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Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Budget performance for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Appropriation for 2021/22	\$1,036,595,600
Expenditure for 2021/22	\$1,036,279,000
Unencumbered balance for 2021/22	\$316,600
Appropriation for 2022/23	\$1,074,387,700
Projected expenditure for 2022/23 ^a	\$1,074,387,700
Projected underexpenditure for 2022/23	\$0
Proposal submitted by the Secretary-General for 2023/24	\$1,157,676,000
Adjustment recommended by the Advisory Committee for 2023/24	\$2,767,300
Recommendation of the Advisory Committee for 2023/24	\$1,154,908,700

^a Estimates as at 31 March 2023.



I. Introduction

1. During its consideration of the reports on the financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) (A/77/633 and A/77/758 (advance version)), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 13 April 2023. The comments and recommendations of the Committee on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations are contained in its report (A/77/767), 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 2021 to 30 June 2022 can be found in its related report (A/77/802).

II. Budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022

2. By its resolution 75/298, the General Assembly appropriated an amount of \$1,036,595,600 gross (\$1,021,609,400 net) for the maintenance of MINUSCA for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. Expenditure for the period totalled \$1,036,279,000 gross (\$1,020,343,500 net), for a budget implementation rate of 99.9 per cent, the same rate as during the 2020/21 period. The resulting unencumbered balance amounts to \$316,600, in gross terms, of the overall level of resources approved for the financial period.

3. The unencumbered balance of \$316,600 of the overall level of resources approved for 2021/22 reflects the combined effect of: (a) lower-than-budgeted expenditure under military and police personnel (\$40,848,300, or 7.1 per cent) and civilian personnel (\$4,502,100, or 2.0 per cent); and (b) higher-than-budgeted expenditure under operational costs (\$45,033,800, or 18.9 per cent). Summary information on the redeployments (\$45,166,500, or 4.4 per cent) from groups I and II to group III is provided in section III.B of the report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of the Mission for 2021/22 (A/77/633). A detailed analysis of variances is provided in section IV of that report.

4. The Advisory Committee notes that unliquidated obligations amounted to \$207,045,300 as at 30 June 2022, representing an increase of \$21,120,800 (or 11.4 per cent) compared with the amount of \$185,924,500 as at 30 June 2021 (which, in turn, represented an increase of \$26,449,500 (or 16.6 per cent) from the unliquidated obligations of \$159,475,000 as at 30 June 2020). The Committee further notes that the unliquidated obligations of \$207,045,300 as at 30 June 2022 represented 20 per cent of appropriation for the 2021/22 period, compared with the amount of \$159,475,000 (or 17.5 per cent of the appropriation) as at 30 June 2020 for the 2019/2020 period. Moreover, the Committee notes that the unliquidated obligations of \$207,045,300 as at 30 June 2022 comprised the following: (a) military and police personnel (\$117,540,400, or 56.8 per cent); (b) civilian personnel (\$2,223,900, or 1.1 per cent); and (c) operational costs (\$87,281,000, or 42.2 per cent). **The Advisory Committee notes that the level of unliquidated obligations at MINUSCA has continued to increase over the recent financial periods and that the amount obligated for requirements under operational costs represented 42.2 per cent of the total unliquidated obligations as at 30 June 2022 (see para. 6 below).** The Committee further discusses matters related to unliquidated obligations in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/77/767).

Matters pertaining to the report of the Board of Auditors

5. In considering the reports of the Secretary-General on the financing of MINUSCA, 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 2022 ([A/77/5 \(Vol. II\)](#)). In its report, the Board made observations and/or recommendations pertaining to MINUSCA with respect to deficiencies in the management of the billing of cost recovery, extensive year-end purchases or overstocking, and medicines and medical supplies (*ibid.*, paras. 234, 327–330 and 358; see paras. 6, 7, 55, 56, 61 and 63 below). **The Advisory Committee concurs with the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and trusts that the recommendations will be implemented in a timely manner.**

Demand and source planning: extensive year-end purchases and overstocking

6. In reviewing demand and source planning under supply chain management, the Board of Auditors pointed out the need to improve the quality of the data entered into the new digital supply chain planning tool and to define appropriate performance indicators to evaluate and improve the efficiency of the planning process (*ibid.*, paras. 314–326). In this context, the Board observed extensive year-end purchases or overstocking at MINUSCA (*ibid.*, paras. 327–330). The Board reported that, during the financial year 2021/22, while the Mission's procurement volumes (\$224 million) were only 61 per cent of the planned amount (\$368 million), the Mission made massive year-end purchases, deviating from the demand plan and redeploying part of its budget to acquire information technology equipment and vehicles that were already held in excess: 309 purchase orders were approved in the last quarter of the financial year, amounting to \$121 million; and 175 purchase orders were approved in the last month of the financial year, amounting to \$65 million. While it was explained that a total amount of \$36.5 million was spent for the purchase of fuel in the last quarter to address the fuel crisis (see paras. 51–53 below), the review by the Board showed that the inventory list revealed a total holding of 6,225 computing devices as at 30 June 2022, against the projected holding of a total of 4,215 computing devices, i.e. an excess over the projected holding of 2,010. However, on 25 June 2022, the Mission purchased another 900 laptops, 900 docking stations and 500 monitors, for a total cost of \$1.4 million, of which \$0.9 million was redeployed from the aviation budget.

