

Statement of the Chairman

Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

16 December 2018

Proposed programme budget for 2020

Estimates in respect of special political missions

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

United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement

United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti

(ACABQ reports: A/74/7/Add.23 and 24; related reports: A/74/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.7 and Add.8)

Revised estimates relating to the programme budget for 2020 under section 27, Humanitarian assistance, and section 36, Staff assessment

Office of the United Nations Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator

ACABQ report A/74/7/Add.27; related reports: A/74/544)

Countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/74/L.11/Rev.1

ACABQ report A/74/7/Add.28; related reports: A/C.3/74/L.11/Rev.1, A/C.5/74/12

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's reports on the Secretary-General's budget proposals for 2020 for the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) and the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH).

The Advisory Committee recalls that the Secretary-General proposed resource requirements of \$643,875,000 for 37 special political missions (SPMs) for 2020 in the

context of his proposed programme budget for 2020 (A/74/6 (Sect.3)/Add.1-6). The Committee notes that the additional requirements being proposed for UNMHA (\$53,613,400) and BINUH (\$20,395,200) would increase the overall resource requirements proposed for the SPMs and the overall resource level of the proposed programme budget for 2020 by \$74,008,600. The Committee further notes that the overall resources currently proposed for the SPMs for 2020 would represent an increase by \$6,176,400 (0.9 per cent) as compared with the appropriation for 2019.

Mr. Chairman,

With respect to the backstopping of SPMs, the Advisory Committee notes that following the management reform, functions and resources relating to budget preparation and financial management, including for SPMs, have been redistributed between the relevant departments and offices, involving redeployments of resources in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2020. However, the Committee further notes that there is a need for greater clarity with respect to ongoing functions, workload, related resources and capacity, including posts/positions of the respective offices concerned. The Committee recommends that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide comprehensive information, with detailed rationale, in the context of his proposed budget for peacekeeping support account for 2020/21 and the proposed programme budget for 2021.

Mr. Chairman,

For UNMHA, the staffing changes proposed by the Secretary-General include 21 new positions, 1 redeployment and 1 reclassification. Concerning the proposed reclassification of the position of the Human Resources Officer/Business Partner from P-3 to P-4 level in Hudaydah, taking into account the functions of this recently established position and the existing capacity of the integrated single mission support structure, the Advisory Committee recommends against the proposed reclassification of the position for 2020.

While the Advisory Committee understands the uncertainties associated with the start-up of UNMHA and its challenging operational environment, it notes with concern the substantial underutilization of the resources approved for 2019 (57 per cent as at 31 October 2019). The Committee trusts that updated information for 2019 will be provided to the General Assembly. In view of the foregoing, the Advisory Committee recommends a 3 per cent reduction (amounting to \$1,191,534) in the proposed resources for operational costs for 2020.

Mr. Chairman,

Now, let me turn to BINUH.

The Advisory Committee makes a number of recommendations regarding the integration and functioning of BINUH and United Nations country team. For

instance, the Committee considers that there is a need to better clarify the division of labour between BINUH and the United Nations country team, to specify roles and responsibilities, and formalize the coordination mechanisms between the two entities. The Advisory Committee also recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to continue to seek opportunities for co-location and cost-sharing with other United Nations system entities.

With regard to staffing, the Advisory Committee welcomes the inclusion of a total of 21 National Professional Officers in the staffing complement of BINUH. The Committee is also requesting further clarification on the backstopping positions at Headquarters for Haiti. The Committee was informed that a total of 5 backstopping positions for MINUJUSTH are being funded through the peacekeeping support account and that the Division of Special Activities in the Department of Operational Support also provides backstopping services. The Committee recommends that, at this stage, the General Assembly approve resources for general temporary assistance to provide the functions of the four positions (1 P-5, 1 P-4, 2 GS-OL) proposed for the backstopping of BINUH.

With regard to operational costs, the Advisory Committee is recommending reductions of 5 percent under consultants and consulting services, official travel outside the mission area and under communications and information technology.

Mr. Chairman,

Next, I am going to introduce the report of the Advisory Committee on the Office of the United Nations Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator.

The Advisory Committee recalls that the funding for the Office of the Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator in order to respond to the tenth outbreak of the Ebola virus disease in the Democratic Republic of Congo was initially provided two-fold: firstly, through an initial funding from 19 June to 31 August 2019, which was authorized by the Secretary-General; and, secondly, under a commitment authority approved by the Committee, from 9 August until 31 December 2019.

The Advisory Committee acknowledges that the situation on the ground remains fluid and trusts that the Secretary-General will provide an update on the latest developments, including on the impact of the security situation on the work of the Office of the Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator and on the response effort overall, to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report. Furthermore, I would like to stress that every effort should be made to build on past experience and that a lessons-learned exercise of the current Ebola response effort should be undertaken as soon as possible.

Mr. Chairman,

It is now expected that the Ebola outbreak would end by March 2020 and that the Office of the Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator would close by 30 June 2020. However, the resulting slow-down of the operations on the ground has not been reflected in the proposed requirements for 2020, for example under staff costs and general operating expenses, including ground transportation. The Committee is also not convinced of the operational need for three training consultants.

In view of these issues, as well as the planned draw-down of the Office of the United Nations Emergency Ebola Response Coordinator, and also considering that the proposed requirements could have been better justified and the budget could have been presented with more clarity, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate an additional amount of \$5,600,000 (net of staff assessment) under section 27, Humanitarian assistance, of the programme budget for 2020, to be charged to the contingency fund; and an amount of \$295,100 under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the programme budget.

Mr. Chairman,

Lastly, I am pleased to introduce the report of the Advisory Committee on countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes

The Advisory Committee was informed that it is possible to absorb the requirements under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, amounting to \$138,300.

The Committee therefore recommends that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.3/74/L.11/Rev.1, an additional appropriation in the amount of \$59,400, representing a charge against the contingency fund, would be required under the proposed programme budget for 2020, comprising \$55,000 under section 16, International Drug Control, crime and terrorism prevention and criminal justice; and \$4,400 under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
