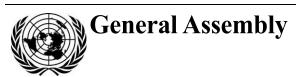
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Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Budget performance for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Appropriation for 2017/18	\$483,000,000
Expenditure for 2017/18	\$482,533,400
Unencumbered balance for 2017/18	\$466,600
Appropriation for 2018/19	\$474,406,700
Projected expenditure for 2018/19 ^a	\$474,342,700
Projected underexpenditure for 2018/19	\$64,000
Proposal submitted by the Secretary-General for 2019/20	\$485,178,300
Adjustment recommended by the Advisory Committee for 2019/20	(\$275,700)
Recommendation of the Advisory Committee for 2019/20	\$484,902,600
^a Estimates as at 31 January 2019.	



I. Introduction

1. During its consideration of the financing of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 20 March 2019. The documents reviewed and those used for background by the Advisory Committee are listed at the end of the present report. The comments and recommendations of the Committee on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations, including those pertaining to the findings and recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, can be found in its related report (A/73/755). The main observations and recommendations of the Board pertaining specifically to UNIFIL are discussed in paragraph 4 below.

II. Budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018

- 2. By its resolution 71/307, the General Assembly appropriated an amount of \$483,000,000 gross (\$470,759,800 net) for the maintenance of UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018. Expenditures for the period totalled \$482,533,400 gross (\$469,647,700 net), reflecting a budget implementation rate of 99.9 per cent. The resulting unencumbered balance of \$466,600, in gross terms, represents 0.1 per cent of the appropriation, reflecting the combined effect of lower-than-budgeted expenditures under operational costs (\$884,500, or 1.3 per cent) and higher-than-budgeted expenditures under: (a) military and police personnel (\$179,000, or 0.1 per cent); and (b) civilian personnel (\$238,900, or 0.3 per cent). A detailed analysis of variances is provided in section IV of the report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/73/627).
- 3. It is indicated in the budget performance report that during the 2017/18 period, a total amount of \$432,000 was redeployed from group III, operational costs, to group I, military and police personnel (\$184,000), and group II, civilian personnel (\$248,000). The redeployment of funds to group I was attributable to increased requirements for contingent-owned equipment. The redeployment of funds to group II was attributable to the application of a revised salary scale for national staff, in effect from 1 September 2017. The redeployment from group III was possible because of reduced requirements under air operations, owing to lower contractual costs for the commercial helicopter (ibid., para. 30). The comments of the Advisory Committee on the information presented in the performance report on individual objects of expenditure can be found, where relevant, in the discussion of the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/73/735) in section IV below.
- 4. In considering the reports of the Secretary-General on the financing of UNIFIL, the Advisory Committee also had before it the report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2018 (A/73/5 (Vol. II), chap. II). In its report, the Board noted that the Office of Internal Oversight Service considered the verification of troop strength to be inadequate. After reviewing the monthly troop strength reports, the Office had found that 20 of 28 troop contributors deployed higher numbers of troops than authorized. UNIFIL subsequently clarified that the differences were due to an overlap of incoming and outgoing troops. The Board recommended that the Administration develop guidance for missions on standardized internal controls and verification

procedures (ibid., paras. 250–255). In addition, the Board found that the secretariat function of the Local Property Survey Board, which independently reviews write-offs and disposals, was not exercised by the appropriate staff member (ibid., para. 331). The Advisory Committee trusts that all mission-specific recommendations of the Board of Auditors accepted by the Secretary-General will be implemented expeditiously.

III. Information on performance for the current period

- 5. With respect to current and projected expenditures for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 January 2019, expenditures amounted to \$378,864,800. At the end of the current financial period, the estimated total expenditures would amount to \$474,342,700, resulting in projected underexpenditures of \$64,000.
- 6. The Advisory Committee was provided with information on the incumbency of UNIFIL military and civilian personnel as at 28 February 2019, as follows:

Category of personnel	Posts authorized/approved 2018/19 ^a	Posts encumbered	Vacancy rate (percentage)
Military and police personnel			
Military contingent personnel	15 000	10 151	32.3
Civilian personnel			
Posts			
International staff	253	237	6.3
National Professional Officers	49	42	14.3
National General Service staff	585	541	7.5
General temporary assistance			
International staff	2	2	0.0

^a Represents the highest authorized strength of military and police personnel and the number of approved posts for civilian personnel.

