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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 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 150: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

Support account for peacekeeping operations
([A/73/661](#), [A/73/661/Add.1](#), [A/73/768](#), [A/73/793](#)
and [A/73/849](#))

1. **Mr. Ramanathan** (Controller), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the budget performance of the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 ([A/73/661](#) and [A/73/661/Add.1](#)), said that funding from the support account was allocated to 14 offices and departments throughout the Secretariat that provided backstopping support for approximately 130,000 military, police and civilian personnel in 13 missions worldwide. In 2017/18, consultations had been held with Member States and international and regional organizations in preparation for the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, launched in March 2018. Extensive consultations had also been held with field missions and Member States on key organizational initiatives, including management reform and the restructuring of the peace and security pillar. Moreover, safety and security in the field had been improved following the issuance of the independent report on improving the security of United Nations peacekeepers prepared by Lieutenant General (retired) Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz.

2. The newly restructured United Nations Office to the African Union had completed its first full year of operations in 2017/18, enhancing cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the African Union on peace and security matters. In addition, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [71/296](#), an arrangement had been established under which troop- and police-contributing countries were paid 25 per cent of the maintenance component of the reimbursement rates for major equipment for units registered at the rapid deployment level of the Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System. A comprehensive review of the support account had been carried out and presented to the General Assembly, and the United Nations Secretariat Safety and Security Integration Project had been completed, bringing all Secretariat safety and security staff under a common legal and policy framework. Investigations of sexual exploitation and abuse had been strengthened, and policies had been developed to prevent the commission of such abuse by civilian staff. Following the replacement of the legacy asset management system Galileo by Umoja, asset accounting systems across the Organization had been harmonized into a single

financial system that complied with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards, and significant progress had been made in the design, development and deployment of Umoja Extension 2. Moreover, extensive support had been provided to peacekeeping operations, including for the closure of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the transition from the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) to the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH). The expenditure for the support account for 2017/18 had been \$325.8 million, an implementation rate of 100 per cent.

3. Introducing the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 ([A/73/793](#)), he said that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [71/295](#), the presentation of the proposed budget had been improved through the highlighting of strategic and changing elements and through the increased use of tables and graphs to facilitate review. The total resource requirements for 2019/20 amounted to \$380.8 million, reflecting an increase of \$56.1 million compared with the authorized resources for the 2018/19 period.

4. The resources required for core activities under the support account were estimated at \$314.4 million, an increase of \$24.6 million compared with the approved resources for 2018/19. That increase was the result of technical adjustments to budgetary salary parameters; the application of lower average vacancy factors for posts approved by the General Assembly for 2018/19; a provision for after-service health insurance brought forward on an exceptional basis from 2018/19; the requirements for the triennial Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment; the proposed establishment of seven new posts and positions in the Department of Peace Operations, the Department of Safety and Security and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; and additional operational resources amounting to \$2.9 million.

5. The proposed resources for Secretariat-wide initiatives were estimated at \$66.3 million, an increase of \$31.5 million compared with the approved resources for 2018/19. That increase was attributable to the transfer to the budget for the support account of Umoja maintenance and support costs, which had previously been included in the budget for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, and to a provision for the proposed global shared service centres, a matter whose consideration the General Assembly had, by its decision [73/547 B](#), deferred until its seventy-fourth session.

6. The Secretariat was mindful of the level of the support account. Taking into account the decision taken by the Assembly on the global service delivery model at the first part of the resumed seventy-third session, the increase in the level of the support account for 2019/20 was primarily attributable to technical adjustments and to requirements for peacekeeping contributions to Secretariat-wide initiatives, reflecting the true cost of supporting peacekeeping operations in the current complex environment.

7. **The Chair** drew attention to the report of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee on the proposed budget of the Office of Internal Oversight Services under the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/73/768).

