**UNITED NATIONS SECURITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**
*Security Policy Manual*

# Chapter

## II  UNITED NATIONS SECURITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

**SECTION**

**G**

**Saving Lives Together**

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UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

**UNDSS**

## A. Introduction

1. The Saving Lives Together framework (herein referred to as "the Framework")[1] was established by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) to improve cooperation on security issues between the United Nations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) that are implementing and/or operational partners of the United Nations. The Framework provides a collaborative approach to security management, particularly humanitarian operations in complex environments.

## B. Purpose

2. The purposes of this policy are as follows:

(a) To reaffirm the commitment of all actors in the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS) to security collaboration with relevant NGOs.

(b) To reaffirm the importance of the Saving Lives Together Framework and ensure support, within available resources, for the implementation of the Framework at all levels within the UNSMS.

(c) To outline the general approach of the UNSMS for using the Framework as a tool for collaborating with relevant NGOs.

(d) To assist Designated Officials (DOs), Security Management Teams (SMTs), United Nations security professionals and United Nations system organizations in their collaboration with relevant NGOs as a part of their security management responsibilities.

## C. Applicability

3. The policy is applicable to all organizations and actors within the UNSMS.

4. Nothing in this policy contradicts the adherence to common humanitarian ground rules, including the need to maintain the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian activities.

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[1] Saving Lives Together "*A Framework for Improving Security Arrangements among IGOs, NGOs and the UN in the Field*", Rev. 2011. Since 2001, the United Nations Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)[1] has examined best practices for security collaboration between the United Nations and non-United Nations organizations. Those best practices formed the basis for the Saving Lives Together framework, developed by the IASC. In 2006, the United Nations High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) and the IASMN (in Vienna in May 2006) approved the Saving Lives Together framework (ref: CEB/2006/HLCM/12/CRP.2). In August 2011, the IASC endorsed a review of the Framework. In October 2011, participants in the Second Saving Lives Together Conference, held in Geneva, endorsed the revised Saving Lives Together Framework, followed by the IASMN's endorsement of the revised Framework in February 2012 at its 17th regular session. In October 2015, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Department of Safety and Security and the United Nations Development Programme jointly issued a revised Saving Lives Together Framework. In October 2016, the HLCM approved revisions of the Programme Criticality Framework, followed by the endorsement of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in November 2016. The revised Framework, in line with the Secretary-General's decision (PC/2016/1), is a mandatory policy of the Organization in areas where security risk levels are "high" or above. The Designated Official is accountable for using the results of the Programme Criticality Assessment and for endorsing security risk management decisions taken at country-level, taking both the Programme Criticality and the results of the Security Risk Management process into consideration.

## D. Scope

5. At the country or mission level, the DOs, Area Security Coordinators (ASCs), members of the SMT[2] and security professionals should take measures to enhance collaboration with relevant NGOs , in consultation with host Governments, in accordance with the staged approach to security collaboration as described in the IASC-endorsed Saving Lives Together framework (attached).[3]

6. The policy is to be implemented taking into account the specific context in which the UNSMS operates. Depending on the specific local context and the discretion of the DOs, the UNSMS collaboration with the NGOs may include other NGOs which are implementing partners of the United Nations.

## E. Roles and Responsibilities

7. DOs, SMT members, ASCs and managers with security responsibilities in organizations in the UNSMS are responsible for implementing this policy and relevant operational guidelines as part of their security management responsibilities.

8. The DO is responsible for promoting the principles of the Framework and implementing measures identified in this policy while adapting the Framework's elements to the specific local context and available resources.

9. Security Advisers shall support the DOs and SMT members and provide technical advice in implementing this policy.

10. Executive Heads of UNSMS organizations are responsible for informing their respective personnel of this policy.

## F. Requirement for Review and Reporting

11. The DO and the SMT, supported by security professionals, should regularly assess the capacity of the local UNSMS to support the implementation of this policy.

12. If any actors within the UNSMS, in-country or in a mission area, require clarification on their responsibilities regarding this policy or require additional technical or operational support they are to inform their respective headquarters in a timely manner.

## G. Training and Compliance

13. This policy constitutes part of the mandatory training for DOs, SMT members, security professionals and managers in the UNSMS organizations who have security management responsibilities in line with the Framework of Accountability for the UNSMS.

14. All actors within the UNSMS should be made familiar with and are requested to abide by this policy.

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[2] For designated security areas within a country or mission, these provisions also apply to ASCs and Area Security Management Teams.

[3] Saving Lives Together "*A Framework for Improving Security Arrangements among IGOs, NGOs and the UN in the Field*", Rev. 2015.

