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Financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

Budget performance for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Appropriation for 2020/21	\$263,783,900
Expenditure for 2020/21	\$263,187,500
Unencumbered balance for 2020/21	\$596,400
Appropriation for 2021/22	\$260,445,300
Projected expenditure for 2021/22 ^a	\$345,260,900
Projected overexpenditure for 2021/22 ^a	\$84,815,600
Proposal submitted by the Secretary-General for 2022/23	\$263,374,800
Adjustment recommended by the Advisory Committee for 2022/23	(\$711,600)
Recommendation of the Advisory Committee for 2022/23	\$262,663,200

^a Estimates as at 31 March 2022.

* Second reissue for technical reasons (5 May 2022).



I. Introduction

1. During its consideration of the financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions met online with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 5 April 2022. The comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations are contained in its report (A/76/760), and those pertaining to the findings and recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 can be found in its related report (A/76/735).

II. Budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

2. By its resolution 74/283, the General Assembly appropriated an amount of \$263,783,900 gross (\$260,452,900 net) for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. Expenditure for the period totalled \$263,187,500 gross (\$259,818,600 net), for a budget implementation rate of 99.8 per cent. The resulting unencumbered balance of \$596,400, in gross terms, represents 0.2 per cent of the overall level of resources approved for the period.

3. The unencumbered balance of \$596,400 reflects the effect of lower-than-budgeted expenditure under military and police personnel (\$11,912,700, or 9.1 per cent) and civilian personnel (\$209,300, or 0.5 per cent), and higher-than-budgeted expenditure under operational costs (\$11,525,600, or 13.2 per cent). Summary information on the redeployments (\$11,846,100, or 4.5 per cent) from group I, Military and police personnel to group III, Operational costs, as a result of the reprioritization of resources, is provided in section III.B of the report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of the Force for 2020/21 (A/76/545).

4. The Advisory Committee was informed that the unliquidated obligations amounted to \$41,064,000 for the 2019/20 period, as at 30 June 2020, and to \$56,647,200 for the 2020/21 period, as at 30 June 2021. **The Advisory Committee notes that the level of unliquidated obligations increased by \$15,583,200, or 38 per cent, for 2020/21, compared with the 2019/20 financial period.**

Matters pertaining to the report of the Board of Auditors

5. In considering the reports of the Secretary-General on the financing of UNISFA, the Advisory Committee also had before it the report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2021 (A/76/5 (Vol. II)). In its report, the Board had made observations and recommendations pertaining to the Force regarding excessive holdings of stock and vehicles and inconsistency of fuel management data (*ibid.*, paras. 130 (b) and 136 (a)). With regard to previous recommendations, the Board considers that its recommendation for the mission to be authorized to use Athony Airfield has been overtaken by events (*ibid.*, chap. II, annex II). Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that, since UNISFA did not have a runway suitable for wide-body aircraft, the incoming troops had to be staged through Entebbe, Uganda, where they were accommodated in a transit camp for up to two days. The troops were transported mainly through contracted commercial airline aircraft from their points of embarkation to Entebbe, and then further transported in narrow-body commercial aircraft to Kadugli, the Sudan, and, from there, to Abyei and to other team sites using UNISFA helicopters. **The Advisory Committee notes the assessment of the Board**

of Auditors that the recommendation regarding the authorization to use the Athony Airfield has been overtaken by events and trusts that the mission will continue its efforts to find a suitable solution to address the logistical difficulties created by the absence of a runway for wide-body aircraft in the mission area.

III. Information on performance for the current period

6. With regard to current and projected expenditure for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 March 2022, expenditure amounted to \$208,845,800, or 80.1 per cent, of the apportionment of \$260,445,300. At the end of the financial period, the estimated total expenditure would amount to \$345,260,900, resulting in an estimated overexpenditure of \$84,815,600.