- 7. The Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 January 2019, a total of \$9,435,965,000 had been assessed on Member States in respect of UNIFIL since its inception. Payments received as at the same date amounted to \$9,201,760,000, leaving an outstanding balance of \$234,205,000. As at 27 February 2019, the cash available to the Force amounted to \$185,035,000, which was sufficient to cover the three-month operating reserve of \$49,170,000 (excluding reimbursements to troopand police-contributing countries). The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly has repeatedly urged all Member States to fulfil their financial obligations as set out in the Charter of the United Nations on time, in full and without condition.
- 8. The Advisory Committee was also informed that all claims for the reimbursement of troop costs up to October 2018 had been settled. As at 31 January 2019, contingent-owned equipment had been certified and paid up to September 2018, leaving a balance of \$28,422,000. With regard to death and disability compensation, as at 31 January 2019, an amount of \$22,893,000 had been paid to settle 547 claims since the inception of the Force; 14 claims were pending. The Advisory Committee trusts that the outstanding claims will be settled expeditiously.

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IV. Proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

A. Mandate and planning assumptions

- 9. The mandate of UNIFIL was established by the Security Council in its resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978). The most recent extension of the mandate, until 31 August 2019, was approved by the Council in its resolution 2433 (2018) of 30 August 2018.
- 10. The Force is mandated to help the Security Council achieve the overall objective of restoring international peace and security in southern Lebanon. The planning assumptions and mission support initiatives of the Force for the 2019/20 period are summarized in paragraphs 6 to 19 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/73/735).

B. Resource requirements

11. The proposed budget for UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 amounts to \$485,178,300, representing an increase of \$10,771,600, or 2.3 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2018/19. This reflects the combined effect of proposed increases under military and police personnel (\$4,845,800, or 1.4 per cent), civilian personnel (\$1,007,500, or 1.1 per cent) and operational costs (\$4,918,300, or 12.6 per cent). Detailed information on the financial resources proposed and an analysis of variances is provided in sections II and IV, respectively, of the proposed budget (A/73/735).

1. Military and police personnel

Category	Authorized 2018/19 ^a	Proposed 2019/20	Variance
Military contingent personnel	15 000	15 000	

^a Represents the highest level of authorized strength.

12. The proposed resources for military and police personnel for 2019/20 amount to \$348,085,400, reflecting an increase of \$4,845,800, or 1.4 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2018/19. The increase is mostly due to: (a) the higher rate of reimbursement approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 72/285; (b) lower estimated adjustments for the deployment of non-functional or absent contingent-owned major equipment in line with Assembly resolution 67/261; (c) increased requirements for contingent-owned equipment resulting from the deployment of fully serviceable major equipment and lower costs for self-sustainment; and (d) requirements for the Maritime Task Force based on actual costs under related letters of assist. The increase would be partly offset by reduced requirements attributable to the application of a higher vacancy factor of 31 per cent compared with the factor of 30.7 per cent applied in 2018/19 (ibid., paras. 57–58).

13. The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for military and police personnel.

2. Civilian personnel

Category	Approved 2018/19	Proposed 2019/20	Variance	
Posts				
International staff	253	255	2	
National Professional Officers	49	48	(1)	
National General Service	585	585	_	
Temporary positions ^a				
International staff	2	0	(2)	
Total	889	888	(1)	

^a Funded under general temporary assistance.

14. The proposed resources for civilian personnel for 2019/20 amount to \$93,264,300, reflecting an increase of \$1,007,500, or 1.1 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2018/19. The Secretary-General indicates that the increase is mainly attributable to increased requirements under international and national staff owing to: (a) the application of a revised salary scale for national staff; (b) the application of vacancy rates of 5 per cent for international staff and 15 per cent for National Professional Officers compared with the rates of 6 per cent and 25.5 per cent applied in 2018/19; and (c) the proposed establishment of one post of Principal Coordination Officer (D-1). The increased requirements would be offset in part by the proposed abolishment of a post of United Nations Police Adviser (P-4) and of a post of Information Analyst (National Professional Officer), as well as lower estimated common staff costs for international staff based on actual average monthly expenditure for the current period. (ibid., paras. 59–60).

Vacancy rates and vacant posts

15. The table below provides a summary of the vacancy rates for civilian personnel, including: (a) for 2017/18, the budgeted and actual average vacancy rates; (b) for 2018/19, the budgeted rate, the actual average rate for the seven-month period between 1 July 2018 and 31 January 2019 and the actual rate as at 31 January 2019; and (c) the vacancy factor applied in estimating the requirements for 2019/20. The Advisory Committee notes that the 2019/20 proposed vacancy rates are: (a) lower than the actual average rate and the actual rate as at 31 January 2019 for National Professional Officers; and (c) higher than the actual average rate but lower than the actual rate as at 1 January 2019 for national General Service staff.