7. The Board of Auditors indicates that large year-end procurement raises questions about whether such spending is necessary or done to utilize unspent budgeted funds at the end of a fiscal year, and that this approach can also increase the risk of a rushed procurement process and, consequently, the purchase of goods at less competitive prices. The Committee recalls that the Board had earlier identified deficiencies in inventory management by MINUSCA (lack of determination of stock levels, lack of declaration of ageing stock as surplus, and new acquisition of items already in stock) in its previous report (see [A/76/760/Add.10](#), para. 5). **The Advisory Committee notes with concern the continued deficiencies in resource planning, including inventory management and the excessive year-end purchases made by MINUSCA for the 2021/22 period, in particular of information technology equipment and vehicles that were already held in excess. The Committee trusts that the Mission will improve its demand and resource planning with a view to achieving an efficient and effective utilization of financial resources.**

III. Information on performance for the current period

8. With respect to current and projected expenditure for the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 March 2023, expenditure amounted to \$943,410,700. At the end of the current financial period, total expenditure was projected at \$1,074,387,700 against the appropriation of the same amount, leaving no underexpenditure.

9. The Advisory Committee was also informed that, as at 31 March 2023, a total of \$8,602,810,000 had been assessed on Member States in respect of MINUSCA since its inception. Payments received as at the same date amounted to \$8,207,547,000, leaving an outstanding balance of \$395,263,000. Also as at that date, the cash available to the Mission amounted to \$180,723,000, which was sufficient to cover the three-month operating reserve of \$158,603,000 (excluding reimbursements to troop- and police-contributing countries). **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, in full, on time and without conditions (resolution 76/274; see also A/76/760/Add.10, para. 7).**

10. The Advisory Committee was further informed that claims for the reimbursement of troop costs had been settled up to 30 September 2022, leaving an outstanding balance of \$61,998,000 as at 31 March 2023. Claims for the reimbursement of contingent-owned equipment had been settled up to 30 September 2022, leaving an outstanding balance of \$48,845,000 as at the same date.

11. With respect to death and disability compensation, as at 31 March 2023, an amount of \$8,840,000 had been paid to settle 218 claims since the inception of the Mission, with 18 claims pending. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the pending claims had been submitted during the period from the third quarter of 2021 to the first quarter of 2023. **The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly expressed its deep concern at the delay in the settlement of claims in respect of death and disability, reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to settle death and disability claims as expeditiously as possible, but no later than three months from the date of submission of a claim, and requested the Secretary-General to provide clear justification when that three-month period was not complied with (resolution 76/274, paras. 37).** The Committee discusses matters related to death and disability compensation in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/77/767).

IV. Proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

A. Mandate and planning assumptions

12. The Mission was established by the Security Council in its resolution 2149 (2014), and its mandate was most recently extended until 15 November 2023 by the Council in its resolution 2659 (2022). The Advisory Committee recalls that, in its resolution 2605 (2021), the Council included reinforced and expanded tasks for the Mission (see A/76/708, para. 5). The planning assumptions and mission support initiatives of the Mission for the 2023/24 period are summarized in section I.B of the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed budget for the Mission for the period (A/77/758).

Electoral support

13. The Advisory Committee recalls that, with support from MINUSCA, the presidential election was held in December 2020 and legislative elections were held in 2021 (see [A/76/760/Add.10](#), para. 10). It is indicated that local elections that were to take place in September 2022 were postponed owing to a lack of financial resources of the national authorities. The National Electoral Authority issued a new electoral calendar on 21 November 2022, in which polls were foreseen to be held in July and October 2023, and the Government of the Central African Republic also committed to increasing funding. Despite the postponement, the Mission continued to provide multifaceted support for the National Electoral Authority ([A/77/758](#), para. 9).

14. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that local elections had not been held in the Central African Republic since 1988. The municipal councils elected in the 1988 elections ended their five-year terms in 1993 and, since then, the municipalities had been governed by Government appointees (special delegations). The 2016 Constitution and the 2019 Political Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic foresaw the organization of local elections to revitalize decentralization in order to foster national reconciliation and sustainable development. The Mission provided logistical, operational and technical support to the elections, including support to national dialogue, legal frameworks, security, mapping, field offices, voter registration, civic education and capacity-building. Furthermore, with respect to the integrated elections security plan and support to the national armed forces and police, the Committee was informed that the plan had been revised based on a lessons-learned exercise undertaken jointly by the Mission and national counterparts and that, on 14 February 2023, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINUSCA had co-signed the plan for the 2023 local elections with the Prime Minister of the Central African Republic and the President of the National Electoral Authority. The support provided by the Mission currently focused on technical assistance to national defence and security forces in operational planning, in addition to providing multifaceted assistance in ensuring adequate security provision for elections (see also para. 40 below).

15. The Advisory Committee was provided, upon request, with information on the resources in support of the elections approved for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23, along with expenditure, as well as resources proposed for 2023/24 (see table below).

(Thousands of United States dollars)

<i>Financial year</i>	<i>Approved resources</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>	<i>Achievements and planned activities</i>
2020/21	17 600	17 000	<p>Presidential elections and two rounds of legislative elections, as well as additional rounds of legislative elections in areas where the polls could not take place due to insecurity, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Technical support to the National Electoral Authority for operational planning and enhancing electoral management capacities; (b) Training of electoral personnel; (c) Countrywide logistical support for voter registration and the polls (transportation of electoral personnel, as well as sensitive and non-sensitive materials); (d) Countrywide outreach and civic education activities
2021/22	15 100	9 500	<p>(a) Additional rounds of legislative elections in areas where the polls could not take place due to insecurity, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Technical support to the National Electoral Authority for operational planning and enhancing electoral management capacities;

<i>Financial year</i>	<i>Approved resources</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>	<i>Achievements and planned activities</i>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) Training of electoral personnel; (iii) Countrywide logistical support for voter registration and the polls (air transportation of electoral personnel, as well as sensitive and non-sensitive materials, to remote areas); (iv) Countrywide outreach and civic education activities;
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (b) Progress towards an updated electoral map for local elections aimed at enhancing the inclusivity of the electoral process, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Technical support to the National Electoral Authority for operational planning; (ii) Technical assistance through the provision of geographical information system (GIS) experts (consultants); (iii) Training of electoral personnel; (iv) Countrywide logistical support (air transportation of electoral personnel to remote areas); (c) Countrywide outreach and civic education for local elections
2022/23	14 200	5 400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) An updated electoral map for local elections aimed at enhancing the inclusivity of the electoral process, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Technical assistance through the provision of GIS experts (consultants); (ii) Countrywide logistical support (air transportation of electoral personnel to remote areas); (b) Technical support for the revision of the electoral legal framework; (c) Technical support (planning) and operational and logistical support (air transportation of electoral personnel to remote areas) for the establishment of local branches of the National Electoral Authority; (d) Countrywide outreach and civic education for local elections; (e) The Mission also foresees providing technical, operational and logistical support to the National Electoral Authority for voter registration. However, this operation is facing delays due to the persistent lack of resources for the local elections
2023/24	11 200	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Technical, logistical and operational support for two rounds of elections, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Technical support to the National Electoral Authority for operational planning and enhancing electoral management capacities; (ii) Training of electoral personnel; (iii) Countrywide logistical support for voter registration and the polls (air transportation of electoral personnel, as well as sensitive and non-sensitive materials, to remote areas); (b) In addition, the Mission will continue to implement countrywide outreach and civic education activities.

B. Resource requirements

16. The proposed budget in the amount of \$1,157,676,000 for the 2023/24 period represents an increase of \$83,288,300, or 7.8 per cent, compared with the resources of \$1,074,387,700 approved for the 2022/23 period (see table below).

Financial resources

Category	Approved (2021/22)	Expenditure (2021/22)	Apportionment (2022/23)	Expenditure as at 31 March 2023	Cost estimates (2023/24)	Variance	
						Amount	Percentage
Military and police personnel	576 938.4	536 090.1	602 014.4	580 207.7	642 887.9	40 873.5	6.8
Civilian personnel	221 795.3	217 293.2	228 597.0	162 514.3	224 096.5	(4 500.5)	(2.0)
Operational costs	237 861.9	282 895.7	243 776.3	200 688.7	290 691.6	46 915.3	19.2
Gross requirements	1 036 595.6	1 036 279.0	1 074 387.7	943 410.7	1 157 676.0	83 288.3	7.8

Note: Detailed information on the financial resources proposed and an analysis of variances are provided in sections II and III of the proposed budget (A/77/758).

1. Military and police personnel

Category	Authorized 2021/22 ^a	Actual as at 30 June 2022	Authorized 2022/23 ^a	Actual as at 31 March 2023	Authorized and proposed 2023/24	Variance
Military observers	169	153	155	137	155	–
Military contingent personnel	14 231	12 017	14 245	13 862	14 245	–
United Nations police officers	600	553	600	563	600	–
Formed police unit personnel	2 420	2076	2 420	2411	2 420	–

^a Represents the highest level of authorized strength.

