

Statement of the Chairman of the
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

11 May 2017

Budget performance for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016, financing for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 of the support account for peacekeeping operations

(ACABQ report: A/71/883; related Secretary-General's reports: A/71/726 and Add.1, and A/71/806)

Madam Chairperson,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report (A/71/883) on the support account for peacekeeping operations. I will now summarize some of the Advisory Committee's key observations and recommendations.

With respect to the proposed budget for the support account for 2017/18, the recommendations of the Advisory Committee would entail a reduction of \$11,722,400 to the proposals of the Secretary-General under both post and non-post resources.

In its report, the Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly has reiterated that the level of the support account should take into consideration the number and size of peacekeeping operations. The Committee notes the withdrawal of military and civilian components in UNOCI and UNMIL, and considers that the requirement for backstopping support should decrease in the 2017/18 period. The Advisory Committee is also of the view that a prudent approach to any increase in the support account would be appropriate at this stage, pending the comprehensive review of the support account to be submitted to the General Assembly in the second part of the resumed 72nd session.

Madam Chairperson,

Under the object of expenditure of consultants, the Advisory Committee reiterates that reliance on the use of external consultants should be kept to an absolute minimum and that the Organization should use its in-house capacity to perform core activities or to fulfil functions that are recurrent over the long term or on policy matters. In respect of official travel, the Committee encourages compliance with General Assembly resolution 67/254 A, including on the 16-day advance booking of tickets. The Committee also emphasizes greater utilization of videoconferencing, a review of the number of staff travelling on each trip, and the possibility of combining trips, to keep the growing cost of official travel under control.

As regards the specific resource proposals of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee recommends against new posts and positions, as well as conversions, given its views on the proposed level of the support account. However, the Committee recommends approval of the conversion from position to post of one P-2 Associate Legal Officer in the Administrative Law Section in view of the continuous nature of the functions regarding disciplinary matters and the availability of P-2 posts at entry level within the Organization. The Committee also recommends approval of 74 continuations of general temporary assistance positions, and makes other recommendations under non-post objects of expenditure by department or office.

The recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the actions to be taken by the General Assembly for the 2015/16 and 2017/18 periods are set out in section V of its report (A/71/883).

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.