8. **Mr. Terzi** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/73/849), said that, under the proposed budget for the support account for 2019/20, the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of \$19,948,200 related to the proposed global shared service centres, given that the General Assembly had deferred, until its seventy-fourth session, consideration of the Secretary-General's report on the global service delivery model for the United Nations Secretariat (A/73/706). The Advisory Committee also recommended reductions related to Umoja maintenance and support costs, staff costs and after-service health insurance, as it was not convinced that the proposed increases in those areas were fully justified. The Secretary-General requested that the payment of \$6 million, representing the peacekeeping share of after-service health insurance for the 2018/19 period, be deferred to the 2019/20 period, in the event that the approved resources for 2018/19 were not sufficient to allow the payment of salaries. As it was unclear whether the proposed amount of \$6 million would be required, the Advisory Committee was not convinced that the request was justified and therefore recommended a reduction of \$6 million.

9. The Advisory Committee made specific recommendations on post and non-post resources by department or office. With regard to post resources, the Advisory Committee recommended against the establishment of one post and the conversion of five general temporary assistance positions to posts, and recommended the abolishment of three posts. With regard to operational costs, the Advisory Committee recommended reductions related to individual objects of expenditure by department or office, including consultants and consulting services, official travel, facilities and infrastructure, information and

communications technology, and other supplies, services and equipment.

10. **Mr. Katkhuda** (Observer for the State of Palestine), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group, whose members contributed financially to peacekeeping budgets, were the largest contributors of troops and police to peacekeeping operations and hosted most active operations, believed that adequate backstopping support must be provided to missions in all phases to enable the effective and efficient implementation of peacekeeping mandates. Notwithstanding the new demands placed on field and Headquarters personnel and the peacekeeping support structure as a result of the changing nature of peacekeeping operations, the level of the support account should broadly correspond to the mandate, number, size, scope and complexity of operations, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 69/308 and 70/287. Support provided by Headquarters to peacekeeping missions must be integrated in order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness, avoid duplication, and achieve qualitative improvements in service delivery to the field.

11. The Secretary-General proposed increases in post and non-post resources under the support account for 2019/20, in addition to the provisions for enterprise resource planning, information and systems security, the global service delivery model, peacekeeping capability readiness, the global shared service centres, and Umoja maintenance and support costs, despite an expected decrease in the number of authorized uniformed personnel owing to reductions in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and MINUJUSTH, and to the closure of UNMIL and MINUSTAH. The Group would seek further information on the discrepancies found by the Advisory Committee in the application of the budget methodology across the different departments and offices under the support account.

12. It had been forecast that a deficit related to salary payments would arise by June 2019; the Secretary-General proposed to delay payment of the peacekeeping share of after-service health insurance for the 2018/19 period to the 2019/20 period, to enable payment of salaries. The Group would seek a more in-depth understanding of the rationale behind the proposed increase related to after-service health insurance for 2019/20.

13. Resources approved by the General Assembly must be used only for the establishment of posts and

positions. The Group would carefully assess the proposals for the abolishment, restructuring, redeployment, reassignment and reclassification of posts. It would seek clarification on the relationship among the proposed posts, given that 2019 was the first year of the implementation of the peace and security and management reforms, which would affect the support needs of staff and of troop, civilian and police contingents. The Group also looked forward to receiving information on the approach to be taken to financing the Department of Operational Support and the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance from the support account, and on the expected effectiveness of the backstopping support provided to peacekeeping operations by the restructured Secretariat following the Secretary-General's reforms. Lastly, the Group would seek further information on measures taken to broaden the representation of troop- and police-contributing countries in the peacekeeping support structure in the field and at Headquarters, especially at senior levels, in accordance with the Assembly's repeated requests to the Secretary-General.

14. **Mr. De Preter** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Ukraine, said that the European Union strongly supported peacekeeping missions and the Secretary-General's reforms to improve peace and security. The implementation of the reforms in management and in the peace and security architecture had resulted in the establishment of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Department of Peace Operations, the Department of Operational Support and the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, which were designed to foster a more effective and efficient Organization capable of comprehensively addressing complex political situations and providing the best possible service to missions. He congratulated the Secretary-General and United Nations staff on the implementation of those reforms and looked forward to assessing their impact on peacekeeping support functions in order to ensure that the operational, material and political support provided to missions was sound and adequate. Notwithstanding the decrease in the number of troops deployed and the reductions in the budgets of peacekeeping missions, some of which were in the drawdown phase, many missions' mandates remained complex and required sophisticated operational and political support from Headquarters. The support account must be a flexible, agile, adaptable, efficient, cost-effective and mandate-driven tool to

enable the Organization to achieve its peace and security objectives.