7. In its resolution [2575 \(2021\)](#), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to provide recommendations for further reconfiguration of the mission and establish a viable exit strategy. Following the strategic review of UNISFA in August 2021, and in line with option one of the recommendations included in the letter of the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Council, dated 17 September 2021 ([S/2021/805](#)), the Council, in its resolution [2609 \(2021\)](#), decided to reduce the authorized troop ceiling from 3,550 to 3,250 and maintain the police ceiling at 640 until 15 May 2022 ([A/76/699](#), para. 22). In his letter, the Secretary-General recommended two options for the reconfiguration of the Force, both of which considered the replacement of a single-nation contingent with a multinational force.

8. In February 2022, the Secretary-General requested authorization to enter into commitments not exceeding \$84,379,600 to cover the projected expenditure for reconfiguration of the Force. The Advisory Committee concurred with the request to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding \$67,503,700 gross to meet the additional requirements associated with UNISFA reconfiguration. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that, as at 15 March 2022, the deployment of the new multinational Force was taking place as planned.

9. The Advisory Committee trusts that updated information on the reconfiguration of the Force, along with the related expenditure, will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.

10. The Advisory Committee was informed that claims for the reimbursement of troop costs had been settled up to 30 September 2021, leaving an outstanding balance of \$13,825,000 as at 31 December 2021. Contingent-owned equipment had been paid up to 30 September 2021, leaving an outstanding balance of \$9,739,000 as at 31 December 2021.

11. With regard to death and disability compensation, as at 31 March 2022, an amount of \$2,047,000 had been paid to settle 82 claims since the inception of the Force, and there were six pending cases. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the outstanding claims will be settled expeditiously.**

12. The Advisory Committee was further informed that, as at 28 February 2022, a total of \$3,008,510,000 had been assessed on Member States in respect of the Force since its inception. Payments received as at the same date amounted to \$2,914,814,000, for an outstanding balance of \$93,695,000. The Committee was further informed that, as at 28 February 2022, the cash available to the Force amounted to \$53,570,000, which was sufficient to cover the three-month operating reserve of \$42,589,000. **The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly has repeatedly urged all Member States to fulfil their financial obligations, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations, on time, in full and without conditions (see [A/75/822/Add.3](#), para. 8).**

IV. Proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

A. Mandate and planning assumptions

13. The mandate of the Force was established by the Security Council in its resolution 1990 (2011) and extended most recently until 15 May 2022 in its resolution 2609 (2021). The mission is mandated by the Security Council to achieve the overall objective of supporting the implementation of the Agreement of 20 June 2011 between the Government of the Republic of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on temporary arrangements for the administration and security of the Abyei Area, ensuring the protection of civilians and support for the peaceful administration of the Abyei Area, facilitating humanitarian access, and supporting the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism in creating a safe and demilitarized border zone (A/76/699, paras. 1 and 2).

14. The planning assumptions and mission support initiatives of the Force for the 2022/23 period are summarized in paragraphs 7 to 35 of the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed budget for the Force for that period (ibid.).

B. Resource requirements

15. The total resource requirements in the amount of \$263,374,800 for the 2022/23 period represent an increase of \$2,929,500, or 1.1 per cent, compared with the apportionment of \$260,445,300 for the 2021/22 period (see table below).

Financial resources

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Category	Apportionment (2020/21)	Expenditure (2020/21)	Apportionment (2021/22)	Cost estimates (2022/23)	Variance	
					Amount	Percentage
Military and police personnel	131 539.4	119 626.7	125 665.2	117 385.3	(8 279.9)	(6.6)
Civilian personnel	45 205.0	44 995.7	51 692.9	51 692.9	312.2	0.6
Operational costs	87 039.5	98 565.1	83 399.4	94 296.6	10 897.2	13.1
Gross requirements	263 783.9	263 187.5	260 445.3	263 374.8	2 929.5	1.1

16. Information on variances between the apportionment for 2021/22 and the proposed resources for 2022/23 is contained in section III of the proposed budget (ibid.).

