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Chair: Ms. Bird (Australia)
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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Contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates

Expression of farewell to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 165: Financing of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
(A/73/488 and A/73/656)

1. **Mr. Ramanathan** (Acting Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the revised budget for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (A/73/488), said that the proposed budget amounted to \$727.5 million, a decrease of 20.1 per cent from the approved budget for 2017/18. That reduction was owing to the repatriation of uniformed personnel and the abolishment of posts and positions for civilian personnel following the reconfiguration of the Operation pursuant to Security Council resolutions 2363 (2017) and 2429 (2018). A new structure for state liaison functions was proposed as part of the transition concept for the withdrawal of the Operation over a two-year period. Under that structure, UNAMID would work with the United Nations country team to sustain peace in Darfur and enable the Government of the Sudan, the country team, civil society partners and international actors to prepare for the Operation's exit.

2. Given that \$385.7 million had previously been assessed for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2018 by General Assembly resolution 72/259 B, an additional amount of \$341.8 million would have to be assessed for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2019.

3. **Mr. Sene** (Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/73/656), said that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a reduction of \$2 million to the proposed operational costs. The Advisory Committee trusted that the drawdown of civilian personnel would proceed as planned under Security Council resolutions 2363 (2017) and 2429 (2018). UNAMID was expected to undertake capacity-building activities to support national staff during the drawdown.

4. UNAMID should apply the experience gained by closed peacekeeping missions in order to ensure that timely and appropriate processes were followed during the drawdown and liquidation activities in compliance with all application regulations and rules. In particular, efforts to reduce the overall environmental footprint of the Operation should be strengthened, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolutions 69/307 and 70/286. As team sites were closed, it was essential that they be handed over in compliance with the relevant guidance, the Liquidation Manual, including its

environmental annex, and environmental laws and practices.

5. **Ms. Nalwanga** (Uganda), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that Darfur had experienced a period of stability and the humanitarian and political situation had steadily improved. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations had presented in their special report (S/2018/530) a whole-of-system approach to Darfur with adjusted priorities for UNAMID and a transition concept involving collaboration with the United Nations country team to prepare for the withdrawal of the Operation.

6. In view of the proposed abolishment of military and civilian positions, the 942 national civilian staff should be assisted through capacity-building, job fairs and other measures to equip them to seek gainful employment. She recalled the Advisory Committee's recommendations on the further nationalization of posts and timely recruitment to fill all vacant posts.

7. As UNAMID came to an end, it was crucial to utilize the experience gained in the liquidation of other missions, in particular by applying the Liquidation Manual and updating it as appropriate. The Secretary-General should ensure that the environmental footprint of UNAMID was reduced and that contaminated soil was treated in a timely and adequate manner. She welcomed the greening initiative undertaken in the mission area, which included tree-planting and improved water and sanitation facilities.

8. The Group of African States was in favour of approving the full resource request for the Operation.

9. **Mr. Ahmed** (Sudan) said that his Government was grateful for the great understanding that the members of the Security Council had shown in developing an exit strategy for UNAMID following the improvement in the humanitarian situation and the unilateral cessation of hostilities by the Government of the Sudan. The Council had welcomed the efforts of his Government to restore law and order by mobilizing human and financial resources in Darfur, including for the security sector and justice system. His Government attached particular importance to protecting the citizens of the Sudan and ensuring national sovereignty throughout the country. That effort was difficult owing to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the activities of terrorist groups.

10. Aware of the importance of peacebuilding and increased stability in Darfur for the future, his Government deemed it crucial to set up development

projects that would address the root causes of the conflict as well as the harmful effects of climate change and natural disasters, including drought. He encouraged the international community and the United Nations to provide financial and other development support in order to assist his Government in establishing projects that would help consolidate peace in Darfur; the high-level conference held in the margins of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly had underscored the importance of such support for the success of the transition period and future peacebuilding. He therefore supported the Secretary-General's proposal for \$15 million for programme-based projects as part of the resources for UNAMID.