15. **Ms. Levin** (United States of America) said that her delegation fully supported the implementation of the Secretary-General's reforms, which had resulted in the restructuring of critical functional areas to enhance accountability, transparency and efficiency in domains such as supply chain management, information and communications technology, and budget and finance. In addition, the regional structure that had been established in the Department of Peace Operations and was shared between that Department and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs was intended to make peacekeeping operations more effective.

16. The support account provided necessary backstopping support at Headquarters to enable the fulfilment of peacekeeping mandates. While it would take time to fully realize the benefits of the Secretary-General's reforms, the United States was concerned at the increase in the resources requested for the support account, particularly given the decreasing numbers of civilian and uniformed personnel owing to downsizing and reconfigurations in UNAMID, MONUSCO and MINUJUSTH. Indeed, the ratio between the support account budget and overall peacekeeping resources had increased continuously since 2014. Her delegation was not convinced that mission closures and downsizing required an increase in backstopping resources.

17. **Mr. Feldman** (Brazil) said that the support account was essential to ensuring the full implementation of all mandated policies, programmes and activities in the area of peace and security, and that adequate backstopping at Headquarters was critical to supporting troops, police and civilian staff in the field. The level of the support account should nevertheless broadly correspond to the mandate, number, size and complexity of peacekeeping operations, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions [69/308](#) and [70/287](#). It was a matter of concern that, while the overall budget proposal for peacekeeping operations for 2019/20 represented a reduction of 5 per cent compared with the overall resources approved for 2018/19, the proposed resources for the support account for 2019/20 reflected an increase of 17 per cent compared with the resources approved for that account for 2018/19. The Organization sent the wrong message when it proposed harsh cuts in the budgets of operations in remote and high-risk areas, while increasing resources for staff at headquarters duty stations in New York, Geneva and elsewhere.

18. In his report on shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: implementing a new management architecture for improved effectiveness and

strengthened accountability (A/72/492/Add.2), the Secretary-General had underlined the need to adapt the support account to the new structures established as a result of his management reforms, given that the Department of Operational Support and the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance served not only peacekeeping operations but the entire Secretariat. The Secretary-General had pledged to submit, for consideration by the General Assembly at the second part of its resumed seventy-fourth session, a proposal to establish a clear and consistent approach to financing the two departments from the support account, on the basis of the initial experience gained from the implementation of the “whole-of-the-Secretariat” approach advanced under the management reforms. Brazil would have liked to see the preliminary findings of the assessment underpinning that proposal in the Secretary-General’s report on the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/73/793). His delegation would seek clarification of the impact of management reform thus far on the use of support account resources.

19. No approach to the support account could be clear and consistent without taking into consideration the funding and backstopping of special political missions. Recalling the General Assembly’s affirmation, in its resolution 73/279 A, of the critical role played by special political missions in the maintenance of international peace and security, he trusted that the Secretary-General would review the arrangements for the funding and backstopping of those missions in his report to be submitted at the second part of the resumed seventy-fourth session.

Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda
(A/73/612, A/73/755/Add.14 and A/73/764;
A/C.5/73/20)

20. **Mr. Ramanathan** (Controller), introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/73/612) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/73/764) for the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, said that the reports had been submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/307, by which the Assembly had decided to give the Centre operational and managerial independence, and resolution 72/286, by which the Assembly had decided to consider at its seventy-third session the question of the financing of the Centre.

21. For the 2019/20 period, the Secretary-General proposed that the full-service client base of the Centre be expanded from 14 to 18 missions and operations,

comprising 8 peacekeeping and 10 special political missions, with a proposed staffing complement of 404 posts and positions, reflecting a reduction of 2 national General Service posts. To enable that expanded coverage, the Secretary-General proposed that posts be redeployed between service lines, in accordance with the revised scalability model for the Centre developed pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/286.