## H. Final Provisions

15. This policy is to be distributed to all United Nations personnel.

16. This policy enters into force on 14 April 2014.

# SAVING LIVES TOGETHER

"A Framework for improving Security Arrangements among International Non-Governmental Organizations/International Organizations and the United Nations"

October 2015

## Objectives and Principles

Saving Lives Together, or SLT, is a series of recommendations aimed at enhancing security collaboration between the United Nations, International Non-Governmental Organizations and International Organizations ("SLT partner organizations"). It recognizes the collectively experienced security threats and the importance of collaboration to ensure the safe delivery of humanitarian and development assistance.

The objective of SLT is to enhance the ability of partner organizations to make informed decisions and implement effective security arrangements to improve the safety and security of personnel and operations.

To this end, SLT partner organizations commit to:

- Establish security coordination arrangements and forums;
- Share relevant security information;
- Cooperate on security training;
- Cooperate on operational and logistics arrangements, where feasible;
- Identify resource requirements for enhancing security coordination between the UN, INGOs and IOs, and advocate for funding; and
- Consult on common ground rules for humanitarian action.

It is recognized that SLT partner organizations perceive risks and assess vulnerabilities differently, accept different levels of risks, and implement security arrangements which they consider suitable for their organization and operational conditions.

In this context, SLT partner organizations accept that they remain fully accountable for the safety and security of their personnel in accordance with their 'duty of care' obligations as employing organizations. Accordingly, organizations that wish to cooperate under the SLT Framework are required to maintain internal security risk management procedures, contingency planning and adequate and reliable arrangements to respond to security emergencies. Implementation of SLT in the field will be achieved through the establishment of collaboration mechanisms at two levels: Regular and Enhanced. The arrangements associated with the two levels are designed to differentiate between "low/medium" and "high/very high" risk areas and the related security and operational conditions.

The SLT arrangements in the field will be supported by UN, INGO and IO headquarters security managers and through the SLT Oversight Committee. A feedback mechanism will be maintained for the resolution of coordination issues which may arise in the field.

Although Saving Lives Together is a voluntary engagement by the SLT partner organizations, the success and effectiveness of the initiative is dependent on the commitment of all participating organizations to work collectively towards the mutual goal of improving the security of personnel, operations and assets. Accordingly, organizations that wish to become SLT partner organizations must commit to the adoption of the principles, objectives and arrangements comprised in this framework.

## Headquarters Support for SLT

UNDSS and OCHA will work with the headquarters of SLT partner organizations to achieve the following:

- Timely sharing of security incident reports and alerts;
- Timely responses to queries on SLT related issues;
- Supporting the resolution of security coordination problems which may arise in the field;
- Supporting the coordination of security incident response measures in the field;
- Sharing of contact information between security managers of SLT partner organizations;
- Collecting, compiling and cross-checking information for regular security reports and coordinate mutual assistance in maintaining relevant security incident databases;
- Making training events available to security managers of SLT partner organizations, when feasible;
- Organising workshops and conferences to enhance mutual knowledge and understanding of UN, INGO, and IO security collaboration;
- Exploring further areas of security cooperation between the UN, INGOs and IOs; seeking innovation and efficiencies in areas of security management.

To support the effective implementation of this framework with the required leadership and guidance, and to ensure monitoring and reporting, an SLT Oversight Committee has been established to:

- Provide strategic guidance for the implementation of the SLT Framework;
- Monitor the implementation of the SLT Framework;
- Review and approve INGO HQs' requests for admission to SLT partnership;
- Maintain a feedback mechanism for the resolution of coordination issues in the field;
- Identify and disseminate good practice to enhance security cooperation between the UNSMS, INGOs, and IOs;
- Report on the implementation of SLT to the IASC on an annual basis; UNDSS, on behalf of the SLT OC, will compile regular reports to reflect the status of SLT implementation globally, record new developments and initiatives, and publicise good practices;
- Monitor the application of the SLT Levels to ensure their coherence.

The SLT OC is co-chaired by UNDSS and a representative of an INGO SLT partner organization. UNDSS and OCHA will function as a Secretariat for the SLT OC.

## SLT Partner Organizations

The SLT partnership comprises the following categories of organizations:

- United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS) Organizations;
- International Non-Governmental (INGOs)/ International Organizations (IOs) that are implementing or operational partners of United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes;

INGOs and IOs may request global SLT partnership status, which will be formalized through an exchange of letters of understanding (LOUs) between the headquarters of INGOs/IOs and UNDSS, upon review and agreement of the SLT OC. SLT partnership is conditional

to committing to implement the principles, objectives and

## SLT Cooperation in the Field – Regular Level

The essential goal at the Regular Level of SLT implementation is to create dialogue and information sharing arrangements to ensure that all SLT partner organizations have adequate access to relevant security information.