11. It was essential to reduce the environmental footprint of the Operation; UNAMID had not, however, taken the necessary steps to do so. He therefore proposed that a joint working group be established with his Government to assess the environmental impact of all UNAMID sites and to report thereon during the next budget cycle.

12. All posts in UNAMID should be re-evaluated and international posts should be converted to national posts in order to make savings. Sudanese people who had performed important functions in UNAMID should be placed on international posts in the period before the closure of the mission as a means of ensuring national capacity-building and the smooth continuation of operational activities following the full withdrawal of the mission.

13. His Government would continue to cooperate with the United Nations, the African Union and UNAMID, and would spare no effort to achieve peace, reconstruction and development in Darfur.

Agenda item 136: Programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (continued)

Implementation of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters (A/73/370, A/73/370/Corr.1 and A/73/635)

Revised estimates relating to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (A/73/412 and A/73/649)

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its thirty-seventh, thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth sessions and its twenty-eighth special session (A/73/477, A/73/477/Corr.1 and A/73/637)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.4/73/L.9: Effects of atomic radiation (A/73/642; A/C.5/73/8)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.37: Advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security (A/73/639; A/C.5/73/9)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/73/L.22/Rev.1: Convening a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (A/73/640; A/C.5/73/10 and A/C.5/73/10/Corr.1)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.6/73/L.22: Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its seventieth session (A/73/643; A/C.5/73/12)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/73/L.51: Situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/73/638; A/C.5/73/13)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/73/L.48: Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine (A/73/650; A/C.5/73/14)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/73/L.52/Rev.1: A global call for concrete action for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (A/73/648; A/C.5/73/15)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/73/L.23: Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States (A/73/647; A/C.5/73/16)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/73/L.49: Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/73/646; A/C.5/73/17)

Contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates (A/73/655; A/C.5/73/18)

14. **Mr. Ramanathan** (Acting Controller), introducing the Secretary-General's third annual progress report on the implementation of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters (A/73/370

and [A/73/370/Corr.1](#)), said that 14 floors of the Secretariat Building had been reconfigured to a flexible workplace and 1 floor was currently being reconfigured. As a result, capacity for 690 staff had been added to the Building. In 2018, two leased buildings had been vacated, leading to reduced annual rental costs of \$16.3 million. The report presented the schedule and costs to complete the reconfiguration of the remaining floors in 2019 and 2020. It also provided details of the staff survey conducted in 2018, which showed a higher satisfaction score than in the 2017 survey.

15. The General Assembly was requested to approve the implementation of further phases of the project and the continuation of three positions. It was also requested to authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments of up to \$12,691,200 for project costs in 2019 and to appropriate \$6,586,600 under component 5, Division of Administration, New York, of section 29B, Department of Operational Support, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019.

16. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the revised estimates relating to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate ([A/73/412](#)), he said that the Assembly, by its resolution [72/262 A](#), had approved an amount of \$665,000 for the Office for 2018. The Secretary-General proposed resource requirements for 2019 of \$836,100, comprising \$772,500 under section 1, Overall policymaking, direction and coordination, and \$63,600 under section 29B, Department of Operational Support, representing a charge against the contingency fund, as well as an amount of \$94,100 under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the programme budget for 2018–2019. The Secretary-General also proposed the conversion of four positions into established posts.

17. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its thirty-seventh, thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth sessions and its twenty-eighth special session ([A/73/477](#) and [A/73/477/Corr.1](#)), he said that the Council had adopted 55 resolutions with financial implications. In support of the implementation of those resolutions, an additional appropriation of \$29,103,500 was requested, representing a charge against the contingency fund. Approval was also requested for the establishment of one new P-3 temporary post under section 24, Human rights, and an additional appropriation of \$60,000 under section 36, Staff assessment, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

18. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.4/73/L.9](#): Effects of atomic radiation ([A/C.5/73/8](#)), he said that, in order to implement the requests contained in the draft resolution, the Secretary-General proposed the reclassification of one established post from the P-4 to the P-5 level, effective 1 January 2019, to serve as Deputy Secretary of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation. Should the Assembly adopt the draft resolution, additional resources of \$24,900 would be required under section 14, Environment, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, representing a charge against the contingency fund. In addition, an amount of \$4,400 would be required under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

19. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.1/73/L.37](#): Advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security ([A/C.5/73/9](#)), he said that, in order to implement the requests contained in the draft resolution, the Secretary-General proposed additional resources of \$206,700 to cover travel costs of the experts and secretary of the group of governmental experts, and the services of a consultant to provide technical and substantive support to the Office for Disarmament Affairs in connection with the work of the group and the informal consultative meetings. Should the Assembly adopt the draft resolution, those additional resources would be reflected under section 4, Disarmament, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 and would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

20. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft decision [A/C.1/73/L.22/Rev.1](#): Convening a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction ([A/C.5/73/10](#) and [A/C.5/73/10/Corr.1](#)), he said that, in order to implement the requests contained in the draft decision, the Secretary-General proposed additional resources of \$1,013,200 to cover the costs of interpretation, documentation, meeting summaries, website production and maintenance, and other staff costs. Should the Assembly adopt the draft decision, those additional resources would be reflected in the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management; section 4, Disarmament; and section 28, Public information, representing a charge against the contingency fund, as

well as under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

21. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.6/73/L.22](#): Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its seventieth session ([A/C.5/73/12](#)), he said that, in order to implement the requests contained in the draft resolution, the Secretary-General proposed additional resources of \$128,100 to cover the costs of travel of members of the International Law Commission and travel of staff to service the Commission's sessions. Should the Assembly adopt the draft resolution, those additional resources would be reflected in the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 under section 8, Legal affairs, and would represent a charge against the contingency fund.

22. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.51](#): Situation of human rights in Myanmar ([A/C.5/73/13](#)), he said that, in order to implement the requests contained in the draft resolution, the Secretary-General proposed additional resources of \$1,232,200 to cover the salaries of five positions in the Office of the Special Envoy on Myanmar, as well as other operational requirements. Approval for those requirements was being sought in the context of the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council ([A/73/352/Add.1](#)).

23. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.48](#): Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine ([A/C.5/73/14](#)), he said that, in order to implement the requests in the draft resolution, the Secretary-General proposed additional resources of \$105,200 to prepare and present a report to the General Assembly. Of that amount, \$26,000 would be absorbed within the approved appropriation for the biennium under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management. The balance of \$79,200 under section 24, Human rights, of the programme budget was requested as an additional appropriation for 2018–2019 and would therefore represent a charge against the contingency fund.

24. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.3/73/L.52/Rev.1](#): A global call for concrete action for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination,

xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action ([A/C.5/73/15](#)), he said that, in order to implement the requests in the draft resolution, the Secretary-General proposed additional resources of \$616,600 for the proposed establishment of one P-4 post under section 24, Human rights, of the programme budget, effective 1 January 2019, to serve as secretary of the permanent forum on people of African descent, and for other operational requirements. Provisions in the amount of \$95,200 had already been included in the 2018–2019 programme budget and an amount of \$73,900 would be absorbed within the approved appropriation under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management. The remaining requirements of \$447,500 would be met by an additional appropriation for the biennium 2018–2019, representing a charge against the contingency fund. Should the Assembly adopt the draft resolution, those additional resources would be reflected in the 2018–2019 programme budget under section 24, Human rights; section 28, Public information; and section 29F, Administration, Geneva. An additional appropriation of \$11,000 would also be required under section 36, Staff assessment, of the 2018–2019 programme budget, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

25. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/73/L.23](#): Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States ([A/C.5/73/16](#)), he said that, in order to implement the requests contained in the draft resolution, the Secretary-General proposed additional resources of \$287,400 to provide for two posts and other operational requirements for the United Nations liaison office to the League of Arab States, to be located in Cairo. The Secretary-General also proposed the establishment of one P-5 post and one Local level post. Should the Assembly adopt the draft resolution, those additional resources would be reflected in the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 under section 3, Political affairs, representing a charge against the contingency fund, and under section 36, Assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