1. Military and police personnel

Category	Authorized 2021/22 ^a	Proposed 2022/23	Variance
Military observers	225	130	(95)
Military contingent personnel	3 325	3 120	(205)
United Nations police officers	148	148	—
Formed police unit personnel	492	492	—

^a Representing the highest level of authorized strength.

17. The proposed resources for military and police personnel for 2022/23 amount to \$117,385,300, reflecting a decrease of \$8,279,900, or 6.6 per cent, compared with the apportionment for 2021/22. The decrease reflects mainly the reduction in the authorized military contingent strength (\$5,654,700); the application of a lower net daily rate for mission subsistence allowance and a higher planned vacancy rate for United Nations police (\$1,909,700); and the application of a lower net daily rate for mission subsistence allowance and a reduced planned average deployment for military observers (\$687,000) (*ibid.*, paras. 90–92).

Delayed deployment factors

18. The Advisory Committee was provided with information on the delayed deployment factors for military and police personnel for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 periods, as well as those proposed for the 2022/23 period, as indicated in the table below.

Delayed deployment factors

(Percentage)

<i>Category</i>	<i>Actual 2020/21</i>	<i>Approved 2021/22</i>	<i>Actual 31 March 2022</i>	<i>Actual average 31 March 2022</i>	<i>Projected 2022/23</i>
Military and police personnel					
Military observers	42.7	25.0	40.5	25.1	14.6
Military contingents	(1.6)	3.0	(3.2)	0.5	1.5
United Nations police	73.6	25.0	68.9	68.1	33.8
Formed police units	100.0	91.6	100.0	100.0	91.6

19. The Secretary-General indicates that the deployment of three formed police units is unlikely to fully take place before the end of June 2022, given the delays in the issuance of visas and clearances by the host country. However, efforts are being made by the mission leadership to engage the local authorities in the deployment efforts of at least one formed police unit, which is expected to start deploying in the last quarter of 2022 (*ibid.*, sect. V.B). The Advisory Committee notes from the information provided that an amount of \$3,156,400 was apportioned for the formed police units for the current period and a requirement of \$3,127,900 is proposed for the same purpose in 2022/23. **The Advisory Committee reiterates concern about the high vacancy rates of UNISFA police personnel and encourages the Secretary-General to renew his efforts to improve the deployment rate of police personnel and limit its impact on the implementation of the mandate (see also [A/75/822/Add.3](#), para. 14). The Committee trusts that updated information on the deployment of the formed police units will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

20. **Subject to its observations above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposals of the Secretary-General for military and police personnel.**

2. Civilian personnel

<i>Category</i>	<i>Approved 2021/22</i>	<i>Proposed 2022/23</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Posts			
International staff	174	185	11
National Professional Officers	7	10	3
National General Service	83	83	–
Temporary positions ^a	2	2	–
United Nations Volunteers	36	37	1
Total	302	317	15

^a Funded under general temporary assistance.

21. The proposed resources for civilian personnel for 2022/23 amount to \$51,692,900, reflecting an increase of \$312,200, or 0.6 per cent, compared with the apportionment for 2021/22. These resources would provide for 317 posts and positions, which represents an increase of 15 posts (2 P-5, 5 P-4, 1 P-3, 3 Field Service, 3 National Professional Officer and 1 United Nations Volunteer) compared with the previous period. The Secretary-General indicates that the overall increase is attributable to the following (see [A/76/699](#), paras. 93–96):

(a) International staff: an increase of \$101,300, due mainly to the proposed establishment of 10 posts (2 P-5, 4 P-4, 1 P-3 and 3 Field Service), offset in part by the application of lower rates for international staff salaries based on the revised salary scale effective 1 January 2022, compared with the rates applied in 2021/22;

(b) National staff: an increase of \$151,300, reflecting mainly the proposed establishment of three National Professional Officer posts;

(c) United Nations Volunteers: an increase of \$727,300, due to the application of a higher monthly average rate for the volunteer living allowance and the proposed establishment of one United Nations Volunteer (International) position in support of the Medical Unit;

(d) General temporary assistance: a reduction of \$667,700, owing to a reduction in the mission's share of allocated costs for the Umoja implementation support project compared with 2021/22 and the proposed conversion of one temporary P-3 position to a post. The reduced requirement is partially offset by the proposed establishment of one general temporary assistance position at the P-4 level.

