ exacerbate the conflict, they limited talks to the most pressing issue.
- 4) Our team needs to learn the needs of the local people, to get a better sense of their values and way of life _____ help bring positive changes to their society.
- 5) Listen to the report of his difficulties carefully _____ make the same mistakes.

Guidance on Phrases of Quantity

An adjective clause uses pronouns to connect the dependent clause to the independent clause.

- little of which (pronouns for quantity)
- some of whose
- most of whom
- all of whom



"Most of which" (subject position)


JOIN THE SENTENCES:		INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	DEPENDENT CLAUSE
1	Replace the subject pronoun "most of them" with "most of which"	The UN has a lot of visitors	Most of them take public tours.
			↓
2	Insert the clause into the main sentence.	The UN has a lot of visitors	most of whom take public tours
3	Add <u>punctuation</u> .	The UN has a lot of visitors,	most of whom take public tours.

"Most of whom" (object position)

JOIN THE SENTENCES:		INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	DEPENDENT CLAUSE
1	Replace the object pronoun "a lot of them" with "a lot of which"		
2	Move the relative pronoun to the front of the sentence.		↙

3	Insert the clause into the main sentence.		
4	Add <u>punctuation</u> .		

"Most of whose" (subject position)

JOIN THE SENTENCES:		INDEPENDENT CLAUSE	DEPENDENT CLAUSE
1	Replace the subject pronoun "most of her" with "most of whose"	She listens to experts' presentations	Most of the presentations contain key information 
2	Insert the clause into the main sentence.		most of whose presentations contain key information
3	Add punctuation	She listens to experts,	most of whose presentations contain key information

Other Quantity Phrases

some of	many of	most of	none of	two of
half of	both of	neither of	each of	all of
both of	several of	a few of	a little of	a number of

Common Mistake - most of who / most of whom

ERROR	FIX
In my class there are 30 students, most of who are from Asia.	In my class there are 30 students, most of whom are from Asia. Use "whom" after a preposition, such as in the above expression of quantity.

Count nouns and non-count nouns

Non-count nouns	Count nouns
(use “much”, “a little”, “less”, “amount of”, “a lot of”)	(use “many”, “a few”, “fewer”, “number of”, “a lot of”)
Note that “a lot of” can be used with both “count” and “non-count nouns”	
advice baggage clothing email equipment furniture information insurgency knowledge luggage machinery mail noise (sometimes ‘non-count’) smoke	advertisement bag clothes cabinet demonstrator document insurgent jewel letter noise (sometimes ‘count’) person police officer (plural: “police officers” or “police”) staff member

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Transitional Devices

A. Commonly used transitional devices

RELATIONSHIP	Coordinator	Subordinator	Transitional phrase	Preposition	Other
Addition	and		additionally besides equally important furthermore in addition moreover not only...but also	in addition to	another other as well as further
Cause	for	as because since		as a result of because of due to on account of owing to	caused by
Clarification			actually in other words		i.e., that is,
Comparison/ Contrast	but	while whereas although	by comparison however on the one hand... on the other hand in contrast on the contrary in like manner similarly	like similar to unlike	
Concession, Unexpected result	but yet	although even though though despite the fact that in spite of the fact that regardless of the fact that	at the same time even so however nevertheless nonetheless still that said	despite in spite of regardless of	
Conclusion			finally in conclusion in short in sum(mary) on a final note to sum up/summarize to conclude		
Condition		as long as if even if only if unless whether (or not) provided that with the proviso that on condition that		in case of X only on the basis of X only with X	

		on the understanding that			
Correction of previous mis-understanding			actually as a matter of fact in actuality in fact in reality		
Example			for example for instance in particular		such as namely a case in point to illustrate in particular <i>inter alia</i> among others including e.g.,
Generalization			all things considered by and large generally speaking in general on the whole overall		
Intensification			actually as a matter of fact certainly indeed in fact undoubtedly without a doubt		
Judgement			fortunately hopefully interestingly on a (less) positive note on the positive side regrettably unfortunately		
Change of topic			as far as X is concerned on a different matter on another note regarding X turning to X with regard to X		Let me turn to another matter
Purpose		so (that)	to this end	with a view to (-ing) with the purpose of X	to (verb) in order to (verb) so as to (verb)
Reference/ Response			concerning X in this connection in response to X in this regard on this point regarding X with regard to X	in connection with X	such X this, that these, those former, latter I refer you to X you will recall X
Result	so		accordingly as a result/consequence		resulted in resulting in

			consequently for this reason hence therefore thus		causing with the result that
Time			as at a certain stage in the meantime meanwhile		

B. PUNCTUATION OF TRANSITIONS

1. Coordinator

Independent clause, *coordinator* independent clause.

e.g. *We thank you for your cooperation in this matter, and we look forward to hearing from you at your convenience.*

e.g. *The candidate has the requisite work experience, but he has not yet received his university degree.*

2. Subordinator

Independent clause *subordinator* + dependent clause.

