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## **OVERVIEW OF THE UNITED NATIONS LOGISTICS BASE/GLOBAL SERVICES CENTRE**

### *Absztrakt/Abstract*

*Napjainkban egy tipikus békefenntartó műveleti terület egyre veszélyesebb és néha nyíltan ellenséges az ENSZ jelenlétét illetően. Ilyen körülmények között a kommunikációs vonalak nem ritkán túl hosszúak és eltorzultak. A helyi piaci állapotok meglehetősen limitált lehetőségeket kínálnak, alapvető szolgáltatások gyakran nem elérhetőek, ivóvízben is hiányt szenvednek. Mindezek biztosítására nagy igényeket támaszt egy-egy ENSZ művelet, amelyet létfontosságú biztosítani.<sup>1</sup>*

*Today, the typical field environment is remote, austere and, increasingly, dangerous, sometimes openly hostile to a United Nations presence. In such settings, lines of communications (for support and sustainment) are often long and subject to frequent and extended natural and man-made disruptions. Local markets for goods and services are limited or non-existent, and the rule of law can be tenuous or wholly absent. Moreover, potable water is scarce and in high demand, fresh food can be difficult to procure in quantity, housing stock is frequently in short supply, and reliable communications infrastructure is lacking.<sup>2</sup>*

**Kulcsszavak/Keywords:** ENSZ, Globális Szolgáltatási Központ, logisztika, békefenntartás ~ UN, Global Services Center, logistics, peacekeeping

## Introduction

Since the creation of Department of Field Support (DFS), nearly five years ago, United Nations have dedicated its efforts to not only improving its service delivery model, but also proving its ability to obtain more value for money. Whether on the subject of the financing of missions or on the review of Special Political Missions (SPM) or Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) budgets, the deliberations over the past years highlight the serious impact of the global financial situation on the ability of Member States to contribute UN operations. In the coming 2012-2013 budget cycle, UN DFS will build on the foundation of the first phase of Global Field Support Strategy (GFSS) implementation to realize the benefits of managing globally, and assure Member States that UN delivers its mandates with the most reasonable level of resources. DFS is deeply engaged in finding disciplined, creative and responsible ways to effectively deliver our mandates with fewer resources.<sup>3</sup>

The United Nations Logistics Base (UNLB) in Brindisi has been in operation since late 1994 under a rent free arrangement with the Republic of Italy. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding the use by the United Nations of the facilities was signed by the Secretary-General and the Republic of Italy on 23 November 1994. Successively there was a first addendum to the implementation agreement dated 11th December 2001 and a second one on 4th August 2008. The General Assembly, in section XIV of its resolution 49/233 of 23 December 1994, welcomed the establishment in Brindisi, Italy, as the first permanent United Nations Logistics Base in support of peacekeeping operations. From the beginning, satellite communications systems were established on the base to link the missions with Headquarters. In 1998, the General Assembly approved small Start-up kits of new material to support the start-up of new missions. In 2002 the General Assembly approved the establishment of the Strategic Deployment Stocks (SDS). This revolving inventory provided 150 million dollars of equipment to be purchased, received, maintained, shipped and replenished at UNLB (thousands of vehicles, hundreds of generators and up to three thousand containers of material) In 2004, the Italian Government built three modern warehouses to maintain delicate SDS material on shelf. Till the end of 2011, over 265 million dollars' worth of SDS has been sent to missions.

On a daily basis UNLB/GSC adds value to arriving SDS items the moment they arrive to the base. Each item is inspected, labeled, inventoried, tested and when necessary adapted to field conditions.

The support that UNLB provides from Brindisi to the missions can be equated to the support we provide in Brindisi for the missions. UNLB has the potential and experience to excel in logistics, technology and knowledge management. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the UNLB/GSC pillar that deploys critical telecommunications equipment, designs and develops applications and systems for missions. ICT connects every year over 15 million voice calls and supports 4000 videoconferences. ICT hosts more than 400 servers in support of field operations and manages 800 communications links with the satellite infrastructure on site. GSC controls and monitors the global ICT network of peacekeeping. Today, GSC ICT supports all peacekeeping and political missions, the UN Secretariat as well as special courts, many agencies and funds.