17. The proposed resources for military and police personnel for 2023/24 amount to \$642,887,900, reflecting an increase of \$40,873,500, or 6.8 per cent, compared with the apportionment for 2022/23. The increased requirements are reflected mainly under military contingents (\$34,388,000, or 7.1 per cent) and formed police units (\$5,722,900, or 7.5 per cent) (see A/77/758, paras. 161–164).

18. The Advisory Committee recalls that the Security Council, in its resolution 2566 (2021), decided to increase the authorized level of the military component of MINUSCA by 2,750 and its police component by 940 (see A/76/760/Add.10, para. 16). Upon enquiry, the Committee received an updated deployment schedule for the 2022/23 period (see table below).

Deployment schedule for the 2022/23 period

Category	Authorized strength	Actual deployment						Projected deployment					
		July 2022	August 2022	September 2022	October 2022	November 2022	December 2022	January 2023	February 2023	March 2023	April 2023	May 2023	June 2023
Military contingents	2 750	1 415	1 417	1 440	1 440	1 797	2 229	2 244	2 324	2 324	2 324	2 324	2 504
United Nations police	200	164	164	164	164	174	179	200	200	200	200	200	200
Formed police units	740	560	560	560	560	560	560	740	740	740	740	740	740
Total	3 690	2 139	2 141	2 164	2 164	2 531	2 968	3 184	3 264	3 264	3 264	3 264	3 444

Rations

19. The proposed budget for 2023/24 includes increased requirements for rations: an increase of \$8,374,900 (or 15.4 per cent) for military contingents and an increase of \$2,687,300 (or 35.5 per cent) for formed police units. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed increases under rations were attributable to the following for military contingents and formed police units, respectively: (a) mobilization costs for the planned establishment of a warehouse under new rations contracts to accommodate higher quantities of food to meet the requirements of the increased number of uniformed personnel (\$5,618,900 and \$1,922,000); (b) a higher individual daily rate ceiling (\$2,171,000 and \$532,300); (c) stock of combat-ready packs (\$71,000 and \$22,000); (d) air delivery to three locations, for which no provision was made for the 2022/23 period (\$229,000 and \$87,000); and (e) warehouse rent for the first five months due to the mobilization of additional facilities to accommodate the increased troop strength (\$710,000 and \$124,000).

Temporary operating bases

20. It is indicated that the Mission will continue the rationalization of its temporary operating bases, in compliance with General Assembly resolution 76/274 (para. 51) and within the overall review of the Mission's footprint (see A/77/758, paras. 30 and 31). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, of a total of 31 temporary operating bases as at 1 July 2022, the Mission had decided to close 14 during the 2022/23 period, upgrade 6 to permanent operating bases and keep 11 as temporary operating bases with improvements primarily in respect of accommodation and sanitary facilities. The goal of the rationalization plan was to operate from the main and permanent operating bases and use temporary bases only as intended in support of specific operations and activities for less than three months, in accordance with the United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual. The Committee was provided with information on total expenditure for the upgrade of the temporary bases in the 2021/22 and 2022/23 periods (see table below). The Committee was informed that no provision was proposed for the improvement of temporary operating bases in the proposed budget for the 2023/24 period.

(United States dollars)

<i>Items</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>		
	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>Total</i>
Engineering supplies	2 085 052	–	2 085 052
Generator and electrical equipment	577 896	–	577 896
Construction materials	2 626 935	370 800	2 997 735
Accommodation equipment	–	978 000	978 000
Acquisition of water treatment equipment	181 979	–	181 979
Field defence	770 329	–	770 329
Labour	–	247 200	247 200
Communications and information technology	914 125	–	914 125
Total	7 156 316	1 596 000	8 752 316

21. The Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposals of the Secretary-General for military and police personnel.

2. Civilian personnel

Category	Approved 2021/22 (1)	Encumbered as at 30 June 2022 (2)	Approved 2022/23 (3)	Encumbered as at 31 March 2023 (4)	Proposed 2023/24 (5)	Variance (6)=(5)-(3)
Posts						
International staff	694	599	730	614	741	11
National staff						
National Professional Officer	107	100	114	105	115	1
National General Service staff	497	476	501	477	509	8
Temporary positions	69	54	32 ^a	23	41	9
United Nations Volunteers						
International	236	236	244	235	252	8
National	45	43	50	49	51	1
Government-provided personnel	108	108	108	104	108	–
Total	1 756	1 616	1 779	1 607	1 817	38

^a Excluding the 10 temporary positions approved on an exceptional basis (see para. 36 below).

