

Statement of the Chairman

Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

29 October 2019

Estimates in respect of special political missions

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Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the report of the Advisory Committee on the Secretary-General's overall resource estimates for 37 special political missions (SPMs) for 2020 and related cross cutting issues.

The resource requirements for individual missions are submitted by the Secretary-General in addenda 2 to 6 to his main report (A/74/6 (Sect. 3/Add.1)). Accordingly, specific recommendations on resource requirements for the missions are contained in the related reports of the Advisory Committee (A/74/7/Add.2-6). In addition, the resource requirements for 2020 for two missions will be presented separately, namely, the United Nations Mission to Support the Hadydah Agreement (UNMHA) and the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) (both under thematic cluster III).

Mr. Chairman,

With the introduction of an annual programme budget on a trial basis approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 72/266 A, the Advisory Committee notes that actual resource estimates of the SPMs are now included within the overall resource level of the proposed programme budget for 2020. The Committee welcomes such inclusion that improves the budgetary accuracy of the programme budget, compared with the biennial provisions for the missions proposed for recent bienniums. Consequently, the Committee notes that its recommendations pertaining to the budget proposals for 2020 for the individual missions would require adjustments to the overall resource level of the proposed programme budget for 2020 submitted by the Secretary-General. Furthermore, the Committee notes that the Secretary-General's proposals for 2020 no longer contain information on budget performance for the current period and trusts that the most updated information in this regard will be provided to the General Assembly.

On a related matter; the Advisory Committee has made comments and recommendations on the budget methodology, format and presentation in its first report on the proposed programme budget for 2020 (see A/74/7, chap I, sect A), which also apply to the reports of the Secretary-General on the estimates in respect of the SPMs for thematic clusters I to III, UNAMA and UNAMI (A/74/6 (Sect 3/Add 2-6).

Mr. Chairman,

Now let me turn to the proposed resources for 2020 for the SPMs

The overall resource level proposed for 2020 represents a decrease of \$11,673,700 (or 1.8 per cent) compared with the approved resources for 2019 (excluding UNMHA). On staffing requirements, a net increase of 34 positions (0.8 per cent) is proposed for the 37 missions for 2020 (excluding the proposed 11 GTA positions for electoral support for 2020 for UNSOM). Information on the proposed staffing changes is contained in annex I to the report of the Committee. The comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the proposed staffing requirements for individual missions are contained in its related reports (A/74/7/Add 2-6).

Mr. Chairman,

With respect to vacancy rates for new and "reassigned" posts and positions, the Advisory Committee notes that different vacancy rates are proposed and applied without sufficient justification, as reflected in the proposed programme budget for 2020 including special political missions, the peacekeeping operations and the support account for the 2019/20 period. The Committee is therefore of the view that as a policy matter, vacancy rates budgeted for new and reassigned posts and positions under different budgets should be presented with clarity. The Committee trusts that further information and explanation will be provided to the General Assembly.

In its first report on the proposed programme budget for 2020 (A/74/7, chap I, m nm

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