Subordinator + dependent clause, independent clause.

e.g. *The company has decided to recall all cars with the new anti-lock brake system*

although there is no clear evidence that it was the brake system that caused last week's fatal accident.

e.g. *Although there is no clear evidence that it was the brake system that caused last week's fatal accident, the company has decided to recall all cars with the new anti-lock brake system.*

3. Transition word

Independent clause, *Transition*, independent clause.

e.g. *There is no clear evidence that the brake system caused last week's tragic accident. Nevertheless, the company has decided to recall all cars with the new anti-lock brake system.*

e.g. *The suspect has not admitted to any wrongdoing. On the contrary, he swears that he has committed no crime.*

4. Preposition

Preposition + noun/ noun phrase/ noun clause, independent clause.

e.g. *In addition to the brake system, the car has had problems with the fuel injection.*

e.g. *Despite the torrential downpour, the searchers continued to look for the lost dog.*

Compare:

1. Despite the rain, **the searchers continued to look for the lost dog.**
2. Although it was raining, **the searchers continued to look for the lost dog.**
3. **It was raining.** Nevertheless, **the searchers continued to look for the lost dog.**
4. **It was raining,** but **the searchers continued to look for the lost dog.**

Compare:

1. In addition to two Masters degrees, **the candidate has worked in the field for five consecutive years.**
2. **The candidate has two Masters degrees.** In addition, **she has worked in the field for five consecutive years.**
3. **The candidate has two Masters degrees,** and **she has worked in the field for five consecutive years.**

Compare:

1. As a result of the recently implemented flex-time policy, **employees are more productive at work.**
2. **The company has recently implemented a flex-time policy.** As a result, **employees are more productive at work.**
3. Because the company has recently implemented a flex-time policy, **employees are more productive at work.**
4. **The company has recently implemented a flex-time policy,** so **employees are more productive at work.**

Text with Numbers Written According to UN Editorial Standard



Standard United Nations practice for the use and presentation of numbers can be found in section E of the *United Nations Correspondence Manual* (pages 38-39) as well as in the on-line *United Nations Editorial Manual*.

Look at the following texts and underline all the numbers written either in figures or words. The first two paragraphs are done for you:

- (a) At present, there are approximately 3.5 million data items, of which one third are numerical data and two thirds are the codes used for defining and accessing the numerical data. They are stored in approximately 115,000 SAS observations on some 80 essentially different SAS variables. The total size of this data base is about 10 to 20 megabytes.
- (b) With regard to institutional sector accounts, 3 per cent of all developing countries have established integrated accounts, for all sectors, compared with 7 out of the 46 countries (15 per cent) in the present study.
- (c) With regard to geographical coverage, all except four claimed to have national coverage. Furthermore, 16 countries indicated that non-market production was included in their censuses of agricultural activities; of these, six also included it in their national censuses;
- (d) With regard to estimates of final demand, information available from the country replies indicates that nine countries have conducted investment surveys and nine surveys of stocks, and 28 used construction permits. These surveys may give direct information on capital formation and related capital accounts. Forty countries have conducted household surveys and 39 used customs data.
- (e) An early compact optical disk based for data recording/retrieval could hold up to nearly 500 megabytes (or 500 million characters) on a 5 ¼ inch disk. This was more than 1,000 times the capacity of the previous 5 ¼-inch 360 KB magnetic disk and is equivalent to 150,000 pages of documents.

Exercise on Rules for Writing Numbers



Extrapolate eight rules for writing numbers in Organizational documents based on the preceding data. Fill the blanks with “figures” or “words”.