22. The proposed resources for civilian personnel for 2023/24 amount to \$224,096,500, reflecting a decrease of \$4,500,500, or 2.0 per cent, compared with the apportionment for 2022/23. It is indicated that the reduced requirements are attributable mainly to the application, for international staff, of a lower common staff costs rate and a higher vacancy rate of 15.3 per cent for 2023/24, compared with the budgeted rate of 13.0 for the 2022/23 period, offset in part by increased requirements for national staff (including the revised salary scale, applied retroactively from April 2021) (see [A/77/758](#), paras. 165–169).

23. A total of 1,817 civilian posts and positions are proposed for 2023/24, which represents a net increase of 38 posts and positions, reflecting 39 establishments and 1 abolishment.

Staffing review

24. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as per General Assembly resolution [76/274](#), MINUSCA was conducting a civilian staffing review, taken in two phases:

(a) Phase one addressed critical safety issues and key deficiencies in the support component of the Mission, among other things, in respect of the additional uniformed personnel authorized by the Security Council in its resolution [2566 \(2021\)](#). The findings of phase one had been included in the budget proposal for the 2023/24 period. Of the 39 posts and positions proposed for establishment, 24 related to aviation, in response to the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS);

(b) Phase two was ongoing and was being undertaken in collaboration with Headquarters. It focused on the current and medium-term operating environments, including by identifying efficiencies within the approved civilian staff capacity and also identifying clearly where staff were required to be reallocated across the Mission areas. It was indicated to the Committee that any requests for additional staff or staffing changes that might arise from the second phase would be presented for consideration in the budget proposal for the 2024/25 period.

25. The Advisory Committee was also informed that, during the period from 2018/19 to 2022/23, the scope of the Mission and the complexity of the situation had increased, although there had been no significant changes to its overall strategic direction. The Security Council, in its resolution [2566 \(2021\)](#), had subsequently authorized an increase in the level of uniformed personnel at MINUSCA. Information on the authorized uniformed personnel and approved support component of the Mission for the period, and the related financial resources, is provided in the table below.

	<i>Period</i>					
	<i>Actual</i>					<i>Proposed</i>
	<i>2018/19</i>	<i>2019/20</i>	<i>2020/21</i>	<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23</i>	<i>2023/24</i>
Authorized uniformed personnel	13 838	13 838	13 838	17 528	17 528	17 528
Approved support personnel	910	924	921	942	959	994
(Thousands of United States dollars)						
Approved budget	930 211.9	910 057.5	937 711.7	1 036 595.6	1 074 387.7	1 157 676.0
Expenditure	900 643.4	895 690.3	936 317.8	1 036 279.0	943 410.7 ^a	–

^a Expenditure as at 31 March 2023.

26. The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly, in its resolution [76/274](#) (para. 28), emphasized the importance of efficient and agile staffing structures to support missions in the delivery of their mandates and to ensure the effectiveness of workforce planning, oversight and accountability, and encouraged the Secretary-General to assure the continuous adaptation and optimization of the structures, including through civilian and security staffing reviews, with United Nations Headquarters participation, at least on a quadrennial basis. **The Advisory Committee expects that, as requested by the Assembly, the staffing review at MINUSCA will reflect efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of its mandate through the adaptation and optimization of its structures, taking into account the increasing number of vacant posts and positions, in particular long-vacant senior posts and positions, including those with incumbents receiving special post allowance (see paras. 43–45 below). The Committee trusts that such efficiencies will be reported in the next budget submission.**

Recommendations on post resources

Establishment

27. It is proposed to establish a total of 39 new posts and positions, comprising 20 posts (1 P-5, 5 P-3, 5 Field Service, 1 National Professional Officer and 8 national General Service) and 19 positions (10 national General Service and 9 United Nations Volunteers (8 international and 1 national)). The proposed 39 new posts and positions (4 under the substantive components and 35 under the support component) are as follows ([A/77/758](#)):

(a) Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General: two positions of Victims' Rights Officer (United Nations Volunteer, one international and one national) (*ibid.*, paras. 51–54 and table 2; see para. 31 below);

(b) Office of the Chief of Staff: one post of Data Analyst (P-3) and one position of Data Analyst (international United Nations Volunteer) (*ibid.*, paras. 57–61 and table 4; see para. 32 below);

(c) Finance and Budget Section: one post of Finance and Budget Officer (P-3) and one post of Senior Finance and Budget Assistant (national General Service) (ibid., paras. 93–102 and table 10; see para. 33 below);

(d) Human Resources Management Section: one post of Human Resources Officer (National Professional Officer) and one post of Human Resources Assistant (national General Service) (ibid., paras. 103–106 and table 11);

(e) Aviation Section: 11 posts and 13 positions (ibid., paras. 107–116 and table 12; see paras. 34–37 below);

(f) Facilities and Engineering Management Section: one position of Electrician (international United Nations Volunteer) (ibid., paras. 117–119 and table 13; see para. 39 below);

(g) Fuel Unit: one post of Fuel Officer (P-3) and one position of Fuel Assistant (international United Nations Volunteer) (ibid., paras. 120–124 and table 14; see para. 39 below);

(h) Rations Unit: one post of Rations Officer (P-3) and one position of Rations Assistant (international United Nations Volunteer) (ibid., paras. 125–129 and table 15);

(i) Movement Control Unit: two posts of Movement Control Assistant (National General Service) (ibid., paras. 130–134 and table 16).

