NOTE TO CORRESPONDENTS

In response to questions on private security contractors

The UN system has been working to develop a draft policy which proposes a decision making framework and framework of accountability for the use of armed private security companies by the United Nations. A draft policy was approved by the Inter Agency Security Management Network at its last meeting in June 2012.

The draft policy provides the structure for the assessment process for the use of private security contractors and articulates that such companies may only be used in circumstances where the provision of armed security by the host country, another member state, or United Nations resources are not possible or appropriate. The policy emphasizes the need for strict protocols concerning the use of force. It also describes the management and oversight responsibilities of the United Nations.

Other issues the draft policy deals with include guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of United Nations personnel in the decision to use armed private security contractors, criteria for recommending the use of armed private security contractors and screening and training requirements. The Working Group produced a Statement of Work for use by the Office of Legal Affairs to develop a model contract for how to engage an armed private security contractor that has been selected.

The draft policy is still in the process of being approved by the UN system.

Regarding the larger issue on whether it is appropriate to use armed private security contractors, we believe it is appropriate that if they are used we ensure due diligence. UN contracting policies have improved and we need to continue to improve them. The distinct differences in the ways that private security contractors go about their work also must be borne in mind.

New York, 10 July 2012