



**AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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We appreciate the financial discipline shown by the Secretary-General in maintaining a similar budget bottom line to 2021. We also welcome the efficiencies enabled by lessons learned from COVID-19. This includes more virtual meetings and training, reducing the need for travel and allowing broader participation.

We continue to be concerned by the Committee for Programme and # some programme plans. We would be interested in the views of other Member States on how to ensure the CPC is able to complete its mandated work as a subsidiary body.

If open programme plans are taken up by the relevant Main Committees for consideration, it will be crucial that they consider them early and provide any conclusions and recommendations to the Fifth Committee in a timely manner. Otherwise, we risk delays in adopting the 2022 budget. This could create an unwelcome precedent which could undermine the role and the value of the CPC.

We congratulate the Secretary-General on the effectiveness of the management, development, and peace and security reforms, to date, which have better enabled the UN to adapt and respond to the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19. We continue to support the annual budget cycle which has been more responsive to emerging needs, improved engagement with programme managers, and enhanced accountability and results.

As we head into the review of the annual budget cycle next year, during UNGA77, it is important to underscore that liquidity challenges facing the UN due to late and non-payment of assessed contributions by some Member States, remains the biggest challenge to mandate delivery.

The hiring freeze and delayed procurement by the Secretariat in the last year hampered mandate delivery and created a situation where the UN returned unspent balances to Member States, not because the funds were not needed, but because they came too late.

We look forward to working with all colleagues this session to reach a timely consensus on a budget which provides the necessary resources to implement mandated activities.

It is crucial that consideration of the budget not be delayed by other issues to ensure that the UN is able to deliver on our shared objectives.

Thank you, Mister Chair.

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