Vacancy rates

(Percentage)

	2017/18			2018/19	2019/20	
	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual average vacancy rate from 1 July 2018 to 31 January 2019	Actual vacancy rate from 1 July 2018 to 31 January 2019	Proposed vacancy rate
International staff	5.5	5.1	6.0	6.7	5.5	5.0
National Professional Officers	40.4	27.5	25.5	14.3	12.2	15.0
National General Service staff	7.6	6.3	7.0	6.8	7.2	7.0

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- 16. With respect to vacant posts, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 8 March 2019, 66 posts were vacant, including 16 international staff posts and 50 national posts. The Advisory Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that nine national posts, including six national General Service posts and three National Professional Officer posts, had been vacant for more than two years (see annex). According to the information provided, one post of Information Analyst (National Professional Officer) is proposed for abolishment and eight posts are at different stages of recruitment, including one post of Public Information Officer (National Professional Officer) for which a reclassification process has been completed, and two posts, one Finance Assistant (national General Service) and one Electrician (national General Service), for which candidates have already been interviewed.
- 17. The Advisory Committee recalls the General Assembly's request, expressed consistently in its resolutions on peacekeeping budgets, that the Secretary-General ensure that vacant posts be filled expeditiously (A/71/836, para. 108). The Advisory Committee also reiterates its view that budgeted vacancy rates should be based, as much as possible, on actual vacancy rates. In cases where the proposed budgeted rates differ from the actual rates at the time of budget preparation, clear justification should be provided in related documents for the rates used (A/70/742, para. 45).
- 18. The Advisory Committee stresses that the continuing requirement for posts that have been vacant for two years or longer should be reviewed and the posts either proposed for retention with rejustification or abolishment in subsequent budget proposals (A/69/839, para. 67, see also General Assembly resolution 66/264). For the post which has been reclassified and the two posts for which candidates have been interviewed, the Committee trusts that updated information on their recruitment status will be provided at the same time.

Recommendations on posts and positions

- 19. A total of 888 civilian posts and positions are proposed for 2019/20, comprising 255 international posts and 633 national staff posts (48 National Professional Officer and 585 national General Service). The staffing proposal reflects the establishment of one D-1 post, the conversion of two temporary P-3 positions into regular posts and the abolishment of two posts (1 P-4 and 1 National Professional Officer), resulting in a net reduction of one National Professional Officer post compared with the approved staffing levels for 2018/19.
- 20. The Secretary-General proposes the establishment of a post of Principal Coordination Officer (D-1) in the Office of the Head of Mission/Force Commander to support the Head of Mission/Force Commander in carrying out cross-cutting responsibilities spanning the three-pillar structure of UNIFIL. This support would focus in particular on strategic planning as it relates to cross-cutting aspects, policy coordination, senior-level decision-making and information management. The Principal Coordination Officer would also ensure alignment between substantive priorities and support capacities and liaise with all components of the Force to advise on and ensure the application of best practices for achieving the objectives and priorities of the Force (A/73/735, paras. 31–32).
- 21. The Advisory Committee continues to note that the Force's current civilian staffing structure already provides for three senior officials at the D-2 level (1 Deputy Force Commander, 1 Deputy Head of Mission and 1 Director of Mission Support), who, in its view, could deputize and assist the Head of Mission/Force Commander in his coordinating and integrating functions. The Committee also notes that UNIFIL is staffed primarily with military personnel, including a Deputy Force Commander (see also A/72/789/Add.5, para. 21). Therefore, the Committee recommends against the

proposed establishment of the Principal Coordination Officer (D-1) post. Any operational cost should be adjusted accordingly.

- 22. Concerning the proposed abolishment of the post of United Nations Police Adviser (P-4) in the Office of the Director of Political and Civil Affairs in Beirut, the Secretary-General indicates that this post was established when it was envisaged that a United Nations police component would be created to support a police-led security arrangement. As this component was never established, the Secretary-General is of the view that the post is no longer required (A/73/735, para. 39). In the context of its previous report, when the Secretary-General had proposed reassigning the post, the Advisory Committee was informed that in the absence of a police component, the United Nations Police Adviser had served to engage in liaison with and provide advice on matters related to the Lebanese border security agencies and their functions. The Committee recommended against the proposed reassignment of the United Nations Police Adviser post (A/72/789/Add.5, para. 25), and the General Assembly subsequently endorsed this recommendation in its resolution 72/299. The Advisory Committee continues to see merit in the retention of this post and recommends against the proposal to abolish the post of United Nations Police Adviser (P-4). Any operational cost should be adjusted accordingly.
- 23. Subject to its observations and recommendations in paragraphs 21 and 22 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for civilian staff.

