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Proposed programme budget for 2021

Proposed programme budget for 2021

Part II

Political affairs

Section 3

Political affairs

Special political missions

Thematic cluster I: special and personal envoys, advisers and representatives of the Secretary-General

Fourth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for 2021

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General in respect of special political missions that contains the proposed resource requirements for 2021 for thematic cluster I: special and personal envoys, advisers and representatives of the Secretary-General ([A/75/6 \(Sect. 3\)/Add.2](#)). During its consideration of the report, the Committee received additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses dated 21 October 2020.

2. The Secretary-General, in addendum 1 to section 3, Political affairs, of his report on the proposed programme budget for 2021 ([A/75/6 \(Sect. 3\)/Add.1](#)), provides an overview of the proposed resource requirements for 2021 for 39 special political missions and related cross-cutting issues. Detailed information in respect of each special political mission is contained in five addenda to section 3 of the proposed programme budget.¹ The addenda cover the specific requirements for thematic clusters I to III and the two largest missions, the United Nations Assistance Mission

¹ [A/75/6 \(Sect. 3\)/Add.2](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 3\)/Add.3](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 3\)/Add.4](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 3\)/Add.5](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 3\)/Add.6](#) and [A/75/6 \(Sect. 3\)/Add.6/Corr.1](#).



in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The Advisory Committee's comments and recommendations of a cross-cutting nature pertaining to all special political missions are contained in its main report (A/75/7/Add.2), while its comments and recommendations on budget proposals for thematic clusters I to III, UNAMA and UNAMI are covered in its related reports.² The Secretary-General also indicates that he will present to the General Assembly separate proposals for any additional requirements emanating from additional mandates or changes in mandates (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.1, para. 3). The Committee was informed that resource requirements for 2021 for the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in the Sudan (UNITAMS) (thematic cluster III), established on 3 June 2020 pursuant to Security Council resolution 2524 (2020), would be presented in a separate report (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.7). The Committee's comments and recommendations pertaining to the budget proposal for UNITAMS will be contained in its related report (A/75/7/Add.8).

3. In its first report on the proposed programme budget for 2021 (A/75/7 and A/75/7/Corr.1, chap. I, sect. A), the Advisory Committee made comments and recommendations on the budget methodology, format and presentation, which also apply to the reports of the Secretary-General on the estimates in respect of special political missions (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.1-7).

II. Budget performance for 2019 and 2020 and resource requirements for 2021

4. The proposed resource requirements for 2021 for the 11 special political missions under thematic cluster I, compared with the approved resources for 2020 and the expenditures for 2019, are summarized in table 1 below.

Table 1
Summary of resource requirements for thematic cluster I
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Mission	2019		2020		2021		Variance 2021 budget vs. 2020 appropriation
	Appropriation	Expenditure	Appropriation	Expenditure 1 Jan– 30 Sept	Total requirements	Non- recurrent requirements	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)=(5)-(3)
Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus	2 775.8	2 116.9	2 878.3	1 873.3	2 881.8	–	3.5
Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide	2 179.9	1 832.5	2 227.4	1 060.7	2 353.3	12.7	125.9
Office of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara	450.6	192.0	434.4	–	532.3	–	97.9
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)	361.2	242.2	397.2	231.8	368.9	–	(28.3)
Office of the United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions	1 887.1	1 716.7	2 236.7	1 297.5	1 928.2	–	(308.5)
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria	16 200.2	15 061.2	16 235.3	9 722.3	16 735.1	505.1	499.8

² A/75/7/Add.3, A/75/7/Add.4, A/75/7/Add.5, A/75/7/Add.6 and A/75/7/Add.7.

Mission	2019		2020		2021		Variance
	Appropriation	Expenditure	Appropriation	Expenditure 1 Jan– 30 Sept	Total requirements	Non- recurrent requirements	2021 budget vs. 2020 appropriation
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)=(5)-(3)
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa	1 496.4	1 650.8	1 496.4	1 078.3	1 821.4	–	325.0
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region	4 400.4	4 400.9	4 400.4	3 231.8	5 188.7	–	788.3
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen	17 020.0	16 560.9	18 177.0	11 896.2	17 892.8	–	(284.2)
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi	7 007.8	6 514.5	7 237.0	4 781.3	6 510.2	–	(726.8)
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar	1 220.3	1 077.1	1 073.0	682.7	1 152.6	–	79.6
Total	54 999.7	51 365.7	56 793.1	35 855.9	57 365.3	517.8	572.2