Logistical activities have diversified beyond Strategic Deployment Stocks. Currently UNLB/GSC receives an important volume of material in transshipment which is inspected, tested, inventoried, consolidated and shipped to missions. The UNLB/GSC Learning and Conference Service Centre manages hundreds of technical, administrative and managerial events every year. This includes the mission pre-deployment Induction training for civilian staff. UNLB/GSC also hosts two elements of the UN Headquarters. The Integrated Training Service which delivers courses and the Standing Police Capacity that delivers policing expertise in every corner of the globe.

## **1. Global Field Support Strategy (GFSS)**

The overall intention of global field support strategy is to provide service delivery to field missions. It is designed as an integrated comprehensive program that drawn from the lessons learned from several decades of operational experience. The strategy is designed to achieve six objectives:

- Improved support for peacekeeping, including critical early peacebuilding;
- Improved support for peacemaking, electoral assistance, mediation support and conflict prevention;
- Strengthened resource availability and accountability with greater efficiencies;
- Improved safety and living conditions of staff.
- Fully utilized local and regional investments and capacity;
- Reduced in-country environmental impact of missions.

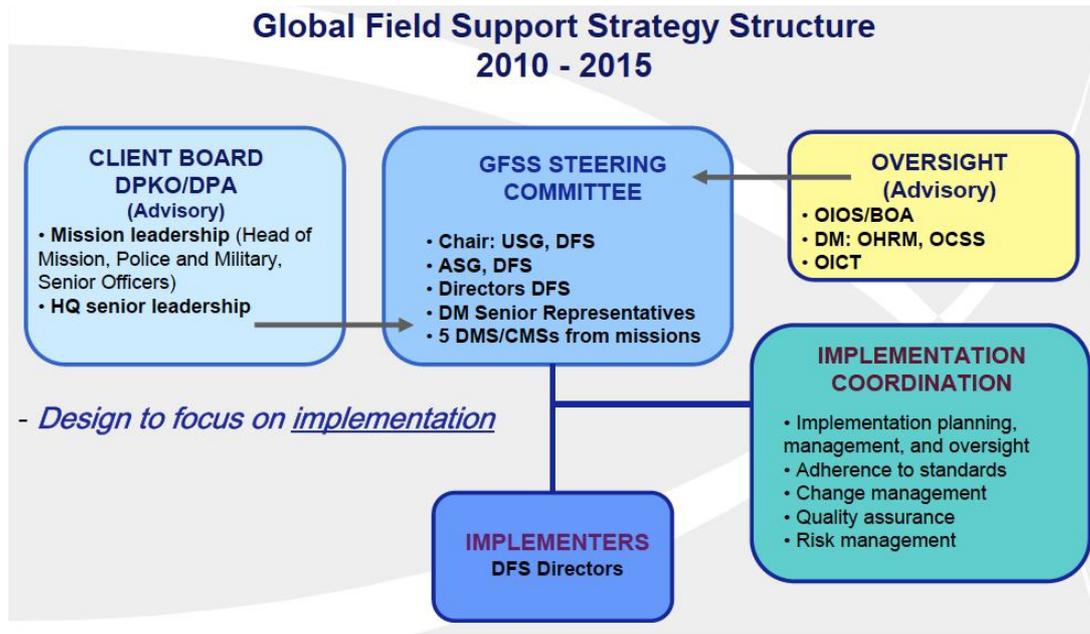
The strategy brings to the consideration of Member States key proposed changes aimed at improving the full spectrum of service delivery, on the one hand providing fast, complete and flexible support to the civilian, police and military components deployed in the field, and ensuring cost efficiencies and transparency.

The main intention of GFSS is the following. The United Nations Secretariat continuing to set strategic direction, exercise oversight and take policy decisions, but not on operational level. Global and regional service centers take care if most of the operational issues and transactions. Mission support components of field operations are reduced, and take care of only location-dependent activities performed in specific mission locations such as mission area of operations.

On the basis of these principles, the strategy has four integrated components:

- One global service center in Brindisi, Italy and regional service center in Entebbe, Uganda;
- Available deployment modules in order to improve the speed and predictability of the deployment, particularly in start-up operations;
- Modified mission financing arrangements to ensure timely deployment of material and human resources to missions;
- Reinforced response capacities, such as secured external and internal civilian capacities, including rapidly deployable stand-by capacities with contractors, military support capacities, short-term consultants and individual contractors.