Victims' Rights Officer and work against sexual exploitation and abuse

28. It is proposed to establish two positions of Victims' Rights Officer (United Nations Volunteer, one international and one national) in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to assist the Senior Victims' Rights Officer and ensure adequate coverage of the provision of assistance to victims (ibid., paras. 51–54). It indicated that, since the establishment of the Mission in 2014, there have been 630 identified victims of United Nations personnel who are in need of assistance. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 March 2023, a total of 650 identified victims had been documented and 666 identified alleged perpetrators had been reported (24 civilian and 642 uniformed personnel). There were no reported recent cases as yet in 2023, with three allegations as at 20 March, all involving past incidents reported to have taken place prior to 2019.

29. Information on the Mission's further efforts to prevent and address cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, such as by building on its annual sexual exploitation and abuse risk management framework and the implementation of a strong conduct and discipline programme, is described in paragraph 35 of the budget proposal (A/77/758). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Mission's work against sexual exploitation and abuse had three aspects: prevention; enforcement and the accountability of perpetrators; and assistance to victims. In terms of prevention, the decrease in the number of cases in MINUSCA was the result of a number of factors: the implementation of a revised context-based risk management framework; the strengthening of engagement with the local population and partnership with the relevant government ministry; and the strengthening of the Conduct and Discipline Service through the approval of four new posts and positions for the current 2022/23 period, which supported the Mission's preventive work in additional field locations. Concerning enforcement and accountability, the Committee was informed that, once a troop- and police-contributing country was notified of an allegation, related funds were withheld by the Secretariat pending the completion of an investigation. If the allegations were substantiated, the relevant funds were transferred to the trust fund in support of the victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. MINUSCA had withheld a total of \$817,532 from troop- and police-contributing

countries and personnel as a result of their involvement in allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse. In terms of the provision of support to victims, the Mission referred victims to services according to their needs, such as medical treatment, psychosocial support, protection and/or legal aid. (The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provided services for adults and children, respectively).

30. The Advisory Committee was further informed that, pursuant to the Secretary-General's 2017 strategy to improve the Organization's system-wide approach to preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse ([A/71/818](#)), the Senior Victims' Rights Officer acted as the main focal point for all victims of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by United Nations and related personnel in the Central African Republic. The Senior Victims' Rights Officer had reached out to victims and identified gaps and delays in addressing victims' needs. Three reviews, which were conducted by a multidisciplinary team in the Department of Peace Operations in October 2021 and February and September 2022, had recommended that support for the role of the Senior Victims' Rights Officer be enhanced to ensure that adequate assistance and support were provided to the victims. The reviews had also noted that, due to the significant demands from the large number of victims, the Senior Victims' Rights Officer was unable to fulfil all the assigned responsibilities, including support to all victims during investigations, coordination of assistance and oversight of the implementation of assistance projects. The latter was essential in the context of the Central African Republic, as the capacity of service providers was extremely limited. Currently, in addition to the Senior Victims' Rights Officer at the P-5 level, there was one Junior Professional Officer until 31 October 2023 and one United Nations police Gender Specialist on loan to support the Senior Victims' Rights Officer.

31. The Advisory Committee trusts that the Mission will seek greater collaboration to leverage the resources available among various entities within the Mission, including the Conduct and Discipline Service, OIOS Resident Investigators, Gender Adviser and Gender Affairs Unit, Child Protection Adviser and Child Protection Unit, Civil Affairs Section, Office of the Force Commander, Office of the Police Commissioner and Senior Victims' Rights Officer, as well as within the United Nations country team, to address the needs of victims in a more efficient and holistic manner (see also [A/77/831](#), para. 10). The Committee therefore recommends against the proposed establishment of a position of Victim's Rights Officer (international United Nations Volunteer) (see [A/77/767/Add.11](#), para. 24). The Committee discusses the matters further in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations ([A/77/767](#)).