- (a) In general, numbers under 10 should be expressed in _____.
- (b) Numbers from 10 to 999,999 should normally be written in _____.
- (c) A number at the beginning of a sentence should be expressed in _____.
- (d) When two or more numbers to which different rules apply occur in a series, referring to the same thing, they should be expressed in _____.
- (e) Millions and billions should be expressed in _____.
- (f) Number with decimal or vulgar fractions should be written in _____.
- (g) Vulgar fractions alone should be expressed in _____.
- (h) Percentages should be expressed in _____ and the sign should be expressed in _____.

Some Clouds That Can Obscure Clear Writing



- a) **too wordy:** ideas can drown in a sea of excess words
- b) **overly long: “run-on” sentences** (attempt to express too many ideas in one complex sentence): should be separated into shorter, simpler sentences
- c) **common grammatical errors:** lack of subject-verb agreement, incorrect use of conditional structures, incorrect use of verbs in subjunctive sentences
- d) **too many passive constructions:** phrases like “Data has been requested”, “It was decided...” so that it is unclear who asked or who did what to whom
- e) **too many nominalizations:** too many strings of concept-nouns (“the be transformed into verbs for better writing flow
- f) **incorrect pronoun reference:** incorrect pronoun is used when referring to a noun in previous phrase
- g) **misuse of prepositions:** incorrect use of prepositions can cause misunderstanding
- h) **punctuation errors:** incorrect use of commas, colons, semi-colons, etc.
- i) **misplaced modifiers:** words and phrases that are not next to the words they are meant to describe
- j) **unfamiliarity with organizational writing conventions:** incorrect writing of abbreviations, numbers, capitalized terms
- k) **incorrect use of verbs in reported speech:** incorrect sequence of tenses in reported speech
- l) **lack of parallel structure:** using structures that do not match; lack of stylistic balance
- m) **no use of subjunctive**
- n) **lack of professional tone (i.e., tactful, factual)**

Below are some sentences from correspondence that exemplify the problems described above. Work with the person next to you and decide how the sentence could be improved:

a) In view of the agreement made by the Community Building Group to engage in the reconstruction, which is ongoing, of habitats for local use, funds will be supplied by the donor country until such time as construction is completed.

b) The Government of Terrana pledged a total of \$18 million to the three institutions at the meeting, since then, ongoing discussions have been taking place for the express purpose of the finalization of the an agreement with the donor.

c) If the Officer-in-Charge would have taken action more quickly, the emergency situation could have been avoided.

d) A decision has been made by the Working Group to extend an invitation for the participation all parties that are concerned.

e) The mission focused on the stabilization of the post-conflict situation and later the facilitation of a political process that allows for the resumption of negotiations and operationalization of mandated programmes.

f) Our office is grateful to receive your response to the presentation and the participants' comments. It will be very useful in planning future conferences.

g) We have made a request for more storage space; in the other hand, we are holding onto some heavy equipment that could be disposed of.

h) Our office acknowledges the need for updating of documents, however this cannot take place until we receive the updated information from your office.

j) Of the twenty-four staff members in the department of peace affairs, twelve are from the United States, 6 are from Great Britain, five are from China, and 1 is from Italy.

k) The Acting OIC confirmed that the meeting is being held that day.

l) He was told to identify the needed equipment and that he should also order it.

i) The admin assistant brought in the report to the supervisor, poorly and improperly prepared.

m) The Committee recommended that the staff member seeks advice from Headquarters.

n) We have evaluated your proposal and find it unacceptable as it has little to do with our agreement.

Possible rewrites of the above sentences. Are they similar to yours?

a) Since the community building Group agreed to ongoing reconstruction of locally used habitats, the donor country will supply funds until the construction is completed.

b) The Government of Terrana pledged a total of \$18 million to the three institutions at the meeting. Since then, ongoing discussions have been taking place to finalize the agreement with the donor.

c) If the Officer-in-Charge had taken action more quickly, the emergency situation could have been avoided.

d) The working Group decided to invite all concerned parties to participate.

e) The mission focused first, on stabilizing the post-conflict situation. Later, it facilitated a political process that allowed negotiations to resume and mandated programmes to be put in place.

f) Our office is grateful to receive your response to the presentation and the participants' comments. These will be very useful in planning future conferences.

g) We have made a request for more storage space; on the other hand, we are holding onto some heavy equipment that could be disposed of.

h) Our office acknowledges the need for updating of documents; however, this cannot take place until we receive the updated information from your office.

j) Of the 24 staff members in the Department of Peace Affairs, 12 are from the United States, 6 are from Great Britain, 5 are from China, and 1 is from Italy.

k) The Acting OIC confirmed that the meeting was being held that day.

l) He was told to identify and to order the needed equipment.

i) The admin assistant brought in the improperly prepared report to the supervisor.

m) The Committee recommended that the staff member seek advice from Headquarters.

n) We have evaluated your proposal and find it unacceptable as it has little to do with our agreement.