26. Introducing the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.2/73/L.49](#): Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme ([A/C.5/73/17](#)), he said that, to implement the requests contained in the draft resolution,

resources in the amount of \$2,006,100 would be needed in 2018–2019 to provide for conference services and logistical and substantive support to the United Nations Environment Programme governing body. The amount of \$1,137,100 had already been provided for in the 2018–2019 programme budget, and \$545,600 would be absorbed within the existing appropriation under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management. Should the Assembly adopt the draft resolution, the balance of the requirements in the amount of \$323,400 under section 14, Environment, would be met through an additional appropriation for the biennium 2018–2019, representing a charge against the contingency fund.

27. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates (A/C.5/73/18), he recalled that the Assembly, in its resolutions 71/274 and 72/262, had approved charges totalling \$39.4 million against the approved level of \$40.5 million for the contingency fund, leaving a balance of \$1.1 million in the fund. Potential new charges to the fund presented in the present report amounted to \$78.9 million, reflecting the information available as at 7 December 2018, including the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions known at that date. Recommendations of the Advisory Committee made after the present report had been issued reduced the potential charges to \$78.0 million. While efforts had been made to absorb additional requirements, their magnitude had not allowed for full absorption. As the current format of the budget no longer contained priority-setting information approved by the Member States, alternative options for the reallocation or reduction of resources between high- and low-priority mandated programme elements, including the deferral, termination and curtailment of such activities, would require General Assembly approval.

28. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the implementation of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters (A/73/635), said that the progress update indicated that 13 floors of the Secretariat Building had been reconfigured and 1 more floor was in the process of reconfiguration. In addition, the 7th floor of the Building had also been added to the project within the same overall cost estimate in order to enable the Innovation Building to be vacated. The project would result in estimated additional capacity for 1,222 staff members.

29. No assessment had been done of the project's impact on productivity, and workplace satisfaction continued to be used as a proxy for productivity. The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to arrange for an independent evaluation of the flexible workplace project – including its impact on productivity and staff well-being – and lessons learned, and to include the results in his next progress report.

30. With respect to project costs, the Secretary-General indicated that savings in rental costs of over \$18 million for the biennium 2018–2019 would be applied to those costs, leaving a remainder of \$6.6 million, which would require appropriation for the next phases of the project in 2019. The Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's proposal.

31. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on revised estimates relating to the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate (A/73/649), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for the Office for 2019. Having noted the proposed changes to the structure and reporting line of the Office, the Advisory Committee stressed the need for continued coordination between the Office of the Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate. It also emphasized the need to strengthen coordination, avoid fragmentation and ensure coherence between Headquarters and the field as well as among relevant United Nations system entities.

32. With respect to the field victims' rights advocates, the current arrangements at the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) should be kept under review. In view of the functions being performed by the designated Advocate at UNMISS, the organization chart of the Office should be adapted to reflect the existence of four rather than three field victims' rights advocates.

33. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its thirty-seventh, thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth sessions and its twenty-eighth special session (A/73/637), he said that, in view of the low budget implementation rate for the current period, the Advisory Committee recommended reductions to the proposed requirements for 2019 of 5 per cent for resolution 38/20, 5 per cent for resolution S 28/1 and 10 per cent for resolution 37/31, under section 24, Human rights, of the programme budget. The Advisory Committee also recommended a reduction in the proposed consultancy

for resolution 39/16, and small reductions for travel and for requirements under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management.

34. Turning to the statements of programme budget implications, he said that the Advisory Committee, in its related reports, recommended no adjustments in respect of the programme budget implications of the draft resolutions on advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security (A/73/639), convening a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (A/73/640), the report of the International Law Commission on the work of its seventieth session (A/73/643), the situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/73/638), a global call for concrete action for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (A/73/648) and cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States (A/73/647).

35. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution on the effects of atomic radiation (A/73/642), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended against the approval of the proposed reclassification of one P-4 post to the P-5 level at the current stage and encouraged the Secretary-General to expedite the completion of the recruitment process for the Secretary of the Scientific Committee at the D-1 level.