In addition to the higher level of efficiency and effectiveness, GFSS has reduced mission footprints and risk exposure with improved safety and security, better living conditions for support staff.



**Figure 1<sup>4</sup>**

Client board: Board established by members of a certain Department of Political Affairs or Department of Peacekeeping Operations mission.

GFSS Steering Committee: Established by the following members. USG – Under Secretary-General, ASG – Assistant Secretary-General, CMS – Chief Mission Support

Oversight: Board with advisory functions only with the following members. OIOS/BOS - Office of Internal Oversight Services, OHRM – Office of Human Resources Management, OCSS – Office of Central Support Services, OICT – Office of Information and Communications Technology.

Implementers: directors in the mission receiving global support.

The established GFSS has four main areas such as:

1. Global Service Delivery Model that is providing a centralized strategic direction, oversight and policy decisions at HQ, supported by a Global Service Center located in Brindisi with regionalized back-office processing and expertise centers. These regional back-offices are temporary and scalable based on actual needs. The global service model contains Mission Support Teams as well (see below)
2. Modularization (see below)
3. Strengthened Resource Management Framework, that ensures availability of quickly globally deployable material.
4. Integrated Human Resources Framework ensuring flexibility and efficiency taking into account the need for specialized staff.

## 2. Structure of UNLB/GSC

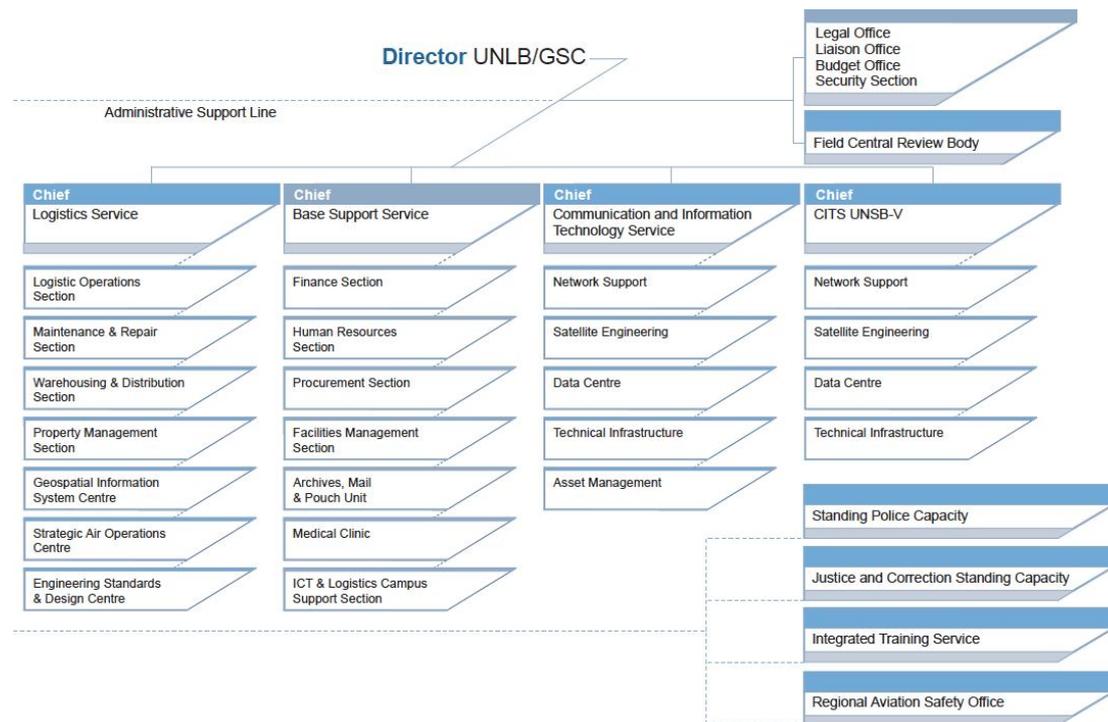


Figure 2 <sup>4</sup>

### The Director's Office

The Director of UNLB/GSC is responsible for managing the administrative and logistics support provided to Peacekeeping Missions worldwide. Through this management UNLB/GSC maintains and stores the Strategic Deployment Stocks (SDS), ensures a state of operational readiness for immediate deployment, operates a communications and information technology hub serving new and existing peacekeeping missions including DPKO, serves as a recovery site for UN Headquarters, and maintains a center of excellence for training, conferences and events of all DPKO staff. To assist in this task, the Office of the Director is divided into three offices, the Legal Office, the Liaison Office and the Budget Office.

