



Submission No 71

Review of Australia's Relationship with the Countries of Africa

Name: Mr Ben Burdon

Organisation: Department of Defence – Answers to Questions on
Notice



Australian Government

Department of Defence

FASIP/OUT/2010/270

i/ May 2010

Dr John Carter
Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Carter

I write to correct evidence that I gave at the Inquiry into Australia's relationship with the countries of Africa hearing held on 21 April 2010 concerning Defence engagement with Africa.

In my opening statement to the Committee (page 51 of *Proof Hansard* 21 April 2010) I stated "I would note that EASFORCE is currently deployed in Somalia, primarily with Ugandan and Burundi forces." This is incorrect. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) is currently deployed in Somalia with Ugandan and Burundi forces, not EASFORCE as stated.

In my opening statement to the Committee (page 51 of *Proof Hansard* 21 April 2010) I stated "...we will begin that process by engaging with the Eastern Brigade, which is now known as EASFORCE, which is part of the Eastern African Standby Brigade." This is incorrect. EASFORCE is part of the African Union Standby Force, not the Eastern African Standby Brigade as stated.

In answer to a question from Senator Furner on an Australian Defence Force Member seconded to the United Nations (UN) Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) (page 55 of *Proof Hansard* 21 April 2010) I stated, "...that person is still embedded within the UN and still working within DPKO." In answer to a further question from Mr Fitzgibbon on the rank of this officer (page 55 of *Proof Hansard* 21 April 2010), I stated his rank as "Lieutenant Colonel." This is incorrect. The officer completed his secondment to DPKO in January 2010 and was at the Lieutenant Commander (Major equivalent) level during his secondment.

In response to a query from Mr Fitzgibbon regarding the Defence budget for 2009-10 (page 56 of *Proof Hansard* 21 April 2010) I stated "The \$1.2 million figure is separate from the expected cost of ADF contributions to the UN peacekeeping operations in Africa. That is estimated, for 2010-11, at around \$1.8 million." I would like to clarify that this figure refers to ADF peacekeeping operations in the Sudan and Darfur.

I apologise for any misunderstanding that may have arisen.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ben Burdon'.

Mr Ben Burdon
Acting First Assistant Secretary
International Policy Division
Department of Defence

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Inquiry into

Australia's Relationship with the Countries of Africa

21 April 2010

Questions Taken on Notice

Q1

Exchange training courses, Hansard p 53
Mr Hawker and Mr Fitzgibbon

Could Defence please provide a list detailing offers to countries for people to come to Australia for exchange training courses? How many of those have been accepted? In previous years were any offered and accepted?

Response:

Pre-2009

Prior to 2009 Defence did not offer any training positions to African countries under the Defence Cooperation Program.

2009

Six positions offered:

- Four positions to the African Union (AU); two for the United Nations Military Observer Course (UNMOC) and two for the Civil-Military Interaction Seminar (CMIS)
- Two positions to Botswana; one UNMOC and one CMIS

Two positions were taken up:

- One AU position on CMIS
- One Botswana position on UNMOC

2010

Eleven positions offered:

- Two positions to the AU; One UNMOC and One Civil-Military Interaction Workshop (CMIW)
- Three positions to Botswana; One CMIW, One Governance and Financial Management (GFM) and One CMIW

- Two positions to Uganda; One UNMOC and One GFM
- Two positions to Kenya; One Law of Peace Operations and One Maritime Security Cooperation
- Two to Ethiopia; One CMIW and One GFM

As at 12 May 2010, two positions have been taken up:

- Of 2010 courses there has only been one course run so far this year (CMIW) and both Botswana and Ethiopia sent a delegate (100% uptake to date).

Q2

Peacekeeping Symposium, Hansard p 54 **Senator Forshaw**

Could Defence please provide a report or summary of the Peacekeeping Symposium to the Committee?

Response:

On 3-5 March 2010, the African Union (AU) Commission convened an “International Symposium on the Protection of Civilians in Conflict Zones” in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Australian Government, through the Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence (the Centre), supported and co-hosted the Symposium, which was held at the United Nations Economic Commission in Africa Conference Centre and included translation services (English, French and Arabic).

The Symposium sought to deliver on two key objectives: to share knowledge and experiences in relation to POC; and to review the Draft AU Guidelines which had been prepared at the ‘Protection of Civilians AU Drafting Workshop’ convened by the Centre from 7-11 December 2009 in Queanbeyan, Australia. The Symposium successfully contributed to Australia’s strengthening engagement with Africa, and assisted the AU in progressing its understanding of the requirements for protection of civilians (POC) in peace support operations.