5. The proposed resources amount to \$57,365,300 (net of staff assessment), representing an increase of \$572,200, or 1.0 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2020. A summary of variances between approved resources for 2020 and proposed resources for 2021 for continuing missions is provided in table 5 of the main report of the Secretary-General (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.1). The Advisory Committee was provided, upon enquiry, with further information on the expenditures under thematic cluster I for 2019 and 2020 shown in table 1 above. The overall expenditures for 2019 amounted to \$51,365,700, reflecting an underexpenditure of \$3,634,000, or 6.6 per cent, compared with the appropriation of \$54,999,700. The Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region are the only missions with overexpenditures, of \$154,400 and \$500, respectively. **The Advisory Committee trusts that every effort will be made to absorb any additional costs to the extent possible in future.**

6. As shown in table 1 above, expenditures as at 30 September 2020 amounted to \$35,855,900, which represents 63 per cent of the appropriated amount of \$56,793,100. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will provide updated information on expenditures for 2020 to the General Assembly, at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

A. Comments and recommendations on staffing requirements

7. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with a table presenting positions approved for 2020 and proposed staffing requirements for 2021 for the missions under thematic cluster I (see table 2 below). Staffing changes are also summarized in annex XIII to the main report of the Secretary-General (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.1).

Table 2
Staffing requirements for thematic cluster I

Mission	Approved for 2020	Vacant as at 30 September 2020	Proposed for 2021	New positions	Abolishment	Conversion	Reclassification	Reassignment	Redeployment/relocation
Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus	21 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 5 P-4, 1 P-3, 4 FS, 1 GS (OL) and 5 LL)	1 P-5	21 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 5 P-4, 1 P-3, 4 FS, 1 GS (OL) and 5 LL)	–	–	–	–	–	–
Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide	10 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 P-5, 3 P-4, 2 P-3 and 2 GS (OL))	4 (1 USG, 1 P-5, 1 P-3 and 1 GS (OL))	11 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 2 P-5, 3 P-4, 2 P-3 and 2 GS (OL))	1 P-5	–	–	–	–	–
Office of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara	2 (1 USG and 1 P-3)	2 (1 USG and 1 P-3)	2 (1 USG and 1 P-3)	–	–	–	–	–	–
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)	3 (1 USG, 1 P-4 and 1 GS (OL))	1 USG	3 (1 USG, 1 P-4 and 1 GS (OL))	–	–	–	–	–	–
Office of the United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions	7 (1 ASG, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3 and 1 GS (OL))	–	7 (1 ASG, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3 and 1 GS (OL))	–	–	–	–	–	–
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria	91 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 D-2, 3 D-1, 8 P-5, 14 P-4, 14 P-3, 10 FS, 8 GS (OL) and 31 LL)	19 (2 P-5, 4 P-4, 7 P-3, 1 FS, 1 GS (OL) and 4 LL)	91 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 D-2, 3 D-1, 8 P-5, 14 P-4, 14 P-3, 10 FS, 8 GS (OL) and 31 LL)	–	–	–	–	1 LL	–
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa	9 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 2 NPO and 2 LL)	1 P-4	9 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 2 NPO and 2 LL)	–	–	–	–	–	–
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region	27 (1 USG, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 4 P-5, 6 P-4, 4 P-3, 1 FS, 1 GS (OL), 1 NPO and 7 LL)	4 (1 D-1, 1 P-3 and 2 LL)	27 (1 USG, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 4 P-5, 6 P-4, 4 P-3, 1 FS, 1 GS (OL), 1 NPO and 7 LL)	–	–	–	–	–	–
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen	99 (1 USG, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 6 P-5, 15 P-4, 12 P-3, 25 FS, 1 GS (OL), 8 NPO and 29 LL)	14 (2 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 2 FS and 6 LL)	100 (1 USG, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 6 P-5, 15 P-4, 11 P-3, 26 FS, 1 GS (OL), 9 NPO and 29 LL)	1 FS	–	1 P-3 to NPO	–	–	5 (1 P-5, 1 P-3 and 3 FS)
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi	30 (1 USG, 1 D-2, 2 D-1, 4 P-5, 5 P-4, 2 P-3, 7 FS, 1 GS (OL), 2 NPO and 5 LL)	2 (1 D-2 and 1 FS)	30 (1 USG, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 5 P-4, 4 P-3, 7 FS, 1 GS (OL), 2 NPO and 5 LL)	1 P-3	1 D-1	–	1 P-5 to P-3	1 P-3	2 (1 P-5 and 1 P-4)
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar	5 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 LL)	–	5 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 LL)	–	–	–	–	–	–

Abbreviations: USG, Under-Secretary-General; FS, Field Service; GS, General Service; GS (OL), General Service (Other level); LL, Local level; ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; NPO, National Professional Officer.

