



General Assembly

Distr.: General
9 December 2020

Original: English

Seventy-fifth session

Agenda items 141 and 98

Proposed programme budget for 2021

**Developments in the field of information and
telecommunications in the context of international security**

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.1/75/L.8/Rev.1](#)

Twenty-eighth 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 statement submitted by the Secretary-General ([A/C.5/75/13](#)), in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, on the programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.1/75/L.8/Rev.1](#) on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. During its consideration of the statement, the Advisory Committee interacted remotely with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 2 December 2020.

2. Under the terms of draft resolution [A/C.1/75/L.8/Rev.1](#), the General Assembly would, inter alia:

(a) Decide to convene, starting from 2021, with a view to ensuring the uninterrupted and continuous nature of the democratic, inclusive and transparent negotiation process on security in the use of information and communications technologies, under the auspices of the United Nations, a new open-ended working group on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021–2025, acting on a consensus basis, to continue, as a priority, to further develop the rules, norms and principles of responsible behaviour of States and the ways for



their implementation and, if necessary, to introduce changes to them or elaborate additional rules of behaviour;

(b) Also decide that the open-ended working group would start its activities upon the conclusion of the work of the current Open-ended Working Group and considering its outcomes, and would hold its organizational session in 2021 in order to agree on the organizational arrangements connected with the group.

3. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/75/13) referred to a new open-ended working group on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021–2025 that would be established pursuant to draft resolution A/C.1/75/L.8/Rev.1 and would begin its work with one two-day organizational session and one five-day substantive session to be held in New York in 2021. On the other hand, the statement of programme budget implications of draft decision A/C.1/75/L.47 (A/C.5/75/14) referred to the current Open-ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/27 of 5 December 2018. The Committee was also informed that, in accordance with draft decision A/C.1/75/L.47 and owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the current Open-ended Working Group would convene its third and final substantive session from 8 to 12 March 2021 in New York instead of concluding in 2020.

4. The statement of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/75/13) provides further information on: (a) the relationship of the proposed requests to the proposed programme budget for 2021 (*ibid.*, para. 3); (b) the activities by which the proposed requests would be implemented (*ibid.*, paras. 4–6); (c) the financial implications of the proposals (*ibid.*, paras. 7–11); and (d) the potential for absorption during 2021 (*ibid.*, para. 14).

II. Resource requirements

5. For 2021, the implementation of the proposed requests would entail additional resource requirements totalling \$269,900. These resources would include the following requirements:

(a) **Conference-servicing.** An amount of \$241,800 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, would be required in support of meetings and documentation for one two-day organizational session, consisting of four meetings, and one five-day substantive session, consisting of 10 meetings, to be held in New York in 2021. The requirements would provide for interpretation (\$100,000), pre-session documentation (\$102,100), in-session documentation (\$20,400) and post-session documentation (\$19,300);

(b) **Non-conference-servicing.** An amount of \$28,100 would cover the costs of the services and related travel of a consultant (\$25,100) under section 4, Disarmament, and the costs of webcasting services (\$3,000) under section 28, Global communications. Upon enquiry regarding the use of webcasting services, the Advisory Committee was informed that, based on the Secretariat's experience, delegation members who may not be able to attend meetings in person will expect the webcasting of meetings to be provided, as has currently been the case with the Open-ended Working Group established pursuant to resolution 73/27.

6. For the period 2022–2023, the implementation of the proposed requests would entail additional resource requirements totalling \$329,900 for each year. These resources would provide support for meetings and documentation for two five-day yearly substantive sessions, each consisting of 10 meetings, to be held in New York.

7. For the period 2024–2025, the implementation of the proposed requests would entail additional resource requirements totalling \$494,900 for each year. These resources would provide support for meetings and documentation for three five-day yearly substantive sessions, each consisting of 10 meetings, to be held in New York (see [A/C.5/75/13](#), table 3).

8. For the overall period 2021–2025, the resource requirements would amount to \$1,919,500. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with the following information on the changes in requirements over the periods 2021, 2022–2023 and 2024–2025:

(a) **Interpretation services.** In 2021, an amount of \$100,000 would cover the costs of one two-day organizational session and one five-day substantive session. In each of 2022 and 2023, an amount of \$156,000 would cover the costs of two five-day substantive sessions each year. In each of 2024 and 2025, an amount of \$234,000 would cover the costs of three five-day substantive sessions each year;

(b) **Pre-session documents.** In 2021, the requirement of \$102,100 relates to 12 documents (total of 30,500 words). In each of 2022 and 2023, the requirement of \$68,000 relates to 10 documents (total of 20,000 words) each year. In each of 2024 and 2025, the requirement of \$102,000 relates to 15 documents (total of 30,000 words) each year;

(c) **In-session documents.** In 2021, the requirement of \$20,400 relates to three documents (total of 6,000 words). In subsequent years (2022 through 2025), there are no requirements for in-session documents;

(d) **Post-session documents.** In 2021, the requirement of \$19,300 relates to one document (6,000 words). In each of 2022 and 2023, the requirement of \$67,800 relates to two documents (total of 21,400 words) each year. In each of 2024 and 2025, the requirement of \$101,700 relates to three documents (total of 32,100 words) each year.

9. With regard to the requirement for a consultant, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the consultant will: (a) attend the open-ended working group meetings and accurately take notes of Member States' interventions; (b) support the Chair and the Secretariat in synthesizing statements and contributions, such as working papers from Member States; and (c) support the Chair and the Secretariat in the drafting of progress reports, the outcome document and any background documents that may be requested by Member States. The Committee was also informed that the requirement for a consultant includes 30 days of a level C consultant at the rate of \$535 per day and the cost of travel of the consultant to the organizational session and the first substantive session, amounting to \$3,700 and \$5,400, respectively.

10. The Advisory Committee was also provided, upon request, with the table below on the breakdown of the consultancy costs for the period 2021–2025.

Breakdown of consultancy costs, 2021–2025

(United States dollars)

	<i>Number of sessions</i>	<i>Estimated workdays</i>	<i>Total fees</i>	<i>Travel costs</i>	<i>Total</i>
2021	1 organizational session and 1 substantive session	30	16 000	9 100	25 100
2022	2 substantive sessions	40	21 400	10 800	32 200
2023	2 substantive sessions	40	21 400	10 800	32 200
2024	3 substantive sessions	60	32 100	16 200	48 300
2025	3 substantive sessions	60	32 100	16 200	48 300
Total, 2021–2025	1 organizational session and 11 substantive sessions	230	123 000	63 100	186 100

11. The Secretary-General indicates that no provision has been made in the proposed programme budget for 2021 for the implementation of the activities requested in the draft resolution and that, at this stage, it is not possible to identify activities that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during 2021.

III. Conclusion

12. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should the Assembly adopt draft resolution [A/C.1/75/L.8/Rev.1](#), additional resource requirements in the amount of \$269,900 for 2021 would arise under the proposed programme budget for 2021, comprising \$241,800 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, \$25,100 under section 4, Disarmament, and \$3,000 under section 28, Global communications. The amount of \$269,900 would require an additional appropriation for 2021 to be approved by the Assembly and, as such, would represent a charge against the contingency fund.