The Symposium was opened by the African Union’s Commissioner for Peace and Security, HE Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra (Algeria), and the Australian Government’s Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, the Hon Dr Mike Kelly AM. Commissioner Lamamra stressed the important protection challenges confronting the African Union in peace support operations and welcomed Australia’s assistance in developing the *Draft AU Guidelines for the Protection of Civilians by Peace Support Operations* that had been circulated for consideration by the Symposium participants. Dr Kelly highlighted Australia’s commitment to deepening its engagement with Africa on a number of fronts, and emphasised the importance of improving protection mechanisms in peace missions.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Salim Ahmed Salim, a member of the African Union’s Panel of the Wise, former Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity, and former Prime Minister of Tanzania. Australia was also represented at the opening by VCDF, Lieutenant General David Hurley AC, DSC, and Australia’s Ambassador to the African Union, HE Lisa Filipetto (Nairobi). Notable non-government representatives in the

Australian delegation included the Hon Justice John Dowd AO, QC, President of the Australian Chapter of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), and Professor Charles Sampford from the Institute of Ethics, Governance, Law and Justice (a joint centre of the UN University, Griffith University, Australian National University, and Queensland University of Technology). The Centre's delegation was headed by the Executive Director, Michael G. Smith AO, and representatives included the Governance & Rule of Law team, the NGO Advisor from the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and the University of Melbourne Research Officer from the Asia Pacific Centre for Military Law (APCML). Additional Australian Government representatives from DFAT, Defence, AusAID and AFP also participated, as did representatives from the Australian Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York.

The Symposium attracted strong attendance from 110 senior civilian, military and police participants, including from the AU Peace and Security Commission, resident AU Ambassadors, the African Standby Force, UNAMID and AMISOM missions, the AU Regional Economic Communities, AU peacekeeping training centres, AU strategic partners, experts from the United Nations (DPKO, OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF), the ICRC and civil society (NGO and academia). A noteworthy presentation and several important interventions were made by HE Ambassador Dr Augustine Mahiga, Permanent Representative of Tanzania to the United Nations in New York, and recent Chair of the DPKO/OCHA Jointly Commissioned Independent Study on *Protecting Civilians in the Context of UN Peacekeeping Operations: Successes, Setbacks and Remaining Challenges*.

The Symposium provided valuable input to the development of the *Draft AU Guidelines for the Protection of Civilians by Peace Support Operations*, and supported the Chair's proposal that the Draft AU Guidelines and summary Symposium Report be presented to Commissioner Lamamra for the Commissioner's consideration as to whether the Draft Guidelines should proceed for consideration of the AU Summit.

Symposium Review of the Draft AU Guidelines

The draft AU Guidelines are world leading, and were developed in close consultation with the United Nations. They have a strategic focus and seek to assist the AU prepare for peace support operations and develop POC mandates. They also have an operational focus in providing guidance to the Africa Standby Force and Heads of AU peace support missions in implementing effective protection mechanisms. The Guidelines emphasise the responsibility of the host State for POC, and encourage consistent and effective implementation of protection objectives, in coordination with other protection actors and local communities.

Reflecting the best practices of international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law, and noting relevant UNSC Resolutions (including the annual UNSC *Aide Memoire for the Consideration of Issues Pertaining to the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*), the Draft Guidelines highlight the need for integration of monitoring, preparation and planning at the strategic level, as well as role-delineation, information collection and dissemination, co-ordination and integration between mission elements at the operational level.

Q3

Funding, Hansard p 55-56

Mr Ruddock and Mr Fitzgibbon

Please provide details of Defence funding of programs affecting Africa. Are any of the programs “double-hatted” in terms of funding?

Response:

The International Policy Division of the Department of Defence budgeted around \$1.2 million for Africa related activities in financial year 2009-10. The Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence budgeted around \$430,000 for Africa related activities in financial year 2009-10. International Policy funded programs are not “double-hatted” with other departments. International Policy Division has co-funded with other departments and agencies some Africa related activities in financial year 2009-10. The “International Symposium on the Protection of Civilians in Conflict Zones” convened by the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa on 3-5 March 2010 was, for example, co-funded in Defence by International Policy Division and the Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence, with significant contributions from DFAT, AusAID and the AFP.

Q4

Deployments, Hansard p 57

Senator Forshaw

(a) What proportion of the UN peacekeeping force is a non-African Union component? Are any of those deployed?

(b) Is the impact of visa difficulties affecting the countries that will provide most of the ground force?

Response:

(a) While the United Nations African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) mission is referred to as a “hybrid” mission, that is, a cooperative mission between the United Nations (UN) and AU, all troops are considered as UN peacekeepers and funded through the UN. The hybrid nature refers to consideration of policy issues. Decisions regarding the direction and approach of the mission are made collaboratively between the UN and AU.

According to the UN website (www.un.org), as at 31 March 2010 there were 21,865 peacekeeping personnel deployed to UNAMID from 47 countries. Of these, 17,599 personnel or around 80% were from the 23 AU member countries that contribute to UNAMID.

(b) No. As noted, according to the UN website (www.un.org), as at 31 March 2010 around 80% of the UNAMID personnel deployed are from AU countries. When the contributions of Bangladesh (1309), Nepal (731) and Pakistan (811) are added to the AU contributions, this equates to nearly 95% of all personnel deployed. The UNSC Mandate for UNAMID authorises up to 25,987 personnel, meaning that as at 31 March 2010 the mission is currently at around 85% capacity.

Australia has committed eight ADF personnel to the Africa Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The non-issuance of visas by the Government of Sudan to personnel from Western nations, including Australia, has precluded their deployment since August 2009.