Key Resources



**List of Useful Resources on
Drafting Correspondence and
Principles of Report Writing**

Guidelines on handling sensitive information

Routing slips

Quotes about Writing

List of Useful Resources on Drafting Correspondence and Principles of Writing

A. Recommended Resources Specific to DPKO and DFS

“Guidelines on Drafting Correspondence for DPKO Political Affairs Officers” of 1 May 2008; available on the UN Peace Operations Intranet and in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/On my computer/OO Checklists).

Sample Book of Correspondence for DPKO Political Affairs Officers” of 1 May 2008; available on the UN Peace Operations Intranet and in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/On my computer/Samples & Models). .

DPKO-DFS guidelines and templates on correspondence; available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/On my computer/ DPKO&DFS Guidelines and DPKO&DFS Templates).

“DPKO-DFS Model Note Extension of Appointment (2008)”; available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/On my computer/Samples & Models).

“Tips on Using DPKO and DFS Templates;” available in Microsoft Word on your computer (File/New Document/On my computer/ DPKO&DFS Guidelines).

B. Recommended Books

Benson, Morton, Evelyn Benson and Robert Ilson. (1997). *The BBI Dictionary of English Word Combinations*, revised edition. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Burchfield, R.W. (2000). *The New Fowler’s Modern English Usage*. 3rd edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

***Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary*, 2nd edition. (1995). London: Harper Collins Publishers.**

*** *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 11th edition. (2004). New York: Oxford University Press.**

Hacker, Diana and Wanda Van Goor. (1998). *Bedford Basics*, 3rd edition. New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press.

*** Hindle, W.R. (1984). *A Guide to Writing for the United Nations*. New York: United Nations.**

Partridge, Eric. (1997). *Usage and Abusage: A guide to Good English*, Janet Whitcut,

editor, New York: W.W. Norton and Company.

Skillin, Marjorie E. and Robert M. Gay. (1974). *Words into Type*. Pearson PTP.

* Strunk, William, Jr., E.B. White and Roger Angell. (2000). *The Elements of Style*, 4th edition. New York: Pearson Higher Education.

* Swan, Michael. (1995). *Practical English Usage*, Second Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Williams, Joseph M. (1997). *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, Fifth Edition. New York: Longman.

Zinsser, William K. *On Writing Well*. New York: HarperResource, 2001.

C. Recommended Websites⁵

UN Resources

UN Correspondence Manual

<http://iseek.un.org/m246.asp?dept=363&did=1584&k=%22un+correspondence+manual%22&c=0&df=&dt=&p=1&sc=>

UN Editorial Manual

<http://intranet.un.org/dgaacs/translation/editorial/>

or available through the internet at: www.dgacm.org (click on "Editorial Manual Online" then type in the Username: emanual and the Password: 1234)

UN Protocol and Liaison Service

<http://missions.un.int/protocol/>

UN English Language Programme

<http://www.un.org/depts/OHRM/sds/lcp/English/>

General Usage

World Wide Words

<http://www.worldwidewords.org/qa/qa-moo1.htm>

Created by a Cambridge University educated writer, BBC studio manager, museum curator and advisor to the Oxford English Dictionary. He writes about international English use from a British perspective.

Ask Oxford

⁵ Source: "ECLAC Drafting Class, OCTOBER 2005"

<http://www.askoxford.com/?view=uk>

Web site about the English language by the publishers of the Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford University Press). Articles and information about English, its vocabulary, grammar, and use throughout the world. You can submit a question to the OED's English experts, search the English dictionary, thesaurus, and quotation dictionary, learn new words and to play word games.

Plain English Campaign

<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/>

General Writing Skills

Bartleby (The Elements of Style)

<http://www.bartleby.com/141/>

This is the on-line version of the Strunk and White Style Manual. However, according to another website (which is listed below), this on-line version is the 1918 edition of the manual. If that is true, some of the “rules” may be outdated. (Strunk, William, 1869–1946. The elements of style, by William Strunk, Jr. 1st ed. Ithaca, N.Y.: Priv. print. [Geneva, N.Y.: Press of W.P. Humphrey], 1918.)