### Legal Office

The Legal Office renders legal advice to the Director and to all Sections and Units of UNLB/GSC. It ensures that procedures and processes undertaken at UNLB/GSC are in compliance with the UN Charter, Rules and Regulations, International Standards or DPKO policies and Administrative instructions.

### Liaison Office

The Liaison cell, in the Office of the Director, undertakes all protocol and liaison work with Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense, and the Italian Air Force in support of mission staff, their dependents, and other individuals such as experts and consultants working at the Base.

### Safety & Security Section

The UNLB/GSC Safety and Security Section, under the supervision of the Director of UNLB/GSC, is responsible to provide security and safety services to protect and safeguard UN staff, dependents and visitors, assets and even property. The UNLB/GSC Safety &

Security works closely with UN officials and the country law enforcement such as Carabinieri or Municipal Police.

### **Field Central Review Body**

Reporting to the Director, Field Personnel Division on substantive matters, and the Director, UNLB/GSC on administrative matters, the Unit administers the Field Central Review Bodies (FCRB). The FCRB membership is comprised of over 100 staff members spread geographically among the various peace operations. The FCRB advises on the recommendation for inclusion of candidates in rosters for all occupational groups at all levels up to D-1 in peace operations and special political missions, who may be subsequently selected for appointment to specific missions. The FCRB is the last arbiter before candidates are placed on the field roster, and its core purpose is to ensure that the process was conducted in a fair and transparent manner.

### **Integrated Training Service Office at the Global Service Centre (ITS-GSC)**

The Integrated Training Service office at the Global Service Centre (ITSGSC) is a 'tenant unit', and part of ITS-DPKO headquartered in New York under the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division (DPET). ITS-GSC main function is to coordinate the training cycle of the Civilian Pre-deployment Training (CPT) course, which is one of the primary tools used by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and Department of Field Support (DFS) to improve preparedness, effectiveness and productivity of civilian staff deploying to field missions. ITS-GSC has expanded its activities to include the establishment of a civilian Mobile Training Team (MTT) capacity; and the set up of an international certification for peacekeeping trainers.

### **Regional Aviation Safety Office (RASO)**

The Regional Aviation Safety Office (RASO) concept was developed as a means of optimizing the use of available resources in certain regions with established DPKO missions. The Region initially comprised UNLB, UNMIK (UN Mission in Kosovo) and UNOMIG (UN Mission in Georgia), although in mid-2008, air operations in UNMIK were discontinued. However, later in end-2008, the Region was expanded to include other missions including Iraq, Lebanon and Cyprus. The Office continued with the role of advising and assisting the Chiefs of Mission Support of the affiliated missions in the establishment, implementation and management of the missions aviation safety programs and ensuring that aviation safety related policies, guidelines and procedures are implemented and followed in the affiliated missions.

### **Procurement Section**

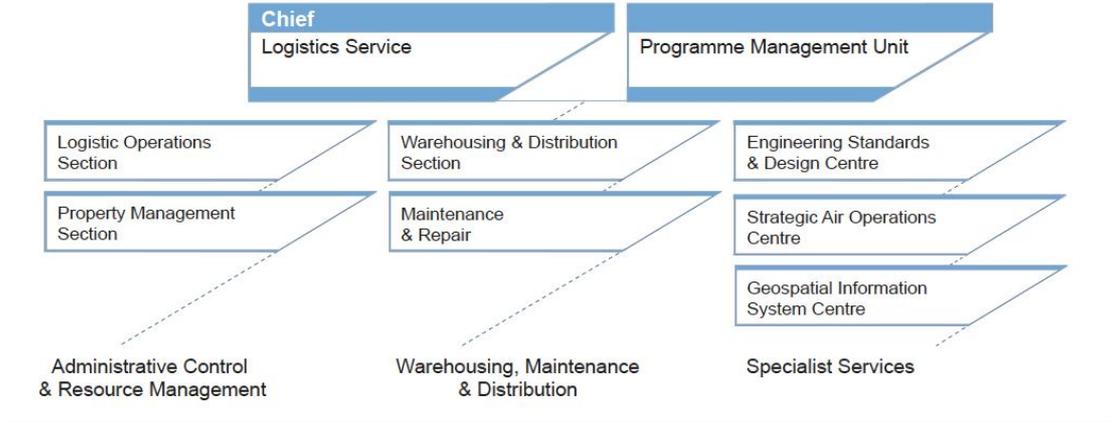
Procurement Section undertakes all acquisition activities for and on behalf of UNLB/GSC. In addition the Section supports field operations, as and when required. Functionally, the Chief Base Support Services and staff members of this Section are the sole designated individuals within UNLB/GSC authorized to undertake tendering on behalf of UNLB/GSC, enter into negotiations with vendors, issue and sign contractual documents, on behalf of the Organization, for goods or services.