22. **Mr. Terzi** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/73/755/Add.14), said that the Secretary-General, in his report on the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 for the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda (A/73/764), proposed a revised scalability model that reflected the functions performed by the Centre for its client missions, the projected volume of transactions and the average processing time per transaction; the Advisory Committee trusted that that model would continue to be refined and consistently applied in subsequent budget proposals. The Advisory Committee made observations on efficiency gains, environmental measures and the East Africa corridor project for the regional sourcing and delivery of key commodities, and trusted that information on those matters would be included in the Secretary-General’s next report. The Advisory Committee recommended reductions in operational costs relating to consultants and consulting services, official travel, and information and communications technology.

23. **The Chair** drew attention to the note by the Secretary-General on the proposed budgetary levels for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/C.5/73/20).

24. **Mr. Katkhuda** (Observer for the State of Palestine), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Regional Service Centre had been established in July 2010 by General Assembly resolution 64/269. As indicated in the Secretary-General’s third annual progress report on the implementation of the global field support strategy (A/67/633), the Centre had been developed to harness synergies and economies of scale in order to deliver better and more timely support and to reduce or eliminate waste, duplication and bottlenecks in logistical, administrative and financial support services. The Centre had achieved those objectives by realizing efficiencies and providing timely support to its client missions in the areas of human resources, finance, travel, transportation and movement control services, personnel and cargo transport, and information and communications technology.

25. The Group commended the Secretary-General and the management of the Department of Operational Support for the decrease of 5 per cent in operational costs compared with 2018/19; the reduction of the Centre's environmental footprint through the upgrading of the field remote infrastructure monitoring system, developed to ensure that preventive equipment maintenance was carried out quickly and to minimize utility costs; the deployment of the Umoja travel solution, which was expected to reduce, inter alia, expenditure on tickets; the efficiencies achieved through the implementation of the revised scalability model; and the costs saved by enrolling the Centre's staff in training conducted by other missions at the Centre.

26. The East Africa corridor project, which had closed in November 2018, had resulted in the development of a web-based inbound delivery tracking tool and an interactive regional surface network map, as well as in reduced costs and delivery times. The Group looked forward to reviewing the budget proposal for the Centre for 2020/21; in that proposal, the Secretary-General, drawing on the experience of the East Africa corridor project, would set out the future roles and responsibilities of the Strategic Air Operations Centre, the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre and the Global Procurement Support Section, which had replaced the Regional Procurement Office as at 1 January 2019. The Group also welcomed the expansion of the Regional Service Centre's full-service coverage to all special political missions based in Africa, including the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) and the Panel of Experts on Somalia.

27. **Mr. Moussa** (Djibouti), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Centre had done important work in providing human resources, administrative and financial services to missions in the region. The lessons learned and experience gained from the implementation of the East Africa corridor project would be essential in defining the future roles and responsibilities of the Strategic Air Operations Centre, the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre, the Air Traffic Control Section and the Global Procurement Support Section. The Group also welcomed the expansion of the Regional Service Centre's full-service coverage to all special political missions based in Africa.

28. The Group would seek to understand the continued role of the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre in coordinating regional air operations

and to determine how the greater delegation of authority granted as a result of the Secretary-General's management reforms had defined the role of the Regional Service Centre. Notwithstanding the increase in the number of missions supported in the previous two years, the scalability model for the Regional Service Centre had been refined and improved to achieve efficiencies and savings, as requested by the General Assembly. That model's design should be applied to similar support entities.

Agenda item 152: Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic ([A/73/654](#), [A/73/755/Add.12](#) and [A/73/772](#))

Agenda item 153: Financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire ([A/73/707](#) and [A/73/854](#))

Agenda item 157: Financing of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti ([A/73/621](#) and [A/73/856](#))

Agenda item 160: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia ([A/73/692](#) and [A/73/855](#))

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

(a) **United Nations Disengagement Observer Force** ([A/73/614](#), [A/73/734](#) and [A/73/755/Add.3](#))

Agenda item 163: Financing of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan ([A/73/652](#), [A/73/755/Add.13](#) and [A/73/769](#))