Bartleby (Fowler's "The King's English")

<http://www.bartleby.com/116/>

This is the on-line version of Fowler's The King's English. Again, it is the early edition (1908) and therefore also somewhat outdated. (Fowler, Henry Watson, 1858–1933. The King's English. 2d ed. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1908.)

The British Council

http://www.learnenglish.org.uk/adult_frame.html

The British Council's website – it has some very useful links.

Ohio University

<http://www.ohiou.edu/esl/english/writing/reference.html>

Ohio University's website is a good resource for many language-related topics and includes links to other university writing centres.

On-Line Dictionaries

One Look

<http://www.onelook.com/>

A mega-dictionary with links to other dictionaries. Provides translations in French, Italian, Portuguese, German and Spanish.

United Nations

Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Department of Field Support

Ref.

Guidelines on Handling Sensitive Information

Content:	A.	Purpose
	B.	Scope and rationale
	C.	Guidelines
	D.	References
	E.	Monitoring compliance
	F.	Contact
	G.	History

A. PURPOSE

1. The purpose of these guidelines is to support United Nations Secretary-General Bulletin ST/SGB/2007/6 *Information Sensitivity, Classification and Handling* by providing guidance for the handling and storage of sensitive information.
 2. These guidelines serve strictly as an interim tool prior to the issuance of the Archives and Records Management Section's *Peacekeeping Information Sensitivity Toolkit*, which will provide comprehensive policy and procedure for the creation, transmittal, storage, and destruction of sensitive information.
-

B. SCOPE

3. These guidelines apply to all Confidential and Strictly Confidential information, regardless of format, created and received by Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Department of Field Support (DFS), and peacekeeping operations staff members.
-

C. GUIDELINES

See following page.

Information marked as <i>CONFIDENTIAL</i>	
Definition	<p>"The designation 'confidential' shall apply to information or material whose unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause damage to the work of the United Nations"</p> <p>– ST/SGB/2007/6 Section 2.2</p>
Clearance Level	<p>An internal SOP should designate the functions/staff that are permitted to handle this information. These include all staff involved with the transmission, storage and disposal of the information.</p>
Marking	<p>The following terminology must be used: "Confidential".</p> <p><u>Hardcopy documents</u> Classification must be marked at the top of the title page, on each interior page and on the reverse side of the last page.</p> <p><u>Electronic documents</u> Documents must be marked with appropriate headers to ensure that information transmitted will have appropriate markings. Removable storage media such as CD-ROMs, DVDs, etc. must bear an outer label with the appropriate classification level.</p> <p>Note that the term "Only" is not a substitute for "Confidential". A code cable marked as "Only" must be additionally marked and handled as a "Confidential" document.</p>
Electronic Transmission	<p>Information transmitted across any networks must be encrypted using a system or database approved by ICTD.</p> <p>Except under exceptional circumstances, information must not be transmitted by a fax or email system.</p>
Electronic Storage	<p>Information must be stored in a secure electronic document management system approved by ICTD and the UN Archives and Records Management Section.</p>
Manual Handling	<p><u>Within UNHQ</u> Material should be double enveloped with "by hand" stamped or hand-written on the outer envelope, sealed and dispatched by hand, with hand-to-hand receipts at each stage of the process.</p> <p><u>Transfer between UNHQ and other bodies</u> Material must be double enveloped and sealed with a receipt form included inside the inner envelope and carried by the UN Diplomatic Pouch service.</p>
Manual Storage	<p>Information must be stored in a <u>locked</u> container, vault, room, or area under UN control.</p>
Reproduction	<p>Photocopying only allowed with authorization from officer responsible for the information.</p>
Disposal	<p><u>Hardcopy documents</u> Documents should be transported in lockable containers and/or in totally enclosed and lockable vehicles. They should be destroyed in the presence of an officer of your business unit. For extra security, sensitive paper records may also be shredded in-house before being sent for pulping or incineration.</p> <p><u>Electronic documents</u> Particular attention should be paid to digital documents that contain sensitive information and which need to be destroyed. You are strongly advised to collaborate with ICTD to ensure best practice in the destruction of digital documents.</p> <p>Additional guidance on document destruction may be found at: http://archives.un.org/unarms/en/unrecordsmgmt/unrecordsresources/destroyingrecords.htm </p>