UNLB/GSC procures commodities and services that are identified by the various requisitioning entities following the procedures and general principles promulgated by the Organization. Specifically, procurement activities are undertaken to ensure best value for money, fairness, integrity and transparency, effective international competition and the interest of the Organization.

UNLB/GSC affords equal opportunity to all qualified suppliers. Depending upon the complexity of a requirement and the value of the commodity to be procured, a solicitation is issued as formal document for example a Request for Proposal (RFP, sealed bidding over US\$ 40,000) or an Invitation to Bid (ITB, sealed bidding over US\$ 40,000) or as an informal document, a Request for Quotation (RFQ):

In order to ensure international competition and transparency, the major procurement requirements are advertised both on the UNLB/GSC internet website, and its equivalent within the New York Secretariat.

**Logistics Operation Section**



**Figure 3<sup>5</sup>**

The Logistics Service of the United Nations Logistics Base in Brindisi, Italy represents one of the Service Pillars that is primarily focused on providing support to DFS/DPKO/DPA missions and operations globally. The Logistics Service is responsible for several discrete under the direction of the Chief Logistics Service (CLS) and has its specific and technically specialized functions, as follows:

**Programme Management Unit**

The responsibility of the Programme Management Unit is to centrally manage and control the financial, administrative and training functions, along with the associated processes and resources to the Office of the Chief Logistics Service (CLS), thus creating a single entry point for financial management for the Service, minimizing the overall risk, whilst increasing individual accountability.

**Warehousing and Distribution**

The warehouse and Distribution Section is responsible for the custodian and management of SDS, UN Reserve and UNLB inventories, information on transport, Engineering, Medical and Supply stores, processing materials, release orders, provision of accessories for missions such as vehicle number plates; UN uniforms etc.

**Maintenance and Repair**

The Central Maintenance and Repair Section is responsible for planning, scheduling and executing both preventive maintenance and repair on equipment under UNLB/GSC custody in the Strategic Deployment Stock (SDS), UN Reserve to ensure preservation and readiness for distribution to field missions. Additionally the Section provides services to UNLB/GSC

specific vehicles, generators and equipment.

The commodities processed by Central Maintenance and Repair Section include Vehicles, Material Handling Equipment, Generators, Kitchen Equipment, Air Conditioners, Office Equipment etc.

The Section also provides technical support to the procurement process on matters in respect to technical specification development, technical evaluation, and prototype inspection.

### **Property Management Section**

The Property Management Section is responsible for the overall management of non-expendable (NEP) inventory records in compliance with Financial Rules and Regulations (FRR), Delegation of Authority (DoA) for Property Management and property management policy/guidelines. The management of global non-expendable and expendable Item Master Catalogue (IMC). The validation of inventory transactions (acquisitions, transfers, write off) and disposal of UN owned property.

### **Receiving and Inspection Unit (R&I)**

The R&I Unit is responsible for receiving, inspecting and verifying acceptance or rejection of all items of supplies, equipment delivered at UNLB in accordance with purchase orders/contracts for several inventories, SDS, UN Reserve, UNLB and Transshipment where required. The processing of equipment into these inventories in a timely manner ensures United Nations Owned Equipment is readily available to support our colleagues in the Field Missions as part of UNLB/GSC mandate under the Global Field Support Strategy.

