

Statement of the Chairman
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

09 May 2017

Budget performance of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 and Proposed budget for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (MONUSCO)

(ACABQ report A/71/836/Add.11 related reports A/71/674; A/71/862)

Budget performance for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

(ACABQ report A/71/836/Add.16; related reports of the Secretary-General: A/71/645 and A/71/847)

Madam Chairperson,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's reports on MONUSCO and UNMIL.

The Advisory Committee is recommending a reduction of \$36.9 million to the proposed budget of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) for 2017/18.

This includes a reduction of \$27.6 million related to the reduction of 3,700 military personnel in the authorized troop ceiling, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2348 (2017), based on additional information provided to the Committee by the Secretariat. The Advisory Committee considers that, in addition to requirements under the military personnel class of expenditure, the reduction in the number of military contingent personnel deployed may have an impact on related support structures as well as other requirements under civilian personnel and operational costs. The Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will provide the General Assembly with a detailed update on the totality of the adjustments to be made to the estimated requirements of MONUSCO for 2017/18 pursuant to the adoption of Security Council resolution 2348 (2017)

In addition, in line with established practice for new posts and positions, the Advisory Committee is recommending application of a vacancy factor of 50 instead of 25 per cent in estimating the requirements of the 8 temporary positions proposed to be established in the Electoral Support Unit. For UNVs, the Advisory Committee is recommending a vacancy factor of 12.9 instead of 11 per cent, taking into account the actual and actual average rates recorded during the first 8 months of the current period.

Under operational costs, the Advisory Committee is recommending reductions under consultants, official travel, facilities and infrastructure and air operations. The Committee recommends a 30 per cent reduction under non-training consultants, taking the view that the Mission should be in a position to assume some of the tasks proposed to be conferred upon

the consultants. In view of the pattern of expenditures the Advisory Committee recommends that the overall proposed resources for 2017/18 under facilities and infrastructure be reduced by some \$2 million and maintained at the level of the apportionment for 2016/17. With regard to official travel, the Committee is of the view that further efforts can be made to reduce the number and duration of trips, in particular, outside mission travel and training related travel, and recommends an overall reduction of 20 per cent. And under air operations, based on the usage of the unmanned aerial system, the Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of \$5 million to the proposed requirements of \$15.1 million for a new unmanned aerial system for the 2017/18 period.

With regard to the current period, the Advisory Committee has requested the Secretary-General to provide the General Assembly with the most up to date information on current and projected expenditures related to the 150 temporary assistance positions established by the Controller to provide technical assistance and logistical support in support of the voter registration process, pursuant to security Council resolution 2277 (2016).

Madam Chairperson,

With regard to UNMIL, the Advisory Committee trusts that the drawdown of personnel and equipment of UNMIL will proceed as swiftly as possible and as planned and in accordance with Security Council resolution 2284 (2016) and in compliance with all applicable United Nations regulations and rules, and policies. The Committee expects that the Mission will avail itself of the experience gained in the course of the drawdown and liquidation of other peacekeeping missions, including the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, and make use of any applicable lessons learned.

The Advisory Committee recommends an overall reduction in the proposed budget of UNMIL in the amount of approximately 7.7 million dollars. These reductions pertain to the abolishment of one P-5 post and a reduction under general temporary assistance, as there is no need for dedicated asset disposal staff at such activities are coordinated directly through the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi. As the Mission will continue its downsizing over the next months, the Committee also recommends further reductions which include: a 30 per cent reduction under official travel; a 10 per cent reduction under facilities and infrastructure; a 20 per cent under communications; and a 20 per cent reduction under information technology.

The Advisory Committee is concerned that UNMIL's environmental efforts have not been satisfactory throughout the life of the Mission and expects that the environmental clean-up of all UNMIL sites will comply with established environmental and waste management policies. The Committee expects that the Mission will reduce its long-term overall environmental footprint, as also requested by the General Assembly in its resolutions 69/307 and 70/286.

Finally, I would like to highlight that UNMIL continues to support the return of national staff to the national workplace, including through annual job fairs and a certification programme in vocational skills. The Advisory Committee welcomes the Mission's efforts in implementing its National Staff Capacity-building Programme.

Thank you Madam Chairman.