Information marked as <i>STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL</i>	
Definition	<p>"The designation 'strictly confidential' shall apply to information or material whose unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to or impede the conduct of the work of the United Nations"</p> <p>– ST/SGB/2007/6 Section 2.3</p>
Clearance Level	An internal SOP should designate the functions/staff that are permitted to handle this information. These include all staff involved with the transmission, storage and disposal of the information.
Marking	<p>The following terminology must be used: "Strictly Confidential".</p> <p><u>Hardcopy documents</u> Classification must be marked at the top of the title page, on each interior page and on the reverse side of the last page.</p> <p><u>Electronic documents</u> Documents must be marked with appropriate headers to ensure that information transmitted will have appropriate markings. Removable storage media such as CD-ROMs, DVDs, etc. must bear an outer label with the appropriate classification level.</p> <p>Note that the term "No Distribution" is not a substitute for "Strictly Confidential". A code cable marked as "No Distribution" must be additionally marked and handled as a "Strictly Confidential" document.</p>
Electronic Transmission	<p>Information must be transmitted using the Secretariat Code Cable System.</p> <p>Except under exceptional circumstances, information must not be transmitted by a fax or email system.</p>
Electronic Storage	Information must be stored in a secure electronic document management system or database approved by ICTD and the UN Archives and Records Management Section.
Manual Handling	<p><u>Within UNHQ</u> Material should be double enveloped with "by hand" stamped or hand-written on the outer envelope, sealed and dispatched by hand, with hand-to-hand receipts at each stage of the process.</p> <p><u>Transfer between UNHQ and other bodies</u> Material must be double enveloped and sealed with a receipt form included inside the inner envelope and carried by the UN Diplomatic Pouch service.</p>
Manual Storage	Information must be stored in a <u>locked</u> safe or vault under UN control.
Reproduction	Photocopying only allowed with authorization from officer responsible for the information.
Disposal	<p><u>Hardcopy documents</u> Documents should be transported in lockable containers and/or in totally enclosed and lockable vehicles. They should be destroyed in the presence of an officer of your business unit. For extra security, sensitive paper records may also be shredded in-house before being sent for pulping or incineration.</p> <p><u>Electronic documents</u> Particular attention should be paid to digital documents that contain sensitive information and which need to be destroyed. You are strongly advised to collaborate with ICTD to ensure best practice destruction of digital documents.</p> <p>Additional guidance on document destruction may be found at: http://archives.un.org/unarms/en/unrecordsmgmt/unrecordsresources/destroyingrecords.htm </p>

4. **Terms and Definitions**

Document – Recorded information or object which can be treated as a unit. (*International Standard ISO/TR15489-1, Clause 3.10*)

Electronic document management system (EDMS) – automated system which provides creation and management controls for electronically created documents including electronic mail messages.

Security classification – a security level (Strictly Confidential, Confidential, or Unclassified) that is applied to documents and records and which corresponds to the degree of sensitivity of information in those documents and records.

Security violation – an event which can lead to a security breach, but did not. Examples of security violations include alteration or retention of sensitive information without authorization, or a failure to protect sensitive information.

Sensitive information – information that, as determined by the UN, must be protected because its unauthorized disclosure, alteration, loss, or destruction will at least cause perceivable damage to the Organization, including its staff members, operations, security or international relations. In accordance with ST/SGB/2007/6, all sensitive documents created or received by the UN in the course of its business must be marked as Confidential or Strictly Confidential.

D. **REFERENCES**

5. Normative or superior references

ST/SGB/2004/15 – Use of Information and Communication Technology Resources and Data

ST/SGB/2007/5 – Record-keeping and the Management of United Nations Archives

ST/SGB/2007/6 – Information Sensitivity, Classification and Handling

E. **Monitoring Compliance**

6. DPKO-DFS records management focal points, as designated by the Peacekeeping Information Management Unit, will monitor compliance with these guidelines.

F. **Contact**

7. The Peacekeeping Information Management Unit should be contacted for information about these guidelines at peacekeeping-imu@un.org.