36. In its report on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine (A/73/650), the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction under staff travel.

37. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution on the report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (A/73/646), he said that the Advisory Committee questioned whether a statement of programme budget implications should have been submitted, given that the draft resolution did not include a decision on new or expanded activities, but instead referred to activities that had been ongoing since 2013. For that reason, the Advisory Committee recommended against approval of the related additional requirements of \$323,400.

38. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the contingency fund: consolidated statement of

programme budget implications and revised estimates (A/73/655), he said that the Advisory Committee trusted that an update to the list of potential charges to the contingency fund would be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the matter. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Assembly consider the potential charges against the contingency fund related to new and expanded mandates and offer appropriate guidance to the Secretary-General accordingly.

39. **Mr. Ahmed** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the implementation of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters, said that, while the Group recognized the significance of transformational initiatives that contributed to a more effective and adaptable United Nations, such initiatives should be implemented in a measured manner that responded to evolving work practices and the needs of staff. Flexible working required not only the reconfiguration of workspace but also enhanced information and communications technology support and revised human resources policies. The Group looked forward to receiving information on the lessons learned on flexible working arrangements. Given that one of the reasons for implementing flexible workplace strategies had been to increase productivity and efficiency, it was a matter of concern that recent studies had shown discrepancies in the observations of junior and senior managers regarding team productivity. He noted that white noise generators had been installed at significant cost to the Organization in order to mitigate noise pollution in the flexible workplace environment implemented in the Secretariat Building. The Group noted the difficulty in assessing the actual impact of that environment on productivity and supported the recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an independent evaluation of the project.

40. Noting that the project cost was \$54,981,400 and that actual expenditure at 31 July 2018 was \$30,441,770, he observed that the initial cost estimate had been \$45.6 million and that no further savings had been made despite the use of standardized contracts. A well-substantiated, reliable and predictable business case was essential for the Committee's consideration of costly transformational initiatives. In informal consultations, the Group would seek further information on the projected self-financing of the project. With respect to the Secretary-General's request for authorization to enter into commitments of up to \$12.7 million for 2019 and an appropriation of \$6,586,600, the Group would consider the needs for the project against the backdrop of a holistic consideration

of all construction projects in a context of financial constraints.

41. **Ms. Duncan** (United States of America) said that her delegation noted with appreciation the Offices throughout the Organization that had moved to new modes of working through the implementation of a flexible workplace and welcomed the leadership that had ensured that transformation. It was encouraging that client feedback and the dissemination of best practices remained integral parts of the process and that the project team addressed challenges in a timely and comprehensive fashion. Her delegation strongly supported flexible workplace arrangements. The benefits had so far outweighed the significant initial investment, as efficiencies had been made and the utilization of space had been maximized in one of the most expensive cities in the world.

42. **Ms. Baumann** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein on the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council, said that 2018 was the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a key document for the promotion and protection of human rights. Because the human rights pillar of the United Nations reinforced the other two pillars, peace and security and sustainable development, it was of crucial importance to the entire United Nations system. The two delegations for which she spoke were deeply concerned about the chronic lack of resources for the human rights pillar. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), as much as 10 per cent of officially mandate activities that should be financed under the regular budget were currently funded through voluntary contributions. The Organization's regular budget should at least cover all the costs of activities mandated by the Human Rights Council and other intergovernmental bodies. It should also enable OHCHR to respond to Member States' requests for technical assistance and to ensure an appropriate field presence. Moreover, adequate financial support for the Council itself was essential for its effectiveness in ensuring respect for human rights.