Recommendations on posts and positions

Establishment

22. The Secretary-General is proposing the establishment of two Liaison Officer posts (P-4) in Abyei and Diffra, respectively, to provide stronger human rights and rule of law advisory components in the facilitation of inter-community dialogue and engagement with Misseriya traditional leaders and the Juba/Khartoum appointed local administrations. The incumbents would maintain liaison with youth and women, as well as other stakeholders, and would assist with the coordination of training, conferences, workshops and other capacity-building programmes in northern/southern Abyei and Diffra, respectively ([A/76/699](#), para. 55). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the strategic review recommendations underscored the importance of strengthening the mission's engagements in the areas of human rights, the rule of law and the protection of civilians. The Committee was also informed that

the two Liaison Officers (P-4) would engage in community work and that such expertise was not readily available locally in Abyei.

23. The Advisory Committee notes that the need for community work expertise seems stronger in Abyei than in Diffra and that the Secretary-General is also proposing the establishment of a Liaison Officer (P-3) post in the Community Liaison Office, which already has a complement of 10 posts (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-3, 1 National Professional Officer and 3 national General Service) (ibid., para. 56 and annex II). **In view of the above elements, the Advisory Committee is not convinced that the proposed establishment of two Liaison Officer (P-4) posts is fully justified and therefore recommends against the establishment of one Liaison Officer (P-4) post.**

24. It is proposed that one Management and Programme Analyst (P-4) post be established in the Office of the Chief Mission Support. The incumbent would take the lead in: (a) monitoring key performance indicators within the Mission Support Centre in order to enhance management oversight and decision making; and (b) the planning, implementation and coordination of change management initiatives in order to ensure a centralized and coordinated approach to the implementation of new business practices and process improvement initiatives (ibid., para. 59). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Management and Programme Analyst would be leading business performance with the aim of allowing the mission to capitalize on existing raw data from various sources, including Umoja and the field remote infrastructure management system, by developing tools that allow mission support units to track consumption patterns more effectively and allocate resources accordingly. The Committee was also informed that the role of the existing Administrative Officer (P-4) post in the Office of the Chief of Mission Support was primarily to advise on administrative and financial matters, serve as the representative of the Chief of Mission Support and oversee regulatory bodies. **The Advisory Committee is not convinced that the functions of the proposed Management and Programme Analyst require a dedicated post and cannot be undertaken within existing resources. Therefore, the Committee recommends against the establishment of a Management and Programme Analyst (P-4) post.**

25. The Secretary-General is proposing the establishment of a Procurement Assistant (Field Service) post. The incumbent will be expected to process a minimum of 90 purchase orders on an annual basis; undertake procurement and contractual aspects of projects of significant complexity; participate in negotiations with senior supplier representatives; sign procurement orders up to the authorized limit; educate local vendors on United Nations procurement rules; and prepare submissions to the local and headquarters' contracts committees for review. According to the Secretary-General, the existing staffing level in the Procurement Unit is not adequate to ensure the timely processing of the mission's purchasing requirements – especially in the context of a multinational force and the strengthening of the role of programmatic activities following the strategic review (ibid., para. 69). **The Advisory Committee notes that the authorized troop ceiling was recently reduced from 3,550 to 3,250 troops and that the Procurement Unit already has a complement of five posts (1 P-4, 1 Field Service, 1 National Professional Officer and 2 national General Service). The Committee is of the view that the mission should be able to absorb any additional purchasing requirements within existing resources. Consequently, the Committee recommends against the proposed establishment of a Procurement Assistant (Field Service) post.**

