

**Statement of the Chairman**

**Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)**

**18 October 2019**

**Estimates in respect of special political missions**

**Thematic cluster III: regional offices, offices in support of political processes and other missions**

**United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq**

*(ACABQ report: A/74/7/Add.4 and 6; related report: A/74/6(Sect.3)/ Add.4,6)*

Mr Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report on the Secretary General's resource proposals for 2020 for the special political missions under thematic cluster III.

Regarding requirements for military and police personnel the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the resources for the nine special political missions. In terms of staffing requirements, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the staffing resources for the nine special political missions. Concerning vacant positions, the Committee was informed that as at 31 July 2019, a number of missions had vacant positions for longer than two years. The Committee notes that the continuing requirement for long vacant positions should be regularly reviewed and justifications provided for their retention. The Committee trusts that recruitment for the vacant positions will be completed

expeditiously and encourages the missions to make further efforts. The Committee expects that the recruitment process for the posts presently encumbered by staff members on special post allowance for extended periods will be completed without further delay.

As regards the reconfiguration of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau and the reprioritization of tasks, the Committee notes the positions proposed for downward reclassification as part of the transition process for the projected closure of the Office by the end of 2020 and that the experience gained during the liquidation of recent peacekeeping missions provides an opportunity for establishing best practices and institutionalising lessons learned, including those related to staffing.

As regards staffing in the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, the Advisory Committee notes the unexpected expenditures and working arrangements due to the security situation in the country and the efforts by the Mission to ensure the security of staff. The Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will provide updated information on the security situation and its implications on expenditures, including the deployment of staff and working arrangements.

With regard to official travel, the Committee regrets the persistent non-compliance with the advance purchase policy and reiterates that more efforts are required, in particular in areas where travel can be better planned. In terms of cost sharing arrangements, the Committee trusts that the arrangements in place maximize efficient resource use and cost transparency.

Mr. Chairman,

I now turn to the report of the Advisory Committee on the estimates in respect of special political missions on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

The Advisory Committee recommends reductions to the proposed budget for UNAMI for 2020, as some underexpenditure has occurred in the past, as well as during the current year, under operational costs, specifically under consultants and consulting services, facilities and infrastructure, ground transportation, air operations, communications and information technology, and other supplies and equipment. The Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will provide updated information on UNAMI's expenditures for 2019 to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.

The Advisory Committee regrets that UNAMI is not proposing any adjustments to its staffing complement as a result of the review of the development pillar support functions and is of the view that more clarity is needed with respect to the staffing needs to ensure the full implementation of the reforms of the Resident Coordinator system and the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 72/279. Related comments and recommendations will be provided in the Committee's main report on the estimates in respect of special political missions (A/74/7/Add.1).

Thank you, Mr Chairman.