

**Statement of the Chairman**

**Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions**

**1 December 2015**

**Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council**

**Thematic cluster I: special and personal envoys and special advisers of the Secretary-General**

*(ACABQ reports: A/70/7/Add.11 and 16; related reports: A/70/348/Add.1 and 6)*

**United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan**

*(ACABQ report A/70/7/Add.14; related report: A/70/348/Add.4)*

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's reports (A/70/7/Add.11, 14 and 16) on the Secretary-General's resource proposals for 2016 for the 11 special political missions (SPMs) under thematic cluster I and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA).

First, I am going to share with you some of the observations and recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on thematic cluster I, special and personal envoys and special advisers of the Secretary-General.

The resource estimates proposed by the Secretary-General for the missions under cluster I are contained in two reports (A/70/348/Add.1 and Add.6) and the related reports of the Advisory Committee are issued as documents A/70/7/Add.11 and 16.

The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the resources proposed by the Secretary-General, subject to its recommendations contained in sections III of its two reports. The Committee requests that detailed information on the reductions arising from its recommendations should be provided to the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

The Advisory Committee notes that for a number of budgetary proposals under operational costs, proper justifications have not been provided, in particular for some significant increases requested. The Committee has recommended reductions under consultants, ground transportation and official travel for a few missions (see A/70/7/Add.11, paras. 26, 32, 35 and 36).

The Advisory Committee continues to note issues related to the location of heads of mission. In a few cases, additional resources have to be borne by the Organization due to personal choices of locations. The Committee has reiterated its recommendations (see A/70/7/Add.11, paras.18-23).

Regarding the proposed reclassification from the Assistant-Secretary-General to Under-Secretary-General (USG) for the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, the Secretary-General indicates that the Security Council, in its resolution 2216 (2015), requested him to intensify his good offices role, and that to that end, a new special envoy was appointed at the USG level. The Advisory Committee notes that the current title reflects a change from the previous one, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Yemen. The Committee concurs with the proposed reclassification (A/70/7/Add.16, para.10).

Mr. Chairman,

Now, let me turn to UNAMA.

The proposed resource requirements for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016 for UNAMA are estimated at \$183.3million reflecting a decrease of \$4.1 million or 2.2 per cent compared with the resources approved for 2015.

Mr. Chairman,

The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposal for the resource requirements subject to adjustments that may arise relating to its recommendation on the application of a separate vacancy rate in respect of the one new National Professional Officer position proposed for establishment in 2016 and the Committee's related recommendations relating to the provision of resident auditor services for both UNAMA and UNAMI.

Concerning the services provided to UNAMA by its Support Office in Kuwait as well as the Kuwait Joint Support Office (KJSO), the Committee questions the repeated transfer of functions back and forth between Kabul and Kuwait within a relatively short space of time based on a variety of different arguments and with financial implications arising from each transfer. The Committee also recalls its previous concerns with respect to the lack of clarity with regard to the structures, functions and capacity of the UNAMA Support Office in Kuwait and the KJSO.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

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**Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions**

**1 December 2015**

**Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council**

**Thematic cluster III: United Nations offices, peacebuilding support offices, integrated offices and commissions**

*(ACABQ report: A/70/7/Add.13; related reports: A/70/348/Add.3)*

Mr. Chairman,

With respect to cluster III, the proposed resource requirements for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016 for the 8 special political missions under cluster III are estimated at \$190.1 million reflecting a decrease of \$7 million or 3.9 per cent compared with the resources approved for 2015

The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the resources proposed by the Secretary-General under cluster III, subject to its recommendations contained in section II of its report. The Committee trusts that, as with the other clusters and special political missions, detailed information on the reductions arising from these recommendations will be provided to the General Assembly.

With regard to UNOWA, the Committee recommends against the proposed separation of the Office of the Chief of Staff from the Office of the Special Representative, as well as its related staffing proposal, on the basis that it could be detrimental to the mission's overall cohesion.

As for UNSOM, the Advisory Committee reiterates its view that there should be a clear separation of the mandates and respective budget proposals of UNSOM and UNSOA. In that connection, the Committee recommends against the three proposed UNV positions of Medical Officers for UNSOM, which in its view should be included in the next UNSOA budget. However, the Committee acknowledges the need for appropriate medical support for UN staff and is of the view that the Secretary-General, using his exceptional authority, could approve temporary positions for UNSOA to undertake these functions during the interim 6-month period before the next UNSOA budget cycle comes into effect.

Coming to UNSMIL, the Advisory Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General should have sought the Committee's concurrence prior to creating the extrabudgetary position of Special Adviser at the Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) level. In addition, the Committee questions the basis upon which the ASG level was determined and recommends that the position be established at the D-2 level, which is consistent with other UNSMIL divisional heads.

Thank you