Conversion

26. It is proposed that one temporary position of Engineer (P-3) be converted into a post, given the continuing nature of the functions. The Secretary-General indicates that the Engineering Unit is tasked to implement major projects during the 2022/23

period, and that the increased number of military camps – originally 3 and currently 19 – and temporary bases has resulted in the escalated frequency of maintenance and repairs. The Secretary-General also indicates that UNISFA relies in part on a third-party contractor for the provision of Force mobility capacity and that the related contract is managed by the Engineering Unit (*ibid.*, para. 63). **The Advisory Committee considers that the major projects for 2022/23 and the reliance on a third-party contractor for the force mobility capacity should be temporary in principle. The Committee is not convinced that the functions of the Engineer (P-3), who monitors the third-party contract, are of a continuing nature. Consequently, the Committee recommends against the proposed conversion of the temporary position of Engineer (P-3) into a post.**

Mine action

27. With regard to the resources for mine action, the Secretary-General indicates that the proposed requirements for mine detection and mine-clearing services for 2022/23 amount to \$10,197,000, including resources for international and national staff (\$2,485,700), official travel (\$110,300), two ongoing contracts with one implementing partner (\$6,696,700), equipment (\$30,000), operating expenses (\$109,900), and support and management fees for the Mine Action Service implementing partner, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) (\$764,400) (*ibid.*, para. 81). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with the table below comparing the costs of the functions of the Chief of the Mine Action Programme as a Secretariat staff member and under the arrangement with UNOPS.

Cost comparison of functions of Chief, Mine Action Programme, under Secretariat and under United Nations Office for Project Services

(United States dollars)

<i>Duty station</i>	<i>Proposed budget 2022/23 for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei</i>	<i>United Nations Office for Project Services</i>		
		<i>Annual cost</i>	<i>Fees^c</i>	<i>Total</i>
Abyei	151 700 ^a	268 234 ^b	21 861	290 095

^a Including net salary, common staff costs and staff assessment based on 2022/23 updated salary rates and applying a 50 per cent vacancy rate.

^b Based on rates of 2021/22 financial agreement signed between the United Nations and the United Nations Office for Project Services and a 100 per cent incumbency rate.

^c Including locally and centrally managed direct costs (3 per cent) and indirect costs (5 per cent), in accordance with the umbrella memorandum of understanding between the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Office for Project Services.

28. Following the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, the Administration decided in April 2021 to transfer, as a temporary arrangement, the position of Chief, Mine Action Programme at all missions from UNOPS to the Secretariat through a modality called “lift and shift” (A/76/5 (Vol. II), chap. II, para. 48). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the incumbent of the position of Chief of the Mine Action Programme at UNISFA had been shifted from UNOPS to the Secretariat in July 2021. It is now proposed that this position be established as Programme Management Officer (P-4), funded under general temporary assistance. As focal point of the mine action programme for UNISFA, the incumbent will be responsible for, *inter alia*, designing the UNISFA mine action programme strategy, devising strategic and operational planning, implementing programme design and response to threats, providing advice to mission leadership, supporting advocacy efforts and overseeing the delivery and performance of implementing partners

(A/76/699, para. 43). The Committee considers this matter further in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/76/760).

Vacancy rates

29. The table below provides a summary of the vacancy rates for civilian personnel for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 periods, as well as those proposed for the 2022/23 period. The Advisory Committee notes the lack of justification for the application of rates that differ from the actual vacancy rates during the current period, as follows: (a) international staff: a vacancy rate of 10 per cent is projected, when the actual average (July 2021 to February 2022) is 11.6 per cent; (b) National Professional Officers: zero per cent is projected, when the actual average is 28.6 per cent; (c) United Nations Volunteers: 3 per cent is projected, when the actual average is 4.9 per cent; and (d) temporary positions: 10 per cent is projected, when the actual average is 50 per cent.