3. Operational costs

(United States dollars)

	Apportioned 2018/19	Proposed 2019/20	Variance
Operational costs	38 910 300	43 828 600	4 918 300

24. The proposed resources for operational costs for 2019/20 amount to \$43,828,600, reflecting an increase of \$4,918,300, or 12.6 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2018/19. The Secretary-General proposes increases under facilities and infrastructure (\$3,177,000, or 20.3 per cent), ground transportation (\$1,471,800, or 33.6 per cent) and communications and information technology (\$292,600, or 4.6 per cent).

Facilities and infrastructure

25. The proposed resources under facilities and infrastructure for 2019/20 amount to \$18,826,000, representing an increase of \$3,177,000, or 20.3 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2018/19. The Secretary-General indicates that the increased requirements under facilities and infrastructure are attributable primarily to: (a) the proposed implementation of the first year of the Force's five-year asset replacement plan, namely, the replacement of 11 prefabricated facilities and 1,076 air conditioning units, which are no longer considered to be safe or secure for use owing to their deteriorated condition and age; and (b) the anticipated consumption of fuel for generators of 15.6 million litres at a higher average cost of \$0.642 per litre, compared with 16.2 million litres at an average cost of \$0.496 per litre included in the approved budget for the 2018/19 period (A/73/735, para. 62). The Advisory Committee notes from the information provided to it that for 2017/18, expenditures amounted to \$16,179,700, and for 2018/19, an amount of \$10,064,000 was incurred as at 31 January 2019, against an appropriation of \$15,649,000. In view of the past pattern of expenditures, the Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of \$300,000 to the proposed resource requirements for facilities and infrastructure.

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26. With regard to the five-year asset replacement plan, the report of the Secretary-General indicates that the Force conducted a comprehensive review which showed that over 50 per cent of UNIFIL assets had exceeded their economic usable lives. In the absence of a phased investment in replacements, it is estimated that over 90 per cent of the Force's assets will exceed their usable lives by the 2023/24 period. Consequently, the Force prepared a five-year phased replacement plan which includes in its first year of implementation not only the replacement prefabricated facilities and air conditioning units, as indicated above, but also the replacement of 42 light passenger vehicles that have been extended beyond their useful economic lives and mileage thresholds (ibid., paras. 16, 17 and 64). Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with a copy of the plan. The Advisory Committee welcomes the effort made by UNIFIL to formulate a comprehensive five-year asset replacement plan and trusts that a copy of this plan will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report. The Committee is of the view that this approach could be replicated in all missions where a significant proportion of assets are approaching the end of their usable lives.

Communications and information technology

27. The proposed resources under communications and information technology for 2019/20 amount to \$6,637,000, representing an increase of \$292,600, or 4.6 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2018/19. The Secretary-General indicates that the increased requirements are attributable primarily to higher costs for the maintenance of communications and information technology equipment and support services owing to the increase in the rate per user for centralized support services, compared with the rates applied in 2018/19 (ibid., para. 65). The Advisory Committee notes from the information provided to it that increased requirements in the amount of \$155,900 are also proposed for software, licences and fees. The Advisory Committee is not convinced that the proposed increases for the maintenance of equipment, software, licences and fees are fully justified. The Committee therefore recommends a reduction of \$50,000 to the proposed resource requirements for communications and information technology.

Official travel

- 28. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with data concerning mission compliance with the early booking requirements, The Committee notes that the early booking compliance rate of UNIFIL was 46.4 per cent for 2017/18. The Advisory Committee notes the effort made by the Force to comply with the 16-day early booking policy and encourages it to continue its efforts on this matter.
- 29. Subject to its observations and recommendations contained in paragraphs 22, 23, 25 and 27 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for operational costs.

