



C34 Briefed on UNMAS Critical Role in Peace Operations

On 6 December, UNMAS gave an informal briefing to 60 members of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C34), which was established by the General Assembly to conduct comprehensive reviews of all issues relating to peacekeeping.

Ms. Abigail Hartley, UNMAS Chief of Policy, Advocacy and Public Information, explained the role of UNMAS in peacekeeping operations highlighting the UNMAS contributions to mission mobility, resilience, the protection of civilians, stabilization and the extension of state authority.

UNMAS activities in peacekeeping operations have drastically increased in size, scope and complexity in recent years. This has put a strain on the Service as the resources necessary to fulfil its extensive mandate and backstop programmes have not kept apace. Ms. Hartley noted, "UNMAS work in peace operations is undoubtedly saving lives. The challenge of maintaining sufficient capacity in the face of increased asymmetric threats requires continued support from Member States".



Paul Heslop, UNMAS Chief of Programmes presents the new IED LEXICON/UNMAS photo

Mr. Paul Heslop, UNMAS Chief of Programme, Planning and Management, elaborate on UNMAS initiatives to mitigate the threat posed by Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and other asymmetric threats including the development of guidelines on IED Threat Mitigation in Mission Settings, the publication of an IED Lexicon, the establishment of an online IED Hub and the delivery of training to thousands of peacekeepers (uniformed and civilian), national security forces, humanitarian workers and civilians in IED recognition, reporting and awareness. In this regard, Nepal highlighted the value of UNMAS support to its troops including its Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) companies deployed to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

Mr. Heslop also called on Member States to support establishment of an UNMAS IED Threat Mitigation Advisory Team (TMAT) to ensure a comprehensive UN response to the IED problem. Upcoming TMAT initiatives include the development of IED Disposal Standards and provision of technical assistance to the Office of Military Affairs in elaboration of an IED Threat Mitigation Handbook and the EOD Unit Manual. UNMAS is seeking additional financial and in-kind resources beyond the start-up support already provided by the U.S. Government.

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