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SITUATION OVERVIEW

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Carana (UNAC) has been present in the country for ten years and has seen the country through two peaceful elections. On August 3rd of this year, the Security Council extended UNAC's mandate for a final time, setting its end date as February 28, 20XX (18 months from now). Security Council Resolution 4455 specified a two-part transition. First, the mission has nine months to close all field offices except Faron, to draw down half of UNAC's uniformed personnel, and to complete a handover of responsibility for security to the Caranese national security forces. It then has another nine months to complete the drawdown and closure of the mission. The next presidential and parliamentary elections will take place in three years' time.

The Security Council hailed the mission's overall progress toward restoring peace, security, and stability in the country. The secretary-general called UNAC's mandated drawdown one of the most significant milestones for Carana and the international community since the end of the civil war, with important implications for the future of the country and the UN's broader efforts to sustain peace. Despite significant progress in consolidating peace in the country, lingering tensions remain in some areas, including those related to constitutional reform, gender equality policies, and reconciliation.

At a subsequent meeting of the secretary-general's Executive Committee,¹ the committee specified that the current deputy special representative of the secretary-general/resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator (DSRSG/RC/HC) would stay on as resident coordinator (RC) in Carana.

The current UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) runs from 20XX until 20XX. The UN country team (UNCT) has had difficulty supporting government plans under the UNDAF, as ministries have not always adhered to agreed-upon priorities. Under the current UNDAF, the UNCT does not focus on peacebuilding. The current UNDAF will expire the same year UNAC is to withdraw, which raises concerns about the loss of both logistical asset support and political weight to encourage the government to adhere to the framework.

Currently, the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), World Food

¹ The Executive Committee assists the secretary-general in making decisions on issues of strategic consequence requiring high-level attention across all pillars of the UN's work, informed by relevant deliberations in UN intergovernmental bodies. For more information on the Executive Committee see:

www.un.int/sites/www.un.int/files/Permanent%20Missions/delegate/establishment_of_an_executive_committee.pdf.

Programme (WFP), and UN Development Programme (UNDP) are present in the country.² These offices are spread throughout Galasi. Sureen has no UN presence, but the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) does have an office there.

UNAC has been working actively with women's groups at the community level to increase their participation in decision making, elections, and conflict resolution. It has also undertaken special efforts to promote women's employment and to combat sexual and gender-based violence and impunity for crimes against women. Since UNAC's mandate highlighted work related to Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security, there may be some concern among women in Carana (as well as in the Security Council and some member states) that visibility of those issues will suffer when the UN development presence is reduced.

Currently, UNAC has 421 national staff, 235 international staff, and 125 UN volunteers, the majority of whom are based in Galasi. The economic state in the country is poor, with only 1 percent GDP growth last year—far below pre-war levels. The government controls the mining sector, and there is limited private sector activity. Over the past ten years, a modest service economy, including hotels and restaurants catering to UNAC international staff, has emerged in Galasi; a small number of Caranese have also profited off the rental of offices and apartments and provision of construction materials, freight, banking, and other services to the international community.

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TASK

The Security Council has requested that UNAC and the UNCT jointly provide an integrated transition plan (ITP) to inform decision making over the next 18 months. The SRSG has convened the mission leadership team (MLT) and tasked it with developing an ITP, which will coordinate actions taken by the mission, the UNCT, UNHQ, and the government of Carana.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What initial steps in planning should the mission and UN country team take? Who should lead and who should be consulted? What is the sequencing of these steps?
2. What steps should the MLT and the UN country team/resident coordinator take to ensure that sufficient funding and capacity are in place for the UN presence left in the country? What partners should be engaged to this end?
3. Who are the principal audiences that UNAC and the UN country team should be engaging with during the transition? What are some of the key messages and channels to be used for strategic communications?

² See map for which entities are currently present and where.

Inject 1

The SRSG has just received a call from the president of Carana, who expressed serious concern over the timeline for the security handover and the drawdown of UNAC forces, as mandated by Security Council Resolution 4455. She argues that the timeframe is too short to adequately train the national police and notes that the police are not widely trusted by the people. She further argues that the police are entirely dependent on the mission for logistics support outside of provincial capitals, and they will not be able to respond quickly in the event of violence in the countryside. She informs the SRSG that she is prepared to call the secretary-general directly.

The SRSG asks for guidance on how to engage with the president and for a formal communications strategy for the transition, including engagement with national and international actors in Carana, civil society, and national staff.

- 1. What would be included in a communications strategy, and what are the steps involved in the process? How would this connect to the ITP?**

Inject 2

The UNAC national staff association has sent the MLT an email demanding some form of job security. The message states that the mission has a responsibility to ensure that staff are provided with continued employment and notes that of the 421 national staff in UNAC, a majority have worked for the mission for more than five years. The email further emphasizes that there are limited job opportunities outside of UNAC, and that uncertainty around when staff will be released from the mission makes it difficult to plan for finding new employment. According to the staff union, if the mission does not take immediate steps to address these demands, it will take the story to the local press. An official from the Ministry of Labor has contacted the SRSG's office to ask for clarification on the status of national staff, implying that the minister of labor is considering a public statement on what he considers to be UNAC's obligations under Caranese labor law.

- 1. Which UNAC and UNHQ offices should be involved in supporting the SRSG in dealing with these issues? What resources/references should they draw upon?**
- 2. What options does the mission have to help ease the transition for national staff?**
- 3. How and to whom should these processes and efforts be communicated?**

Inject 3

The DSRSG for political affairs receives a call from the head of office in Sureen expressing concern that, following the closure of the UNAC field office, there will be no UN presence in Sureen. She wants to discuss the impact of the mission's transition. She notes that due to rapid population growth during the war, Sureen's infrastructure is severely overburdened. There are not enough police, and police who are present often do not have basic equipment like radios, non-lethal crowd-control apparatuses,

or ammunition. Many neighborhoods are informal settlements. She says she has repeatedly advocated for UNDP to extend its presence outside of the capital, noting that heads of offices in other provinces have expressed similar concerns despite the presence of other UN agencies.

- 1. What actions should UNAC take as these decisions are made (e.g., conducting joint assessments with the government)?**
- 2. Are there agencies, funds, and programs that should be present outside the capital?**
- 3. What communications strategy can be used to let the public know that the UN is not leaving completely?**