### Coordination Arrangements

- INGOs and IOs will nominate representatives to interface and engage with the UNSMS. Where feasible, INGOs and IOs will establish a security coordination platform or use a coordination entity to interface with the UNSMS through UNDSS;
- INGOs and IOs may opt to grant observer status to nominated UNSMS representatives to attend relevant portions of the INGO and IO security forum meetings;
- UNSMS may opt to grant observer status to INGO and IO representatives to attend the relevant portions of the United Nations' Security Cell and/or Security Management Team meetings.
- UNDSS will function as the focal point for SLT security cooperation on behalf of the UNSMS, in close cooperation with UN Agencies and OCHA;

### Information Sharing

- Obtaining relevant, timely and accurate security information is a critical element of informed decision making, and it is therefore incumbent on all SLT partner organizations to commit to sharing relevant security information with each other.
- Security information shared under the SLT framework is for the sole purpose of enhancing the security of personnel, operations and assets, and must not be used for any other purposes. Participating organizations commit to ensuring confidentiality of shared information and the appropriate use of the information within their organization. Information received cannot be further distributed to third parties without the prior consent of the originating organization. All assessments and decisions made on the basis of shared security information remain the responsibility

arrangements comprised in this framework.

of the individual organizations making those assessments and decisions.

- It is recognised that SLT partner organizations may have limitations on what information they can share due to internal confidentiality requirements, restrictions applicable to information originating from third parties, obligations to protect the privacy of their personnel, and preserving the credibility and integrity of their organization. However, SLT partner organizations should make every effort to disclose relevant security information, especially when such information may be critical to mitigate an imminent risk of injury or death.
- Security information sharing comprises the following: incident reports; situation reports; security alerts; security procedures, risk mitigation and contingency measures, as well as lessons learnt related to security incidents.

### Operational and Logistics Arrangements

- SLT partner organizations will share logistics to enhance security arrangements and respond to security incidents where feasible, e.g. UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS);
- SLT partner organizations should seek to implement, where feasible, interoperable communications systems, advocate for the provision of frequencies, and assist each other in support and maintenance arrangements.

### Security Training

- Recognising that UN, INGO and IO personnel operate in the same environment and that their security is often interlinked, it is advisable that security training is harmonised. Accordingly, SLT partner organizations will collaborate and consult on the development and delivery of security training, and offer participation or observer status at security training exercises, where feasible.
- In areas where the UNSMS establishes a Safe and Security Approaches to Field Environments (SSAFE) training, it will offer participation for INGO and IO personnel, if feasible.

## SLT Implementation in the Field – Enhanced Level

When security conditions become more complex and challenging, information sharing and security coordination arrangements between SLT partner organizations should be enhanced concurrently. Accordingly, the goal of the Enhanced Level of cooperation is to achieve stronger and more effective information sharing, security coordination, and operational arrangements.

In areas with challenging security conditions, the elements of the Enhanced level SLT cooperation below should be considered and applied in addition to the Regular Level SLT components listed above.

### Coordination Arrangements

Effective coordination mechanisms established and formalised:

- INGOs and IOs will establish a fully functioning security coordination platform to interface with the UNSMS;
- UNDSS will nominate a security focal point for SLT, providing a strong link with the INGO security coordination platform;

When required to provide additional capacity for security coordination with INGOs and IOs, and depending on capacity and availability of funding, UNDSS may establish a security support team.

### Information Sharing

SLT partner organizations will:

- support the systematic sharing of security incident reports;
- establish regular security coordination meetings and briefings;
- share operational planning information, where relevant, in the interest of mutual security.

- UNDSS and the INGO security coordination platform will:
- cooperate closely and enhance information sharing to enhance situational awareness for all SLT partner organizations;
- cooperate on security analysis, risk assessments, and operational planning, where feasible.

UNSMS Security Information and Operations Centres (SIOC), where established, will function as a central node for coordination and information sharing between SLT partner organizations.

### Operational and Logistics Arrangements

SLT partner organizations will:

- Collaborate on security arrangements for jointly conducted operations, where applicable;
- Identify security requirements to be included in Consolidated Appeals (CAP), Strategic Response Plans (SRP), or other joint funding appeals;
- Consult on security coordination with host country authorities and other local actors with a view to achieving a coordinated and/or common approach where appropriate;
- Consult on contracted security services, e.g. security escorts, with a view to achieving a coordinated and/or common approach, where appropriate.