Data analyst

32. It is proposed to establish one post of Data Analyst (P-3) and one position of Data Analyst (international United Nations Volunteer) in the Office of the Chief of Staff, as there is a lack of dedicated capacity in the Mission for data analysis and information and records management (see [A/77/758](#), paras. 57–61). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the rapid advancement of digital transformation across peacekeeping missions had revealed a skills shortage among Mission personnel, in particular among those in substantive components. Currently, there were no staff members in the Office of the Chief of Staff with the required academic skills and experience to manage the full range of different platforms, solutions and systems. The request was for an overall management function to coordinate the full range of enterprise and operational resources together with the Mission's Field Technology Section and simultaneously to develop and enhance the use of those tools. The Committee notes that the Field Technology Section has a

staffing capacity of 76 posts and positions (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 1 P-2, 44 Field Service, 1 National Professional Officer, 23 national General Service and 2 United Nations Volunteer) (A/77/758, annex II.B). **Taking into account the existing capacity of the Mission's Field Technology Section, the Advisory Committee is of the view that more synergy should be explored within the existing resources of the Mission and therefore recommends against the proposed establishment of the post of Data Analyst (P-3).** The Committee made a related recommendation in its report on the proposed budget for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (see A/77/767/Add.1, para. 19).

Finance and Budget Officer and Assistant

33. The proposed staffing changes include the establishment of one post of Finance and Budget Officer (P-3) and one post of Senior Finance and Budget Assistant (national General Service) in the Finance and Budget Section, as explained in paragraphs 93 to 102 of the proposed budget (see para. 64 below). The Advisory Committee notes that the Finance and Budget Section has an approved staffing of 22 posts and positions (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-2, 11 Field Service, 2 National Professional Officer and 5 General Service staff). **Taking into account the existing capacity of the Finance and Budget Section, the Advisory Committee recommends against the proposed establishment of the post of Finance and Budget Officer (P-3).**

Aviation Section

34. It is proposed to establish 11 posts and 13 positions in the Aviation Section to address serious challenges and high risks to the Mission's air assets and personnel due to the critically understaffed air operations in the Mission, which were observed in an audit conducted by OIOS in 2022 (report 2022/041 of 31 August 2022) (see A/77/758, paras. 107–116). The proposed new posts and positions comprise the following: 1 post of Chief of Section, Air Operations (P-5), 4 posts of Air Operations Officer (1 P-3 and 3 Field Service), 6 posts of Air Operations Assistant (2 Field Service and 4 national General Service) and 13 positions of Air Operations Assistant (10 national General Service and 3 international United Nations Volunteers). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed posts and positions would be based at various locations (see table below).

<i>Functional title</i>	<i>Category/level</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Location</i>
Chief of Section, Air Operations	P-5	1	Bangui
Air Operations Officer	P-3	1	Bangui (Technical Compliance Unit or unmanned aerial vehicle cell)
Air Operations Officer	Field Service	3	1 each in Bouar, Bria and Bangui (managing and coordinating air operations at the three sector headquarters)
Air Operations Assistant	Field Service	2	1 each in Kaga Bandoro and Bangui (quality assurance)
Air Operations Assistant	United Nations Volunteer (international)	3	Bangui (Technical Compliance Unit, Mission Air Operations Centre and Air Terminal Unit)
Air Operations Assistant	National General Service	4	Bangui (Meteorology Unit, Mission Air Operations Centre, Flight-following Unit and Technical Compliance Unit)
Air Operations Assistant	National General Service/general temporary assistance	10	1 each in Paoua, Berberati, Bossangoa, Birao, Bambari, Bangassou, Bria, Kaga Bandoro, Bouar and Bangui (firefighting services)

35. The Advisory Committee was further informed that MINUSCA currently operated 18 aircraft (5 fixed-wing and 13 rotary-wing) from four locations (Bangui and three sector headquarters locations, at Bouar, Bria and Kaga Bandoro). There were 19 regular flying destinations and an additional 20 non-regular flying destinations. In addition, there were four main operating bases with aircraft positioned, with only one or two staff members overseeing those aircraft 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Ten regular destinations were without aviation staff to support daily flight activities and night operations. The compounding annual growth rate for total flight hours accumulated from 2018 to 2023 was 8 per cent, which was due mainly to the progressive increase in the number of uniformed and civilian personnel in MINUSCA. That was primarily the determining factor in proposing the establishment of additional posts and positions for aviation. Moreover, the Committee was informed that the current ratio of aviation staff per air asset was 1.5 at MINUSCA, compared with an average of 4.0 in the other three large peacekeeping missions (see table below). The ratio would be 2.6 with the proposed staffing increase for the 2023/24 period.

Ratio of aviation staff per air asset

<i>Period</i>	<i>United Nations Mission in South Sudan</i>	<i>United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo</i>	<i>United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali</i>	<i>United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic</i>
2022/23	5.7	3.8	2.5	1.5

36. It is indicated in the budget proposal that, based on a preliminary review of aviation staffing in MINUSCA by the Department of Operational Support, the Controller has approved, on an exceptional basis, the establishment of 10 general temporary assistance positions at the national level for the 2022/23 period as an interim measure before a comprehensive staffing review is finalized. The associated costs were accommodated within the approved resources of MINUSCA for the 2022/23 period (A/77/758, para. 111). Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that technical assessments and competency-based interviews had been conducted and selection would be made shortly from successful candidates.

