

17. Operational support for public information:

A unit for operational planning and support of public information in peace operations should be established, either within DPKO or within a new Peace and Security Information Service in the Department of Public Information (DPI) reporting directly to the Under-Secretary-General for Communication and Public Information.

18. Peace-building support in the Department of Political Affairs:

(a) The Panel supports the Secretariat's effort to create a pilot Peace-building Unit within DPA, in cooperation with other integral United Nations elements, and suggests that regular budgetary support for this unit be revisited by the membership if the pilot programme works well. This programme should be evaluated in the context of guidance the Panel has provided in paragraph 46 above, and if considered the best available option for strengthening United Nations peace-building capacity it should be presented to the Secretary-General within the context of the Panel's recommendation contained in paragraph 47 (d) above;

(b) The Panel recommends that regular budget resources for Electoral Assistance Division programmatic expenses be substantially increased to meet the rapidly growing demand for its services, in lieu of voluntary contributions;

(c) To relieve demand on the Field Administration and Logistics Division (FALD) and the executive office of DPA, and to improve support services rendered to smaller political and peace-building field offices, the Panel recommends that procurement, logistics, staff recruitment and other support services for all such smaller, non-military field missions be provided by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

19. Peace operations support in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights:

The Panel recommends substantially enhancing the field mission planning and preparation capacity of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, with funding partly from the regular budget and partly from peace operations mission budgets.

20. Peace operations and the information age:

(a) Headquarters peace and security departments need a responsibility centre to devise and oversee the implementation of common information technology strategy and training for peace operations, residing in EISAS. Mission counterparts to the responsibility centre should also be appointed to serve in the offices of the special representatives of the Secretary-General in complex peace operations to oversee the implementation of that strategy;

(b) EISAS, in cooperation with the Information Technology Services Division (ITSD), should implement an enhanced peace operations element on the current United Nations Intranet and link it to the missions through a Peace Operations Extranet (POE);

(c) Peace operations could benefit greatly from more extensive use of geographic information systems (GIS) technology, which quickly integrates operational information with electronic maps of the mission area, for applications as diverse as demobilization, civilian policing, voter registration, human rights monitoring and reconstruction;

(d) The IT needs of mission components with unique information technology needs, such as civilian police and human rights, should be anticipated and met more consistently in mission planning and implementation;