

Statement of the Chairman

Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)

22 March 2019

Revised estimates for the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic related to the programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019

(ACABQ report A/73/799; related report A/73/729)

Madam Chair,

I am pleased to introduce the report of the Advisory Committee on the revised estimates for the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic related to the programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

The Mechanism is currently being financed through its unencumbered balance from 2018 and an additional amount provided under the authority of the Secretary-General to enter into commitments to meet unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. The Committee expects that the Secretary-General will provide a detailed explanation on the use of these commitments and related modalities for their use.

In view of last year's discontinuance of cross-border deliveries from Jordan, the Advisory Committee considers that a permanent presence in Amman is no longer merited and recommends the adoption of the Secretary-General's proposal to abolish nine positions located in Amman, as well as the abolishment, as at 30 June 2019, of the remaining position of P-3 Monitoring Officer. Any support required at this stage should

be provided by the Mechanism's two other offices in Iraq or Turkey, or by the OCHA Regional Office for the Syria Crisis in Amman.

The Advisory Committee also recommends a five per cent reduction of the resources under official travel, primarily because of the Mechanism's persistent low rate of compliance with the advance ticket purchase policy.

Thank you, Madam Chair.