8. The proposed staffing changes for 2021 are as follows:

(a) In the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, the establishment of one position of Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5) (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.2, paras. 64 and 65);

(b) In the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, the reassignment of one position of Procurement Assistant (Local level) in the Office of the Chief of Mission Support as a position of Administrative Assistant (Local level) (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.2, para. 164);

(c) In the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen: (i) the establishment of one position of Administrative Officer (Field Service) in the Office of the Chief of Mission Support in Aden; (ii) the conversion of one position of Medical Officer in the Office of the Chief of Mission Support in Sana'a from the P-3 level to a National Professional Officer position; and (iii) the redeployment of five positions from Sana'a to Amman, comprising one Senior Security Sector Reform Officer (P-5) in the Security Sector Section, one Political Affairs Officer (P-3) in the Political Affairs Section, two Movement Control Assistants (Field Service) in the Movement Control, Transport and Aviation Unit and one Property Management Assistant (Field Service) in the Property Management Unit (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.2, para. 248);

(d) In the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi: (i) the abolishment of one position of Principal Security Sector Reform Officer (D-1) in the Security and Rule of Law Unit; (ii) the redeployment of one position of Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5) and one position of Political Affairs Officer (P-4) in the Dialogue Support Unit from Dar es Salaam to Bujumbura; (iii) the reassignment of one position of Special Assistant, Political Affairs (P-3) in the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General from Ouagadougou as a position of Political Affairs Officer (P-3) in the Dialogue Support Unit in Bujumbura; (iv) the reclassification of one position of Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5) in the Dialogue Support Unit as a position of Political Affairs Officer (P-3); and (v) the establishment of one position of Property Management Officer (P-3) in the Logistics Unit (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.2, para. 277).

Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen

9. With respect to the proposed establishment of one position of Administrative Officer (Field Service) in the Office of the Chief of Mission Support in Aden, in the report, it is indicated that the position would provide operational, logistical and administrative support to the Office in Aden (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.2, para. 248 (a)). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Administrative Officer would support the Office of the Chief of Mission Support in liaising with chiefs of services and sections on administrative and logistical issues and activities; support official visits of the Special Envoy to Aden for meetings with government officials; review, monitor and ensure the proper management and disbursement of petty cash funds in compliance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations; provide facilities management services for accommodation and office space in Aden; and liaise with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on staff entry visas, residency permits, shipments and overflight and landing clearances. **The Advisory Committee recalls that, in resolution 74/263, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to promote the nationalization of positions, whenever appropriate, as well as to build local capacity within the special political missions. The Committee also recalls that it had previously noted the decreasing number of positions nationalized in recent years by the special political missions (A/74/7/Add.1, para. 47). Bearing in mind the nature of the**

functions to be performed by the Administrative Officer, the Committee recommends that the proposed position of Administrative Officer (Field Service) in the Office of the Chief of Mission Support in Aden be established as a National Professional Officer position. The Committee makes further comments and observations on the nationalization of positions in its main report (A/75/7/Add.2).

10. Regarding the redeployment of five positions from Sana'a to Amman, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the proposed redeployments of the Senior Security Sector Reform Officer (P-5) and the Political Affairs Officer (P-3) positions would improve engagement and collaboration with mission leadership and external actors while enabling the continuation of central management of the sections and field offices from mission headquarters. The three Field Service positions, located in the Supply Chain Management and Service Delivery pillar (Property Management Unit and Movement Control, Transport and Aviation Unit), are proposed to be redeployed from Sana'a to Amman to better align with operational needs. **The Advisory Committee recalls that the Secretary-General previously proposed the redeployment of four positions (1 P-4, 2 Field Service and 1 National Professional Officer) from Amman to Sana'a (A/74/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.2, para. 248 (h)). The Committee notes with concern the repeated redeployments between Sana'a and Amman. The Committee is of the view that, given the functions to be performed, these positions should be located in proximity to the field of operations, instead of mission headquarters. The Committee therefore recommends against the proposed redeployment of the five positions from Sana'a to Amman.**

Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi

11. In the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi, it is proposed to reclassify one position of Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5) in the Dialogue Support Unit as a position of Political Affairs Officer (P-3) (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.2, para. 277 (d)). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Senior Political Affairs Officer position at the P-5 level had been proposed for reclassification because the duties and responsibilities of the post had changed substantially and could be performed by a position at the P-3 level. **Given the substantial change in functions, the Advisory Committee is of the view that the proposed reclassification should have been proposed as an abolishment of the P-5 position and establishment of a P-3 position. Noting the nature of the functions to be performed and the existing capacity in the office, including the proposed redeployment of one P-5 position and one P-4 position from Dar es Salaam to Bujumbura, and in line with its comments on nationalization above, the Committee recommends the abolishment of the P-5 position and establishment of a National Professional Officer position.**

