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Summary record of the 32nd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 5 April 2019, at 3 p.m.

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

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

1. **The Chair** informed the Committee that some of the draft resolutions and decisions to be introduced had only recently been adopted informally, and were thus provisional and available in English only. With full regard for the resolutions of the General Assembly on multilingualism, she acknowledged the Committee's flexibility in proceeding with its consideration of the draft proposals on that basis so as to conclude its work at the first part of the resumed session.

Agenda item 142: Joint Inspection Unit (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.26: Joint Inspection Unit

2. *Draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.26 was adopted.*

Agenda item 148: Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.24: Construction of a new facility for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Arusha branch

3. *Draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.24 was adopted.*

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

Global service delivery model for the United Nations Secretariat (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.25: Global service delivery model for the United Nations Secretariat

4. **Mr. Ayebare** (Uganda) said that, in view of the lack of transparency in the process for the consideration of the report on a global service delivery model for the United Nations Secretariat (A/73/706), his delegation wished to withdraw draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.25 and to propose that the Secretary-General be requested to submit a new report on the matter.

5. *Draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.25 was withdrawn.*

Special subjects relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.27: Special subjects relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

6. *Draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.27 was adopted.*

7. **Mr. Awad** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his Government had reservations concerning the inclusion in section 27, Humanitarian assistance, and section 36, Staff assessment, of financial resources for the illegal

so-called United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic, as such mechanisms constituted a grave violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States.

Agenda item 135: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (continued)

Accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.28: Progress towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat

8. *Draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.28 was adopted.*

Questions deferred for future consideration

Draft decision A/C.5/73/L.29: Questions deferred for future consideration

9. *Draft decision A/C.5/73/L.29 was adopted.*

Completion of the work of the Fifth Committee at the first part of the resumed seventy-third session of the General Assembly

10. **The Chair** said that, at the current part of the resumed session, the Committee had successfully avoided the common past practice of having to schedule meeting time at weekends and after regular business hours. Such working methods should become standard practice in the Committee in future.

11. **Mr. Bamya** (Observer for the State of Palestine), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, although the Committee had not achieved consensus on several agenda items, it had completed its work within the time allotted, reaching agreement on such matters as after-service health insurance, the organizational resilience management system, the construction of a new facility for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Arusha branch, and the accountability system in the Secretariat, decisions that would contribute to more efficient mandate implementation. During the second part of the resumed seventy-third session, the Committee should avoid the circumstances that had led to the heavy workload and late introduction of agenda items at the second part of the resumed seventy-second session, and documents should be issued in a timely manner to facilitate constructive deliberations.

12. **Ms. Nalwanga** (Uganda), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Group

welcomed the consensus achieved on the construction of a new facility for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals in Arusha; the estimates for the Panel of Experts on Somalia and for the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement; and the revised estimates for the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic.

13. **Mr. De Preter** (Observer for the European Union), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, said that, while the Committee had managed to ensure adequate financing for the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement, he regretted that it had been unable to grant in full the Secretary-General's request for resources for the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic, a decision that should not be interpreted as indicating a lack of support for the Mechanism's mandate, as established by the Security Council. He also regretted that the discussions on the Mechanism had been unnecessarily politicized by a small group of Member States. The United Nations must have the means to continue to carry out humanitarian operations at all agreed border crossings, including that with Jordan, in accordance with Security Council resolution [2449 \(2018\)](#). An estimated 11.7 million people would require humanitarian assistance across the Syrian Arab Republic in 2019, and approximately 35 per cent of humanitarian aid was currently delivered through cross-border operations. Until a political solution was reached, the Organization must be able to deliver life-saving supplies to Syrians through the most direct routes, particularly in the light of the ongoing attempts by the Syrian authorities to politicize and obstruct humanitarian assistance.

14. Momentum must be maintained to ensure the implementation of the Secretary-General's management reforms, of which the global service delivery model was an important component. The European Union looked forward to discussing the model at the main part of the Assembly's seventy-fourth session. It also supported the Secretary-General's efforts to ensure a more strategic approach to procurement, noting that sustainable procurement was essential to maximizing value and promoting market access on a broad geographical basis, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In addition, the European Union attached great importance to the implementation of a strong accountability framework under the new management paradigm and welcomed the consensus reached on that matter.

15. The effective functioning of the Fifth Committee depended on a partnership between the Fifth Committee

itself, the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions; the timely issuance of documentation was critical, as was accurate and detailed information. The Advisory Committee must continue to provide technical expertise to the Fifth Committee in a timely manner and with absolute neutrality.

16. **Ms. Norman-Chalet** (United States of America) said that, in the interest of making the United Nations more nimble, responsive and accountable in order to fulfil its mandates more effectively, the Committee had reaffirmed its commitment to the implementation of a strengthened accountability framework underpinned by results-based management initiatives, the contributions of the Business Transformation and Accountability Division of the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, and improved senior managers' compacts. The Committee had also expressed its support for the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the meaningful engagement of its participating organizations. It was nevertheless regrettable that the Committee had been unable to take a decision on a key reform to establish an appropriate number of shared service centres; her delegation would continue to advocate for that reform and the achievement of the associated efficiencies and cost savings. It was also regrettable that the Committee had not reached consensus on measures to improve the Organization's travel policies, which retained an entitlement to first-class travel for some officials. That was an outdated practice which, as indicated by JIU and the Advisory Committee, had no place within the United Nations. Her delegation would seek to reverse that practice and to establish a single threshold for the use of business class by staff below the level of Assistant-Secretary-General and their eligible family members, in order to achieve efficiencies and cost savings.

17. The Committee's decisions in support of the resource requirements for the United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement and for the Panel of Experts on Somalia were commendable. The Committee had also ensured the continued availability of funding to enable the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic to provide life-saving humanitarian relief, although it had regrettably been unable to grant the Secretary-General's request in full, a decision that should not be interpreted as indicating a lack of support for the Mechanism's mandate. Her delegation unequivocally supported the Mechanism's efforts to facilitate cross-border delivery of humanitarian aid, as authorized by the Security Council in its resolution [2449 \(2018\)](#). At the second part of the resumed seventy-third session, the Advisory Committee

should continue to take a technical approach to evaluating the Secretary-General's proposals, in accordance with its mandate, and to produce its reports expeditiously to enable the Fifth Committee to carry out its work in a timely and orderly manner.

18. **Mr. Fu Daopeng** (China) said that his delegation welcomed the agreement reached on after-service health insurance, the organizational resilience management system, the construction of a new facility for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals in Arusha, JIU and special political missions. The Committee's inability to achieve consensus on the global service delivery model reflected both the importance that all parties attached to that reform and the challenges to its advancement. Negotiations were not a zero-sum game, but were designed to promote cooperation among Member States. All parties must translate their political commitment to the implementation of the global service delivery model into concrete action in order to achieve an outcome in the interests of all Member States and the United Nations.

19. **Ms. Nalwanga** (Uganda) said that, while Uganda was convinced of the benefits that would be generated by the global service delivery model, it would seek a new report on the model, given the lack of transparency in the process for the consideration of the current report on the matter ([A/73/706](#)), as well as the number of forms of wording proposed for inclusion in the draft resolution, since withdrawn by her delegation. Uganda supported the Secretary-General's intention to develop a global service delivery model that would generate cost savings and efficiencies by establishing shared service centres in low-cost locations near the clients they were designed to serve. She hoped that a majority of delegations would agree to continue the discussions on the model at the first part of the resumed seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly.

20. **The Chair** declared that the Fifth Committee had completed its work at the first part of the resumed seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.