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Summary record of the 38th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 22 May 2019, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Lipand (Vice-Chair) (Estonia)
*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Terzi

Contents

Agenda item 155: Financing of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Agenda item 162: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East (*continued*)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (*continued*)

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In the absence of Ms. Bird (Australia), Mr. Lipand (Estonia), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 155: Financing of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (A/73/633, A/73/755/Add.15 and A/73/816)

1. **Mr. Ramanathan** (Controller), introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/73/633) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/73/816) for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), said that the proposed budget for the 2019/20 period amounted to \$1.0 billion, a decrease of 8.2 per cent compared with the approved budget for the 2018/19 period. The budget proposal reflected a reduction in the footprint of MONUSCO, which would concentrate its efforts in areas affected by violence involving armed groups, notably the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Kasai provinces. Seven field offices and one site in Kamina would be closed by 30 June 2019. The reduction in the Mission's footprint and the closure of the offices would result in an overall decrease of 752 posts and positions.

2. The Mission's priorities in the 2019/20 period would be to engage with the President, the newly established Government, national institutions and key international partners on governance and security reforms and efforts to address the root causes of conflict. MONUSCO would also seek to protect civilians by reducing the threat posed by armed groups and by working with the Government to find a way to deal sustainably with those armed groups that were willing to lay down their weapons.

3. **Mr. Terzi** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/73/755/Add.15), said that the Advisory Committee recommended against approval of the proposed Transition Advisor post at the P-4 level, given the similarity between the functions of that post and those of the Senior Transition Advisor. The Advisory Committee also recommended against approval of the proposed Planning and Coordination Officer (United Nations Volunteer) position in the Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Protection and Operations in Goma, in view of the existing capacity of the Office. The Advisory Committee welcomed the efforts made to build national capacity and nationalize posts, and encouraged

MONUSCO to continue to seek opportunities to transfer capacity to national staff. Concerning operational costs, the Advisory Committee recommended further reductions in the proposed resources for official travel, facilities and infrastructure and ground transportation, given the downsizing of the Mission and the pattern of expenditure.

4. Following the entry into force, on 1 January 2019, of a memorandum of understanding between the Secretariat and the United Nations Volunteer programme, the programmatic support costs charged by the United Nations Development Programme, which administered the United Nations Volunteers programme, had increased from 8.0 to 13.0 per cent. The Advisory Committee trusted that the Secretary-General would provide the General Assembly with further information on the financial implications of the memorandum.

Agenda item 162: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East (continued)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (continued) (A/C.5/73/L.31)

Draft resolution A/C.5/73/L.31: Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

5. **Ms. Tarbush** (Observer for the State of Palestine), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Secretary-General, in the proposed budget for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/73/735), stated that Israel had not paid the amount of \$1,117,005 resulting from the tragic incident at Qana on 18 April 1996. The Secretary-General further explained that he had received no response to his subsequent letters addressed to the Permanent Mission of Israel in that regard, the latest dated 10 January 2019.

6. The Group stressed once again that Israel should pay the amount due in connection with the incident at Qana, and requested the Secretary-General to report on the matter to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. The Group also reiterated its acknowledgement of the sacrifices made by UNIFIL and its contribution to the restoration of peace and security in the region.

7. **The Chair** said that action would be taken on the draft resolution at a subsequent meeting.

The meeting rose at 10.15 a.m.