### **Movement Control Unit (MovCon)**

The Movement Control Unit manages the incoming and outgoing material flows at UNLB and it is critical in supporting the strategic movement of equipment to deploying and existing Missions. The principles of Movement Control are based on the effective selection of transport systems commensurate to Missions' requirements, which endorses the Global Field Support Strategy for the efficient use of available resources and the enhancement of quality and responsiveness of services provided to Field Missions.

### **MST Mission Support Teams**

Under the direction of DFS, UNLB/GSC established Mission Support Team capacity of Logistic, Technical and Administrative support teams to deploy to new, expanding and established Missions that are in need of short-term assistance as part of the enabling capacities. The principles of Mission Support Teams are built on the Global Field Support Strategy for the efficient use of available enabling capacities and enhancement of quality and responsiveness of services provided to Field Missions.

The MST provides a wide range of support to requesting missions, with the assumption that no other resources are present in the mission to cover the same functions, including Logistics, CITS and Administration:

- Mission Start-Up with regard to mission support elements
- Modularization
- Supporting the communication and IT infrastructure set-up
- Movcon, R&I and Property Management
- Air Operations
- Finance
- Procurement

- Pre-Liquidation
- Other Ad-hoc services as required or requested

### **Engineering Standards and Design Centre (ESDC)**

The ESDC is responsible for Engineering Planning and Design Services to DPKO, DFS and DPA Missions, Resource Analysis and Mobilization and On-Ground Deployment. These functions are carried out through a centralized engineering database, built and maintained by ESDC, for collecting, screening and storing all relevant engineering data in order to support engineers in all missions. ESDC runs also an Online Standards Library in which the ESDC collects screens and updates all relevant international standards and guidelines. ESDC is also involved in the following mission support projects e.g. modularization and development and design of deployment packages.

### **Geographic Information System (GIS)**

The GIS Centre is responsible for enhancing the global UN field geospatial information capacity, particularly in support of rapid mission start-up and improving operational readiness to ensure that the United Nations and its field missions are provided with quality geospatial information, in a timely and effective manner.

The GIS Centre focuses on building its mandated functional capacity to develop a secured repository of all mission GIS data, and replicate the data with the UNHQ to establish and maintain a global enterprise geo-database for UN field operations.

Within the concept of the Global Field Strategy Support (GFSS) and the mission of the Global Service Centre (GSC), The GIS Centre renders quality geospatial services and superior geo products that include development of geospatial applications and tools, Customization of Google Earth Enterprise (UN Earth) for data visualization, production of large-scale topographic line maps in standard military format, spatial analysis for campsite selection and topographic profiling in support of Modularization, terrain analysis and conduction of geophysical surveys for groundwater exploration, network analysis and trafficability mapping in support of logistical operations.

### **Strategic Air Operations Centre (SAOC)**

The Strategic Air Operations Center (SAOC) at UNLB is the central platform for the management of aircraft deployed for strategic airlift. This includes the fleet planning of the strategic airlift and monitoring and tracking of all aircraft engaged in strategic long-term and short-term passenger and cargo airlift movement and Inter Missions operations.

### **Communication and Information Technology Section (CITS)**

UNLB/GSC CITS maintains the voice and data communication lifelines for the Global Peacekeeping operations. The following global services are provided by CITS to DPKO and DPA Missions together with other specific UN agencies.

CITS provides the communication infrastructure, including Data Centre and related support, software development, training and mission operational support. Network Support provides e. g. global video conference and mission standardization support.

CITS Satellite Engineering Support section provides engineering support to maintain and improve the worldwide UN satellite network.