29. **Mr. Ramanathan** (Controller), introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 ([A/73/654](#)) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 ([A/73/772](#)) for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), said that the proposed budget for 2019/20 was \$925.5 million, a decrease of 0.5 per cent compared with the approved resources for 2018/19. That decrease was mainly attributable to the non-recurrence of provisions included in the approved budget for 2018/19 in respect of contingent-owned equipment for self-sustainment and in respect of freight, owing to the completion of the deployment of equipment for the additional 900 authorized troops in 2018/19. At the request of the Secretary-General and in line with the peacekeeping reforms, a comprehensive, independent strategic review of MINUSCA had been carried out between June and August 2018; the findings and recommendations from that review had been included in the October 2018 report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the situation in the Central African

Republic (S/2018/922). Those recommendations, which had been endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 2448 (2018), and recommendations and actions from internal and independent reviews and investigations, had been taken into consideration in the budget proposal.

30. Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) (A/73/707), he said that the Operation's assets, with a total inventory value of \$115.4 million and a residual value of \$38.0 million, had been disposed of. Regulation 5.14 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations had guided the process of liquidating those assets, which had been categorized into three groups. Group I had included assets with a total inventory value of \$23.5 million, which had been transferred to other peacekeeping missions or the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, to be stored temporarily; group II had included assets with a total inventory value of \$29.7 million, which had been sold commercially or at nominal value; and group III had included assets written off or lost, with a total inventory value of \$30.0 million. In addition, following an assessment conducted by a working group headed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire and Head of UNOCI, assets to be given as gifts to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, government agencies and their non-profit partners, with a total inventory value of \$32.2 million, had been identified.

31. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 for MINUSTAH (A/73/621), he said that the expenditure for the Mission for 2017/18 had been \$90.0 million, an implementation rate of 100.0 per cent. During the reporting period, priority had been given to liquidation activities, including the mandated complete withdrawal of the military contingents and the drawdown of police personnel to a level of 295 United Nations police and 7 formed police units, representing the authorized strength for MINUJUSTH, the successor mission to MINUSTAH. Attention had also been paid to transferring mandated activities to, and closing facilities that had not been needed by, MINUJUSTH.

32. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 for UNMIL (A/73/692), he said that the expenditure for the Mission in 2017/18 had been \$109.6 million, representing an implementation rate of 99.6 per cent. The Mission's financial performance reflected reduced requirements attributable to the early repatriation of uniformed personnel, the lower number of flight hours used by the Mission's fleet, and earlier-than-planned closure of

camp. Those reductions had been offset by higher-than-budgeted payments due to staff members at the time of separation from service or relocation to another duty station.

33. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/73/614) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/73/734) for the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), he said that the proposed budget for 2019/20 was \$70.1 million, an increase of 16.2 per cent compared with the approved resources for 2018/19. That increase was mainly attributable to the full return of the Force to the Bravo side of the area of separation, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2450 (2018); the reopening of the crossing point at Qunaytirah; and the continued commitment of the parties to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. In 2019/20, a net additional 128 military contingent personnel would be deployed to conduct mobile patrolling activities from Camp Faouar and Camp Ziouani to the area of separation. Two additional former United Nations positions would also be reconstructed, an initiative that would, conditions permitting, restore deployment levels and observation capability to the levels maintained by the Force prior to the evacuation from the Bravo side in September 2014.

34. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/73/652) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/73/769) for the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), he said that the proposed budget for 2019/20 was \$1.2 billion, an increase of 6.4 per cent compared with the approved resources for 2018/19. That increase was mainly attributable to the deployment of a larger number of military contingent personnel; higher costs for contingent-owned major equipment and basic supplies and services required in order for the contingents to sustain themselves; the planned implementation of critical engineering projects; and higher salary costs for civilian personnel. UNMISS would continue to provide support for the implementation of the revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, which had been signed by the parties to the conflict in September 2018 and offered hope for inclusive and sustainable peace in the country. The Mission would also foster conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance; monitor and investigate human rights abuses and violations; and implement its mandate to protect civilians, including the 198,000 internally displaced persons temporarily housed at its sites.