43. **Ms. Thaw** (Myanmar) said that Human Rights Council resolutions 37/32 and 39/2 were nothing more than a political tool intended to single out Myanmar. Her Government had been working in good faith with the United Nations through relevant mechanisms, yet Myanmar was still being treated unfairly and subjected to discrimination, as it was under the scrutiny of multiple United Nations human rights mechanisms. The Secretary-General's report (A/73/477) contained resource requirements for several mechanisms,

including the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, a fact-finding mission and an ongoing independent mechanism. The latter mechanism alone would require 62 staff headed by an Assistant Secretary-General, with an annual budget of \$26,733,800. At a time when Member States were concerned about the precarious cash situation of the Organization, allocating funds for multiple mechanisms directed against one country was a waste of scarce resources. No political mission created without the consent or cooperation of the country concerned would produce any positive or tangible result. The United Nations should instead allocate its limited budgetary resources to efforts to alleviate poverty and promote development in order to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

44. **Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation), speaking on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/73/L.48, said that the working plan for the OHCHR mission in Ukraine was infeasible. Under the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol were integral parts of the Russian Federation and therefore could not be covered by the mission mandate. The related General Assembly resolutions were politically motivated and would eventually become defunct. The Russian Federation protected human rights throughout the country, including in the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol, whose inhabitants had freely chosen reunification with the Russian Federation, in compliance with international law.

45. His delegation wished to receive written answers to several questions on budgetary and administrative matters related to the draft resolution. Firstly, it was unclear how the Secretary-General's proposals related to paragraph 14 of the draft resolution, which requested that the Secretary-General report on the issue but contained no reference to a United Nations field mission, the head of such a mission or official travel.

46. With respect to the OHCHR mission in Ukraine established in March 2014, he requested an official text of the intergovernmental decision to establish the mission or confirmation that no such decision existed and that the mission was operating without an intergovernmental mandate. If the Secretary-General had established the mission, his delegation wished to receive the text of the official decision and the rationale for his authority to do so. He also wondered whether the mission stemmed from the former Secretary-General's Human Rights Up Front initiative and requested information on all other structures that were part of that initiative. If no intergovernmental decision had been taken to establish the field mission, his delegation saw

no reason to allocate funds for it from the regular budget, which was funded by all Member States.

47. His delegation wished to see the terms of reference, programme and performance indicators of the mission, as well as its budget documents for the years 2014–2019, with a breakdown of expenditure items. He wondered how the mission was reflected in volume I of the financial reports. He also wished to receive the Board of Auditors' reports on every financial statement and any reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. He would be interested to know what funding had been allocated for official travel in the period 2014–2018 and the annual utilization rate of that funding. He also requested a list of staff and post levels, destinations of staff travel and amounts spent on travel, as well as information on compliance with the requirement for advance booking of tickets at least 21 days prior to travel. He wished to know whether any exceptions had made concerning class of travel, and if so, for what type of staff. He wondered what the budgetary provision was for official travel for the mission in 2019.

48. His delegation also wished to receive the organizational chart of the mission with all staff posts and positions; a list of all staff members, their post levels and nationalities; and copies of all vacancy announcements for the mission. He asked whether the mission employed any consultants, gratis personnel or United Nations retirees. In addition, he requested the mission's donor list with the volume of their voluntary contributions for 2014–2018 and a list of all mission assets. He wished to know whether the mission had any expensive assets, such as unmanned aircraft, surveillance systems, armoured vehicles, helicopters or other VIP transportation, and whether the mission paid rent for its premises or had them provided free of charge. He wished to receive the official text of the host country agreement. Lastly, he asked whether there had been any cases of corruption, fraud, or sexual harassment, sexual exploitation or abuse, and whether the victims had been enabled to appeal to the United Nations Ombudsman or the Victims' Rights Advocate.

49. He expressed confidence that the answers to those questions would shed light on the legitimacy of the mission and would enable delegations to consider objectively the financing of the OHCHR mission and reject the proposed allocation from the regular budget.

50. With respect to the Secretary-General's report on a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters (A/73/370), he welcomed the information on the staff survey and expressed surprise that it indicated an

increased level of staff satisfaction. He would be interested in receiving detailed survey results.

Expression of farewell to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

51. **The Chair** said that the meeting was the last time Mr. Ruiz Massieu and Mr. Sene would be present before the Committee in their capacities as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. She thanked Mr. Ruiz Massieu and Mr. Sene for their years of dedicated service and expressed the Committee's best wishes for their future endeavours.

52. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) thanked the members of the Fifth Committee for their support.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.