12. It is also proposed to establish one position of Property Management Officer (P-3) in the Logistics Unit to ensure that the assets entrusted to the mission are accounted for and managed in compliance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) on property, plant and equipment and financial inventory (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.2, para. 277 (e)). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, following the delegation of authority to the heads of entities, there was a need for staff with expertise on the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and IPSAS on property, plant and equipment and financial inventory, and that such expertise did not presently exist in the Office. **The Advisory Committee notes that the mission is in a stable operating phase and is not fully convinced that there is no existing capacity to perform functions related to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and IPSAS. The Committee therefore**

recommends against the establishment of the Property Management Officer (P-3) in the Logistics Unit.

Special post allowance

13. Annex XII to the main report of the Secretary-General (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.1) shows the positions with incumbents in receipt of special post allowance for one year or more in special political missions, as at 29 February 2020. For the missions under thematic cluster I, there are seven such positions, comprising one since 2015, two since 2017 and four since 2018. The Advisory Committee made comments and recommendations on the use of special post allowance in its first report on the proposed programme budget for 2021 (A/75/7, chap. I, paras. 56 and 57). **The Advisory Committee trusts that the recruitment for positions encumbered by staff members in receipt of a special post allowance for extended periods will be completed without further delay.**

Vacant positions

14. Positions vacant for over one year in special political missions, as at 29 February 2020, are set out in annex XI to the main report of the Secretary-General (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.1), showing 12 such positions under thematic cluster I. These include nine positions that have been vacant for more than two years. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed of the progress made in recruitment, indicating that two positions in the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria – a Chief Security Officer (P-4) position vacant since 16 December 2015 and a Political Affairs Officer (P-3) position vacant since 1 May 2017 – are still at the initial stage of circulation of the job openings. **The Advisory Committee expects that recruitment for all vacant positions will be completed expeditiously and trusts that updated information will be provided to the General Assembly.**

Vacancy rates

15. Annex X to the main report of the Secretary-General (A/75/6 (Sect. 3)/Add.1) provides a comparison of the proposed and actual vacancy rates by mission and staff category. The vacancy rates for missions under thematic cluster I are set out in table 3 below. Upon enquiry as to the different vacancy rates applied to individual missions, the Advisory Committee was informed that, while the actual vacancy rates formed the starting point in determining applicable vacancy rates for a future period, consideration was also given to factors that were specific to a mission, such as the size of the staffing complement. The Committee discusses vacant positions and vacancy rates further in its main report on the estimates in respect of special political missions (A/75/7/Add.2).

Table 3
Vacancy rates for thematic cluster I

<i>Mission</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Approved positions 2020</i>	<i>Approved vacancy rate (%) 2020</i>	<i>Vacancy rates (%) as at 31 August 2020</i>	<i>Average vacancy rates (%) Jan–Aug 2020</i>	<i>Proposed positions 2021</i>	<i>Budgeted vacancy rate (%) 2021</i>
Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus	International staff	16	14	6.3	7.6	16	10
	National staff (Local level)	5	10	0.0	0.0	5	0
Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide	International staff	10	5	50.0	26.3	11	5; new positions: 50
Office of the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara	International staff	2	5	100.0	100.0	2	5
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)	International staff	3	5	33.3	33.3	3	5
Office of the United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions	International staff	7	5	0.0	0.0	7	5
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria	International staff	60	31	33.3	30.4	60	27
	National staff (Local level)	31	6	0.0	0.0	31	0
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa	International staff	5	20	20.0	20.0	5	5
	National Professional Officer	2	18	0.0	0.0	2	0
	National staff (Local level)	2	18	0.0	0.0	2	0
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region	International staff	19	19	5.3	5.4	19	5
	National Professional Officer	1	0	0.0	0.0	1	0
	National staff (Local level)	7	6	14.3	10.9	7	0
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen	International staff	62	15	12.9	10.7	62	15; new positions: 50
	National Professional Officer	8	20	0.0	0.0	9	15
	National staff (Local level)	29	20	20.7	23.8	29	20
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi	International staff	23	17	11.1	11.6	23	13; new positions: 50
	National Professional Officer	2	0	0.0	0.0	2	0
	National staff (Local level)	5	0	0.0	0.0	5	0
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar	International staff	4	5	0.0	0.0	4	5
	National staff (Local level)	1	5	0.0	37.5	1	0

16. Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the staffing proposals of the Secretary-General. Any related operational costs should be adjusted accordingly.