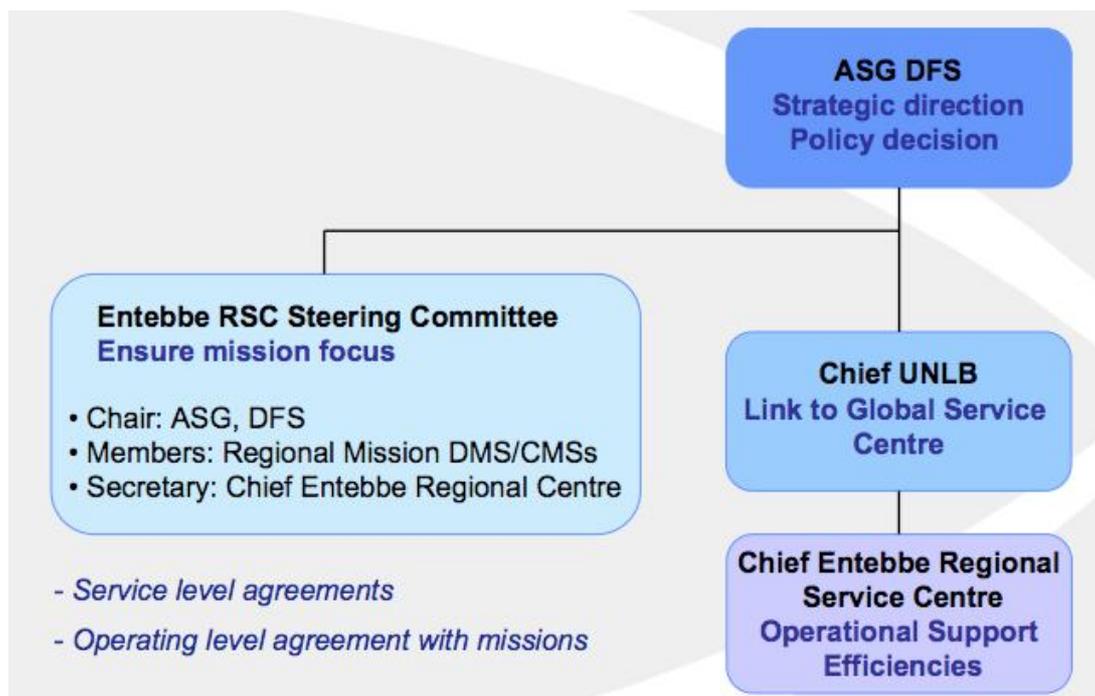
CITS Asset Management Unit is responsible for managing the entire CITS and ICT Strategic Deployment Stocks. Specifically, the Asset Management Unit Manage assets such as network

systems, Servers, Software, peripherals and general communication and information Technology Assets. Assets are classified according to the following, UNLB/GSC assets, UN reserve assets (ex missions), strategic deployment stock, transshipment (assets managed for missions).

#### *CITS Technology Infrastructure Section*

The CITS Technology Infrastructure Section provides specialized services to CITS teams and to mission during startup. Specifically the activities of the section includes

- Support Conventional and Trunking radio, microwave and broadcasting systems
- Design, build and support Mobile Deployable Telecommunications System (MDTS Van) and Rapid Deployable Tele communications System (RDTS Container) etc.



**Figure 4**<sup>3</sup>

(ASG, DFS – Assistant Secretary-General of Department of Field Support)

Regional centers are scalable and mainly designed to respond to the contractions and expansions of UN field operations functioning as transactional processing center, back-office, ICT regional and regional Air Services support office, with staff benefits and entitlements functions covered as well.

### **3. Modularization**

The Modularization concept involves the development of pre-defined Service-Packages including materials, supplies, equipment and services such as:

- Internal capacities
- Commercial contracts
- Member State stand-by arrangements (military and civilian)

The key component of service packages is the enabling capabilities, which means the employees and the necessary equipment is provided as previously planned. The concept is focusing on improving engineering (deployment, mobility, and environment) in the first batch

and engaged in the development of detailed components of the modules. The modules are integrated in financial changes and SDS management.

The modular concept, beside of other advantages, makes the planning and enabling easier, the implementation cheaper.

#### **4. Challenges**

The Department of Field Support currently provides logistics, administrative, information and communications technology support for 32 peacekeeping and field-based special political missions, including to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). These field missions represent a total civilian, police and military deployment of more than 139,000 personnel. In the case of support for peacekeeping missions, the constant rate of troop and police rotations entails supporting twice the number of deployed uniformed personnel on an annual basis. The response to the challenges posed by the scale and scope of current field mission deployments must be considered in the light of the demands that the development of peacekeeping as foreseen will bring. The broader political and operational challenges in the area of peacekeeping are set out in the “New Horizon”<sup>6</sup> non-paper, which outlines the challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping operations and proposes a process of dialogue with Member States that will serve as a basis for promoting innovation, flexibility and accountability in support systems. This paper, building on the Brahimi report<sup>7</sup> stresses that: “Each new operation is built voluntarily and from scratch on the assumption that adequate resources can be found and is run on individual budget, support and administrative lines. Peacekeeping in its current form requires more predictable, professional and adaptable capacities. It needs a global system to match the global enterprise it has become.”