Vacancy rates

(Percentage)

<i>Category</i>	<i>Actual 2020/21</i>	<i>Budgeted 2021/22</i>	<i>Actual average 28 February 2022</i>	<i>Actual 31 March 2022</i>	<i>Actual average Jan–March 2022</i>	<i>Projected 2022/23</i>
Civilian personnel						
International staff	11.5	10.0	11.6	10.9	10.2	10.0
National staff						
National Professional Officers	50.0	0.0	28.6	28.6	28.6	0.0
National General Service staff	7.3	10.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	10.0
United Nations Volunteers	5.6	3.0	4.9	0.0	1.9	3.0
Temporary positions						
International staff	50.0	10.0	50.0	100.0	66.7	10.0

30. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its view that proposed vacancy rates should be based, as much as possible, on actual rates. In cases in which the proposed rates differ from the actual rates, clear justification should be provided systematically in the proposed budget and related documents (A/75/822/Add.3, para. 20, A/74/737/Add.2, para. 23, and A/73/755/Add.11, para. 19).**

Vacant posts

31. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that 23 posts were vacant as at 22 March 2022. The Committee was further informed that recruitment for the post of Deputy Head of Mission (D-2), which was established on 1 July 2021, was still pending and that the recruitment of one Special Assistant (P-3) post and one Political Affairs Officer (P-3) post was dependent on the recruitment of the Deputy Head of Mission.

32. **While acknowledging the issues affecting the Force, the Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly has reiterated its concern about the high number of vacancies in civilian staffing and further reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to ensure that vacant posts are filled expeditiously (see resolutions 75/297, para. 24, and 74/283, paras. 24 and 25). The Committee trusts that the Force will continue its effort for the recruitment of the Deputy Head of Mission and that an update will be provided in the context of the next report (see also A/75/822/Add.3, para. 22, and A/74/737/Add.2, paras. 15–17).**

33. Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 23 to 26 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposals of the Secretary-General for civilian personnel. Any operational costs should be adjusted accordingly.

3. Operational costs

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Category	Apportionment (2020/21)	Expenditure (2020/21)	Apportionment (2021/22)	Expenditure as at 31 March 2022	Cost estimates (2022/23)	Variance	
						Amount	Percentage
		(1)	(2)		(3)	(4)=(3)-(2)	(5)=(4)÷(2)
Operational costs							
Consultants and consulting services	621.6	1 086.8	607.7	1 365.8	636.0	28.3	4.7
Official travel	734.5	392.1	680.0	787.9	680.0	–	–
Facilities and infrastructure	34 035.4	44 234.5	33 443.8	24 676.6	33 576.0	132.2	0.4
Ground transportation	4 339.2	4 550.5	2 156.0	1 694.4	2 025.3	(130.7)	(6.1)
Air operations	15 557.9	15 384.1	19 140.1	18 940.2	26 277.8	7 137.7	37.3
Marine operations	1 058.9	2 047.4	597.5	436.1	511.2	(86.3)	(14.4)
Communications and information technology	10 341.5	12 782.0	9 098.7	9 346.6	9 777.9	679.2	7.5
Medical	1 172.7	608.1	452.6	564.3	715.8	263.2	58.2
Other supplies, services and equipment	18 319.9	16 979.6	16 723.0	21 018.6	19 596.6	2 873.6	17.2
Quick-impact projects	499.9	500.0	500.0	466.6	500.0	–	–
Total	86 681.5	98 565.1	83 399.4	79 297.2	94 296.6	10 897.2	13.1

34. The proposed resources for operational costs for 2022/23 amounting to \$94,296,600 reflect an increase of \$10,897,200, or 13.1 per cent, compared with the apportionment for 2021/22. The proposed increase reflects higher requirements under air operations (\$7,137,700), other supplies, services and equipment (\$2,873,600), communications and information technology (\$679,200), medical (\$263,200), and facilities and infrastructure (\$132,200), which are offset in part by reductions under ground transportation (\$130,700) and marine operations (\$86,300) (A/76/699, paras. 98–104).