B. Comments and recommendations on operational costs

17. The proposed resources for operational costs under thematic cluster I for 2021 amount to \$20,214,100, reflecting a decrease of \$1,088,200, or 5.1 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2020. The Advisory Committee was provided with

information on the operational costs for thematic cluster I, including the expenditures for 2019, the appropriation for 2020 and the proposed requirements for 2021, as shown in table 4 below.

Table 4
Operational costs for thematic cluster I

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Category of expenditure	2019		2020		2021		Variance
	Appropriation	Expenditures	Appropriation	Expenditures 1 Jan-30 Sept	Total requirements	Non-recurrent requirements	2021 budget vs. 2020 appropriation
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)=(5)-(3)
Experts	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Consultants and consulting services	464.0	242.0	433.7	152.9	427.3	–	(6.4)
Official travel	4 503.7	3 114.0	4 363.0	766.3	4 387.0	114.0	24.0
Facilities and infrastructure	8 981.8	7 855.2	9 158.3	3 996.3	8 415.9	150.3	(742.4)
Ground transportation	1 227.8	660.9	1 618.5	681.9	974.0	94.0	(644.5)
Air operations	1 357.6	2 072.7	1 410.4	699.2	1 396.8	–	(13.6)
Marine operations	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Communications and information technology	2 011.4	1 937.8	2 058.1	1 314.4	2 039.7	2.4	(18.4)
Medical	189.9	158.0	211.8	148.5	286.8	5.1	75.0
Special equipment	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other supplies, services and equipment	1 844.1	1 065.5	2 048.5	621.2	2 286.6	152.0	238.1
Quick-impact projects	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	20 580.3	17 106.1	21 302.3	8 380.7	20 214.1	517.8	(1 088.2)

Consultants and consulting services

18. Proposed resources for 2021 for consultants and consulting services amount to \$427,300, representing a reduction of \$6,400 as compared with the appropriation for 2020 of \$433,700. Expenditure amounted to \$242,000 in 2019 and \$152,900 in 2020, as at 30 September. **The Advisory Committee reiterates that the use of consultants should be kept to an absolute minimum and that core activities should be performed by in-house capacity (see also A/74/7/Add.6, para. 18). Taking into account the existing capacity, as well as the level of expenditure in 2019 and in the first nine months of 2020, the Committee recommends a reduction of 20 per cent, or \$85,500, to the proposed resources for consultants and consulting services.**

Official travel

19. Resource requirements for 2021 for official travel are proposed in the amount to \$4,387,000, representing an increase of \$24,000 as compared with the appropriation for 2020 of \$4,363,000. Expenditure amounted to \$3,114,000 in 2019 and \$766,300 in 2020, as at 30 September. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its view that greater use should be made of virtual meetings and online training tools (see also A/75/7, chap. I, para. 62), and, considering that the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to continue to have an impact on travel in 2021, the Committee recommends a reduction of 20 per cent, or \$877,400, under official travel.**

Communications and information technology

20. Under communications and information technology, proposed resources for 2021 amount to \$2,039,700, representing a decrease of \$18,400 as compared with the appropriation for 2020 of \$2,058,100. Expenditure amounted to \$1,937,800 in 2019 and \$1,314,400 in 2020, as at 30 September. **Taking into account the level of expenditure and the need for a consolidated presentation of information and communications technology resources, the Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of 15 per cent, or \$306,000, under communications and information technology.** The Committee makes observations on information and communications technology resources and satellite imagery in its main report on the estimates in respect of special political missions ([A/75/7/Add.2](#)).

Other supplies, services and equipment

21. Proposed resources for other supplies, services and equipment for 2021 amount to \$2,286,600, representing an increase of \$238,100 as compared with the appropriation for 2020 of \$2,048,500. Expenditure amounted to \$1,065,500 in 2019 and \$621,200 in 2020, as at 30 September. **Considering the level of expenditure in 2019 and 2020 and that the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have an impact on expenditure for office supplies, interpretation and meeting services, freight and individual contractor costs in 2021, the Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of 10 per cent, or \$228,700, under other supplies, services and equipment (see also [A/75/7](#), chap. I, para. 68).**

22. **The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposals of the Secretary-General for operational costs, subject to its comments and recommendations in paragraphs 16, 18, 19, 20 and 21 above.**