G. **History**

FICHE DE TRANSMISSION

REMARKS:

2. All materials submitted for signature, decision, action, attention or information must be submitted under the cover of a routing slip. The purpose of the routing slip is to highlight the decision/action requested and show the consultation process. It should be focused on the specific issues requiring action, decision, and/or attention and the information presented should be concise and clear. As the routing slip is a transitory document, it is imperative that all substantive information be included in the document(s) under its cover. If background information is required, attachments should be provided in the form of numbered annexes, and listed at the bottom of the routing slip. If the materials annexed are particularly voluminous, a brief summary of the salient issues or highlighted points to be considered should also be included.
3. **Consultation grid:** Each routing slip must contain an indication that the content of the material submitted for signature or approval has been coordinated with and/or cleared by the relevant counterparts within DPKO, DFS, UN Secretariat departments and offices, and UN agencies, funds and programmes. Coordination means that the different areas of DPKO and DFS work together to develop an integrated product. Clearance means that concurrence has been sought from the appropriate official from the relevant areas, or that areas have been given the opportunity to provide comments on/inputs to the final product. The initials of the colleagues with whom the document has been coordinated/cleared should be indicated beside the relevant box(es). Failure to undertake or complete the consultative process will result in delays in submission for signature or return of the correspondence.
4. If there is disagreement on the document/proposal submitted, this should be clearly indicated in the routing slip, with an explanation of the differing positions. If consultations did not take place, please indicate why.
5. **Submission process:** All materials should be submitted through the established chain-of-command. The name and telephone extension of the drafter(s) should appear on the routing slip.
6. The normal **turnaround time** for materials sent to the USG for signature is 24 hours, if submitted after due consultation and the document is correct in form and content. All front offices will be advised of circumstances that might affect the turnaround time on a particular day. Each routing slip should indicate the degree of urgency required for action. In cases where the senior manager should be interrupted in order to review the material and take action, the material should be categorised as “**Most Immediate**”. In cases where the material should be processed the same day, they should be categorized as “**Immediate**”. Materials that can be processed within the normal turnaround time should be categorized as “**Routine**”.
7. All materials requiring “**Immediate**” attention on a given day must be submitted no later than 4 p.m.; otherwise they might not be seen/actioned until the following day. Staff are encouraged to use the designation “**Routine**” wherever possible.
8. **If it is not possible to meet the submission deadlines, the originating office should immediately advise the OUSG of “Most Immediate” material to be submitted, the anticipated timing of its submission and the particular processing requirements. If these procedures are not followed, conflicting operational requirements may hinder the document processing and prevent action being taken within the required time frame. It is the responsibility of the submitting area to alert the OUSG of the submission of all**

materials requiring “Most Immediate” processing.

9. **Talking points for the USG** should be submitted to the OUSG by 4 p.m. on the date before the meeting, unless otherwise indicated.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Coordinated with or cleared by (please indicate name or initials):

DPKO								
	Coordinated	Cleared		Coordinated	Cleared		Coordinated	Cleared
OUSG			OO			OROLSI		
Front Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Front Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Front Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PAU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	AD-I	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	CLJA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IMU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	- IOT1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DDR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	- IOT2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	MAS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SitCen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	AD-II	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OMA			- IOT1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SSR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fro nt Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	- IOT2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DPET		
CM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	AMED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Front Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OS								
FGS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	- IOT1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ITS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	- IOT2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PBPS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
S								
SM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ELAD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
C								
			- IOT1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
DFS								
	Coordinated	Cleared		Coordinated	Cleared			
OUSG			CITS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Front Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FBFD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SECRETARIAT		
SLAS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	FPD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DEPT./OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OASG			LSD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Front Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CDU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FPPL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				AGENCY/INST.		
AFP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BOI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ERPIMG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If no consultation or coordination was made please clarify why:

Annexe

s:

...and a reminder from some experts on writing...

Quotes on Writing



“Everything that can be thought can be thought clearly. Everything that can be said can be said clearly.”

- Ludwig Wittgenstein

“The most valuable of talents is never using two words when one will do.”

- Thomas Jefferson

“Omit needless words. Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts.”

- William Strunk, Jr.

“Euphemism, question begging and sheer cloudy vagueness fall on the facts like soft snow, blurring the outlines and covering all the details.”

- George Orwell

“I didn’t have time to write a short letter, so I wrote a long one instead.”

- Mark Twain

“Easy reading is damned hard writing.”

- Nathaniel Hawthorne

“Don’t tell someone what you know. Tell them what they need to know, what it means, why it matters.”

- General David C. Jones,
US Air Force Chief of Staff
(1978—81)

“I believe more in the scissors than I do in the pencil.”

-- Truman Capote