35. **Mr. Terzi** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report on MINUSCA (A/73/755/Add.12), said that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a reduction of \$8.3 million in the proposed budget for 2019/20. Of the 42 posts proposed for establishment, the Advisory Committee had recommended approval of the establishment of 34 posts and against the establishment of 8 posts, comprising two P-5 posts, two P-4 posts, one Field Service post, one United Nations Volunteer post and one national General Service post, taking into account the Mission's existing and proposed capacities.

36. The Board of Auditors had observed a pattern of underexpenditure for operational costs, even after a sizeable redeployment of funds from the expenditure group related to such costs to the expenditure group related to civilian personnel. Furthermore, for several objects of expenditure, the level of resources proposed for 2019/20 was similar to or higher than that approved for previous periods, even though considerable underexpenditure had been recorded under those items in 2017/18 and in the first eight months of 2018/19. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended adjustments to the proposed requirements for operational costs for 2019/20, including for contractors and consulting services, official travel, facilities and infrastructure, ground transportation, information and communications technology, and other supplies, services and equipment.

37. The Advisory Committee had requested an update on the implementation of the environmental strategy for MINUSCA since the information provided at the time of its consideration of the proposed budget for 2018/19. The Advisory Committee had been informed that the Mission was continuing to implement a mission-wide environmental action plan, for which it had recorded a provisional environmental management score of 59/100 for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2018, representing an increase of 16 points compared with the score recorded for 2017/18, and to carry out environmental actions, including the installation of wastewater treatment facilities, the synchronization of generators, the installation of solar street lights and photovoltaic systems, and the conduct of environmental inspections to monitor environmental issues at various mission locations. MINUSCA should continue to implement the environmental strategy and reduce its overall environmental footprint. In addition, given the overall low level of female representation in MINUSCA, in particular among national staff, efforts to achieve gender balance among the Mission's civilian personnel should be strengthened.

38. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on UNOCI (A/73/854), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly take note of the Secretary-General's report on the financing of UNOCI (A/73/707) and made observations on the liquidation process and the disposal of assets. Given the increased risk of loss, theft and fraud during the liquidation process, future mission liquidation plans should contain risk assessment and mitigation measures. The Advisory Committee also recommended that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to include in future reports disaggregated information on assets disposed of before and after the liquidation period.

39. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on MINUSTAH (A/73/856), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the unencumbered balance and other revenue and adjustments for 2017/18 be credited to Member States. The General Assembly should be provided with further justification for expenditure in such areas as ground transportation and communications.

40. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on UNMIL (A/73/855), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended that a decision on the treatment of the unencumbered balance and other revenue for 2017/18 be deferred until consideration by the General Assembly of the final performance report for the Mission. Noting that there had been overexpenditure in several areas, the Advisory Committee also recommended that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure that relevant departments and support structures were involved in the monitoring and oversight of mission liquidation processes from an early stage. In addition, the Advisory Committee made observations on lessons learned, capacity-building programmes and environmental matters.

41. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on UNDOF (A/73/755/Add.3), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended reductions of \$182,600 in the proposed resources for 2019/20 for official travel, facilities and infrastructure, and ground transportation. The Advisory Committee remained concerned at the low rate of compliance with the advance purchase policy for air travel and had stressed the need to strengthen such compliance. For 2019/20, the Secretary-General proposed that quick-impact projects be implemented as confidence-building measures to support the Force's return to the Bravo side. The Advisory Committee looked forward to receiving information on those projects in the next budget report for UNDOF. In addition, given the overall low level of female representation in UNDOF, in particular among national

staff, efforts to achieve gender balance among the Force's civilian personnel should be strengthened.

42. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on UNMISS ([A/73/755/Add.13](#)), he said that the proposed resources for 2019/20 for operational costs might be overly optimistic. For many objects of expenditure, the level of resources proposed for 2019/20 was similar to or higher than that approved for previous periods, even though considerable underexpenditure had been recorded in 2017/18 and in the first eight months of 2018/19. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended a reduction of 20 per cent in the proposed overall increase in the resources for operational costs. In addition, the proposal to convert 42 temporary assistance positions to posts was premature, as most of the positions had been encumbered for less than three years. The Advisory Committee also recommended against the proposed establishment of an Administrative Assistant (United Nations Volunteer) position in the Engineering Section.

