



**UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**Agenda item 134:**

**Review of arrangements for funding and backstopping special political missions**

**Statement by Ambassador Joseph M. Torsella,  
U.S. Representative for UN Management and Reform**

Before the Fifth (Administrative and Budgetary) Committee  
During the main part of the sixty-sixth session of the UN General Assembly  
16 December 2011

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

At the outset, my delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the Controller, Ms. María Eugenia Casar, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the review of arrangements for funding and backstopping special political missions, and to Mr. Collen Kelapile for introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

Mr. Chairman, the maintenance of international peace and security is enshrined as the first of four purposes of the United Nations enumerated in Article 1 of its Charter. Over the years and from the very beginning, the United Nations has drawn upon a range of activities primarily financed through the regular budget, including preventative diplomacy, mediation and conflict resolution, and post-conflict peacebuilding, in pursuit of this fundamental objective. Together, these activities are arranged under the rubric of special political missions.

In his report, the Secretary-General asserts that the administrative and financial arrangements applicable to special political missions are inadequate for a variety of reasons, and has proposed measures to address these perceived shortcomings. My delegation believes, however, that the issues of concern can be addressed through technical adjustments to the existing administrative and financial arrangements. Wholesale changes to the basic funding mechanisms for special political missions may, in fact, have significant adverse implications not adequately addressed in the report, including on practical considerations related to the consideration of budget proposals by this Committee. Moreover, while this Committee has previously voiced its concern regarding the piecemeal approach to the budget process, the most far-reaching of the

proposals presented by the Secretary-General would in fact have the effect of exacerbating the piecemeal nature of the budget process.

Today, the thirty special political missions represent approximately twenty percent of the regular budget, with requirements amounting to some \$1.2 billion in a 2010-2011 biennial program budget of \$5.37 billion. The proposals of the Secretary-General thus entail fundamental changes to the basic structure of not only a substantial portion of the work of the United Nations, but also of a substantial portion of the expenditures of the Organization. Careful analysis, thorough discussion, and thoughtful deliberation by Member States are therefore imperative to ensure that any changes to the funding and backstopping arrangements are appropriate and that there will be no adverse impact to the vulnerable populations who live in the areas in which many of the special political missions serve.

The United States therefore looks forward to working with all delegations to ensure that this important issue be provided the time and attention that it rightly deserves.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.