Comments and recommendations on operational costs

35. The Advisory Committee is not fully convinced that the justifications provided fully support some of the requirements listed below and makes the following observations and recommendations:

(a) *Official travel.* The proposed resources for official travel for 2022/23 amount to \$680,000, which is the same amount as the apportionment for 2021/22. **Considering that, of an apportionment of \$839,700 for 2020/21, only \$392,100 was expended, resulting in an underexpenditure of \$447,600, the Committee is not convinced that the proposed requirement for official travel is fully justified. The Committee therefore recommends a 20 per cent reduction, or \$136,000, to the proposed requirement for official travel;**

(b) *Communications and information technology.* The proposed resources for communications and information technology in the amount of \$9,777,900 reflect an increase of \$679,200, or 7.5 per cent, compared with the apportionment for 2021/22. The Secretary-General indicates that the increased requirements are attributable

mainly to projected increased telecommunications and network services, owing to the need for the upgrade and expansion of the microwave links connecting team sites to the mission's headquarters (ibid., para. 101). **The Advisory Committee notes that, in 2020/21, an overexpenditure of \$3,543,900 under communications and information technology resulted primarily from additional communications and information technology equipment required to enhance bandwidth for communications within UNISFA headquarters. Considering that the mission has already expended significant resources on internal communications, the Committee is not fully convinced that the additional requirement is fully justified. Therefore, the Committee recommends a reduction of \$135,800 (or 20 per cent of the proposed increase) to the proposed resources for communications and information technology.**

36. Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 33 and 35 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposals of the Secretary-General for operational costs.

V. Other matters

Services provided by the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe and the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy

37. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe provided its client missions, including UNISFA, with shared services in the areas of onboarding and separation, benefits and payroll, vendor payments, staff entitlements, official travel, cashier services, training and conference services, transport and movement control, and information technology services. The Committee was also informed that, in terms of environmental management services, the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, provided annual environmental assessment services to the mission and collaborated in the preparation of bidding documents for environmental projects such as conventional wastewater treatment plants and construction of solar farms. The United Nations Logistics Base also supported UNISFA in the areas of field remote infrastructure monitoring, ground assessment for contaminated land investigation, the construction of waste management yards and the improvement of wastewater treatment infrastructure.

Use of contractors

38. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, in terms of force mobility, the mission maintained contractual arrangements with a third-party contractor that had provided significant support to the mission, including enhancement of the mission's internal engineering capacity for horizontal construction work, road surveys and assessment and clearance activities throughout the Abyei area. The Committee was also informed that UNISFA maintained contractual arrangements with separate entities for camp management works, including environmental projects.

Risk assessment

39. The Advisory Committee was informed upon enquiry that the five major risks of the mission were as follows: (a) the transition from one to multiple troop-contributing countries; (b) the Force's isolation, topographical challenges, non-permissive environment and wet season; (c) the critical lack of spare parts, the lack of managerial capacity and the lack of technical ability to diagnose and identify required spare parts for heavy equipment; (d) the insecure and unsafe storage of ammunition; and (e) the perception by the communities as not being always impartial.

VI. Conclusion

40. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly with regard to the financing of the Force for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 are indicated in section V of the performance report ([A/76/545](#)). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the unencumbered balance of \$596,400 for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, as well as other income/adjustments amounting to \$2,222,700 for the period ended 30 June 2021, be credited to Member States.**

41. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly with regard to the financing of the Force for the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 are indicated in section IV of the proposed budget ([A/76/699](#)). **Taking into account its observations and recommendations above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed resources be reduced by \$711,600, from \$263,374,800 to \$262,663,200. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate the amount of \$262,663,200 for the maintenance of the Force for the 12-month period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.**