While peacekeeping missions are tasked primarily with providing security and stability, the design and implementation of timely peace building strategies can facilitate a responsible transition and exit. The support perspective must therefore consider the need for seamless transitions between peacekeeping and special political missions. The successive field missions in Sierra Leone and Burundi are examples of such successful transitions, but there is still space for improvement.

Any analysis of support problems must address the fact that, during a mission’s life cycle, mandates and operational demands evolve according to developments on the ground. Also, missions differ significantly in their level of integration, size, type and mandate. Rapid mission deployment is fundamental to supporting mandate implementation. When a mission is mandated, there is a political opportunity in terms of agreement both by Security Council members on actions to be taken and by the host country Government and the parties in dispute. Underestimating the support challenges could cause such an opportunity to be lost. In addition, missions in a mature state of operations are frequently unable to retain talented staff, a reality that can hinder the Organization’s ability to achieve a viable steady state. Many factors determine the success of a support operation, including effectiveness and transparency in the use of resources. From the point of view of those being served, however, speed and quality are two of the most critical dimensions. Unfortunately, both of these attributes have all too often been missing resulting in a direct impact on the credibility of United Nations mission. The need to achieve a better balance and performance in this regard is the major impetus for the further development.

## 5. Future and Conclusions

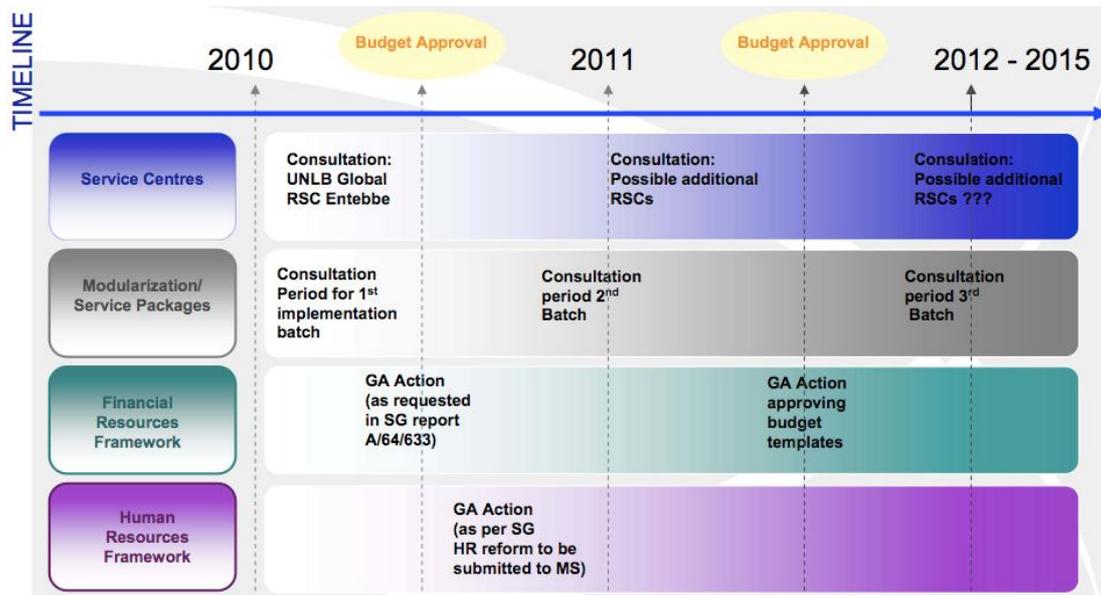


Figure 5<sup>3</sup>

Based on the recently gathered financial data<sup>8</sup>, feedbacks from various committees and meetings, UN member states are still supportive towards the above mentioned strategy and willing to do further steps in order to reach full capacity of the envisaged status of global field support. The road plan on Figure 5 clearly shows the major steps in different areas and foresees another, new regional center beside of the earlier revealed modularization phases.

With these steps, the United Nations Secretariat keeps its global leading status, not only in peacekeeping, but also in global logistics operations, planning and engineering standards as well on the field of crisis response.

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- <sup>8</sup> Budget for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, for the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012, (A/65/760) 28, February 2012