Other matters

Mine detection and mine clearance services

30. An amount of \$1,295,800 is proposed to cover the services of the Mine Action Service in Lebanon under an agreement with the United Nations Office for Project Services (ibid., para. 52). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that mine clearance activities carried out by the Force include demining activities relating to landmines/unexploded ordnance detection, clearance and demolition actions, and that demining is critical for marking the Blue Line and for the safe mobility of

UNIFIL personnel. The Committee was also informed that in 2018, approximately 2,512 anti-personnel mines were found and destroyed and 26,900 square metres of land were cleared. It is anticipated that for the 2019/20 period, UNIFIL demining assets will be used to clear an additional 7,000 square metres of minefields and destroy an additional 1,500 anti-personnel mines. The Advisory Committee notes the continued efforts of UNIFIL and other United Nations entities with respect to their mine detection and mine clearance activities in southern Lebanon (see also A/72/789/Add.5, para. 34).

Efficiency gains and environmental initiatives

31. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that the efficiency gains for 2019/20 are estimated at \$802,500, including an amount of \$389,100 under facilities and infrastructure that reflects the efficiencies gained from the replacement of air conditioners, lighting systems, the installation of additional solar panels and enhancements in generator fuel efficiency (A/73/735, para. 42). The Advisory Committee was informed upon enquiry that the Force plans to install 100 solar panels in 2019/20 and that the efficiency gains resulting from solar energy production in previous periods were estimated at \$96,690 in 2017/18 and \$60,767 in 2018/19. The Advisory Committee welcomes the environmental initiatives undertaken by UNIFIL and encourages the Force to pursue greater energy efficiency gains.

Gender balance

32. The Advisory Committee was provided with the following table showing a breakdown of UNIFIL personnel by gender. The Advisory Committee notes the low level of female representation, particularly at the senior levels among the international category and in the national General Service category and encourages the Force to increase female representation.

Distribution of civilian personnel by gender, as at 30 June 2018 (Percentage)

	Female	Male
International staff		
P-5 and above	13	87
P-1 to P-4	43	57
Field Service	32	68
National Professional Officer	48	52
National General Service	25	75
General temporary assistance		
International staff	0	100

V. Conclusion

33. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly regarding the financing of UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 are indicated in section V of the performance report (A/73/627). The Advisory Committee recommends that the unencumbered balance of \$466,600 for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, as well as other revenue/adjustments amounting to \$4,030,600 for the period ended 30 June 2018, be credited to Member States.

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34. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly regarding the financing of UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 are indicated in section V of the proposed budget (A/73/735). Taking into account its observations and recommendations above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed resources be reduced by \$275,700 from \$485,178,300 to \$484,902,600. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate the amount of \$484,902,600 for the maintenance of the Force for the 12-month period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

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Documentation

- Report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/73/627)
- Report of the Secretary-General on the budget for UNIFIL for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/73/735)
- Report of the Board of Auditors on United Nations peacekeeping operations for the 12-month period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/73/5 (Vol. II), chap. II)
- Report of the Advisory Committee on the report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the United Nations peacekeeping operations and report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2017 (A/72/850)
- Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2018 (A/73/750)
- Report of the Secretary-General on the overview of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations: budget performance for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 and budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/73/776)
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary
 Questions on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2016 to
 30 June 2017 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to
 30 June 2019 of UNIFIL (A/72/789/Add.5)
- General Assembly resolution 72/299
- Security Council resolutions 1701 (2006) and 2433 (2018)

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Posts in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon that have been vacant for more than two years as at 8 March 2019

Component	Position	Type of post	Vacant since	Current status
Joint Mission Analysis Centre	Information Analyst, Political Affairs	NPO	1 July 2015	Vacant. Proposed for abolishment in 2019/20.
Finance and Budget Management Section	Assistant Finance and Budget Officer	NPO	1 July 2015	Under recruitment. Temporary job opening recruitment in progress.
Strategic Communications and Public Information Section	Public Information Officer	NPO	1 February 2017	Vacant. Reclassification of post completed and under recruitment.
Office of the Director of Mission Support	Information Management Assistant	NGS	1 July 2015	Under recruitment. Currently under advertisement.
Office of the Director of Mission Support	Information Management Assistant	NGS	1 July 2015	Under recruitment. Temporary job opening recruitment in progress.
Finance and Budget Management Section	Administrative Assistant	NGS	25 May 2016	Under recruitment. Applicants currently under review.
Finance and Budget Management Section	Finance Assistant	NGS	20 March 2016	Under recruitment. Interviews completed and candidates under review.
Human Resources Section	Human Resources Assistant	NGS	11 June 2016	Under recruitment. Temporary job opening recruitment in progress.
Engineering and Facility Maintenance Section	Electrician	NGS	1 December 2015	Under recruitment. Interviews completed and candidates under review.

Abbreviations: NGS, national General Service; NPO, National Professional Officer.