43. **Mr. Awad** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation wished to reiterate, as it did every year, that his Government welcomed the deployment of UNDOF, having offered the Force every support since its inception. The Syrian Arab Republic continued to respect the Disengagement of Forces Agreement pending the implementation of Security Council resolutions [242 \(1967\)](#), [338 \(1973\)](#) and [497 \(1981\)](#), which stipulated the withdrawal of Israel, the occupying Power, from the entire area of the occupied Syrian Golan, to the 4 June 1967 line. His delegation wished to reiterate that the funding of UNDOF must be the responsibility of the Israeli side, as the occupying Power, in accordance with the principles set out in General Assembly resolution 1874 (S-IV).

44. It was regrettable that, in describing the situation in the area of separation, the Secretariat had shown a lack of neutrality by deliberately distorting and politicizing the facts to favour Israel, the occupying Power, and by not calling things by their names. In the Secretary-General's reports on the 2017/18 budget performance ([A/73/614](#)) and the 2019/2020 proposed budget ([A/73/734](#)) for the Force, the use of the term "parties" in relation to violations of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement put Syria on the same level as Israel, and his delegation requested the Secretariat to issue a corrigendum in which clear reference was made to Israeli attacks – most recently on 13 April 2019 – on the sovereignty of the Syrian Arab Republic, and to Israeli violations of the Agreement. The corrigendum should also contain condemnation of Israeli military, logistical and financial support for groups that had been included on the lists of individuals and entities subject

to measures imposed by the Security Council and had operated in the area of separation until their defeat by the Syrian Arab Army and its allies.

45. Reports on UNDOF should be issued on a daily rather than a weekly basis, given the current Israeli attacks on Syrian sovereignty in the area of separation and, in particular, the illegal announcement by the United States Administration about the occupied Syrian Arab Golan. As a result of that announcement, which constituted a flagrant violation of the Geneva Conventions and international resolutions, especially Security Council resolution [497 \(1981\)](#), most countries had reaffirmed their constant positions on the matter and a spokesperson for the Secretary-General had said that it was clear that neither the status of the Golan nor the related United Nations policy, which was reflected in the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, had changed.

46. His delegation welcomed the inclusion, for the first time in a report of the Secretary-General on the UNDOF budget, of a reference to the armed terrorist groups that were subject to measures imposed by the Security Council, but requested that the Secretariat replace the term "armed opposition groups" with the term "armed terrorist groups", which was more correct in international law. His delegation objected to the Secretariat's disregard for the causes of such terrorism, namely the continuous support that such groups received from countries hostile to Syria.

47. Other than UNDOF, no United Nations mission operating in Syria and the region should be involved in implementing the Disengagement of Forces Agreement. To that end, UNDOF must be committed to its mandate and the Secretary-General must not include in his reports on the Force any references to the Office of his Special Envoy for Syria, as the mandates of the two missions were completely different. His delegation requested the Secretariat to provide clarification of the matter. The Secretary-General's report on the proposed UNDOF budget addressed the Force's mandate, which was military par excellence, consisted of observing the ceasefire in the area of separation and had nothing to do with Syrian domestic affairs; the mandate of the Special Envoy, however, was akin to that of a special political mission, and the two mandates must not be confused. His delegation objected to any role for or reference to communication with the International Committee of the Red Cross, which constituted blatant intervention in Syrian domestic affairs and therefore a clear violation of the principles and Charter of the United Nations and of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement.

48. His delegation welcomed the return of UNDOF to some of the positions that it had previously vacated on the Syrian side. The Force had returned following the improvement of the security situation in the area of separation, principally as a result of the counter-terrorism efforts of his Government and its allies. His delegation reiterated the need for UNDOF to comply with the Disengagement of Forces Agreement as well as the agreement on basic operational procedures. His Government remained committed to the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and appreciated the role played by UNDOF in the area of separation. It looked forward to the achievement of a comprehensive and just peace in the region, in accordance with the relevant international resolutions, and urged members of the Fifth Committee to approve in full the resources requested for UNDOF.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.