37. While recognizing the critical importance of ensuring aviation safety, the Advisory Committee notes the ongoing second phase of the staffing review and potential efficiencies to be identified (see paras. 24 and 26 above) and recommends against the establishment of one Field Service post and one international United Nations Volunteer position at this stage.

Electrician, Fuel Assistant and nationalization

38. It is proposed to establish one position of Electrician (international United Nations Volunteer) in the Facilities and Engineering Management Section and one position of Fuel Assistant (international United Nations Volunteer) in the Fuel Unit, in addition to one post of Fuel Officer (P-3) (see A/77/758, paras. 117–119 and 120–124). The Advisory Committee recalls that one of the measures undertaken by the Mission to address the deficiencies in fuel management observed by the Board of Auditors and OIOS included the reclassification of the post of Fuel Officer from P-3 to P-4 for the 2021/22 period, which was approved by the General Assembly.

39. The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly has reiterated its request for the Secretary-General to consider options for greater nationalization of functions when formulating budget submissions, commensurate with mission mandates and requirements (resolution 76/274,

para. 34; and resolution 75/306, para. 18). The Committee therefore recommends that the proposed international United Nations Volunteer positions be established as national United Nations Volunteer positions of Electrician and Fuel Assistant.

Abolishment

40. Of the approved staffing of 68 posts and positions of the Electoral Affairs Service for 2022/23, one position of Electoral Officer (P-4) is proposed for abolishment for 2023/24 (A/77/758, paras. 82–84). The Advisory Committee was informed that, depending on the progress made in the local elections during the 2023/24 period (see paras. 13 and 14 above), the Mission envisioned a progressive downscaling of the staffing capacity of the Electoral Affairs Service, including the discontinuation of a number of general temporary assistance positions while retaining a staffing capacity to ensure continued capacity-building of the national electoral management body and support for the National Electoral Authority and the Government in planning the next general elections, in alignment with the electoral support mandate of the Mission.

Vacancy rates

41. In his report on the overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations, the Secretary-General indicates that the Office of Programme Planning, Finance and Budget provided policy guidance to improve the accuracy and consistency of the vacancy factors applied in the proposed budgets for the 2023/24 period and to ensure that proposed vacancy rates were based, as much as possible, on actual rates (A/77/779, para. 254). The table below provides a summary of the vacancy rates for civilian personnel during the 2021/22 and 2022/23 periods, as well as those proposed for the 2023/24 period.

(Percentage)

<i>Category</i>	<i>Budgeted 2021/22</i>	<i>Actual 2021/22</i>	<i>Budgeted 2022/23</i>	<i>Actual as at 31 December 2022</i>	<i>Actual average January– December 2022</i>	<i>Actual as at 31 March 2023</i>	<i>Actual average as at 31 March 2023</i>	<i>Proposed 2023/24^a</i>
Civilian personnel								
International staff	13.0	14.7	13.0	16.8	15.3	16.2	15.9	15.3
National staff								
National Professional Officers	10.5	9.3	11.0	8.8	9.0	7.9	9.6	8.8
National General Service staff	4.0	4.6	5.0	5.6	4.0	4.8	4.4	4.0
United Nations Volunteers								
International	5.0	5.9	7.0	3.7	2.9	3.7	2.9	2.9
National	2.0	2.2	2.0	10.0	8.3	2.0	8.0	8.3
Temporary positions								
International staff	10.0	19.7	15.0	51.6	30.4	25.8	45.2	30.4
National Professional Officers	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
National General Service staff	28.5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Government-provided personnel	3.0	3.7	2.0	–	2.8	3.7	3.7	–

^a The assumptions considered for the vacancy factors for 2023/24 include the actual vacancy rate as at 31 December 2022, or the 12-month average vacancy rate from January to December 2022 (A/77/758, para. 138).

42. The Advisory Committee notes that the vacancy rates proposed for 2023/24 for international staff, National General Service staff and United Nations Volunteers align with the actual average vacancy rates experienced during the period from January to December 2022, while the proposed rates for National Professional Officers and Government-provided personnel align with the actual vacancy rates as at 31 December 2022. **The Advisory Committee acknowledges the policy guidance provided to improve the accuracy and consistency of the vacancy factors applied in the proposed budgets for the 2023/24 period. The Committee is, nonetheless, of the view that efforts should continue to be made to ensure that the proposed vacancy rates are based, as much as possible, on actual rates. Where the proposed rates differ from the actual rates, updated information should be provided to the General Assembly at the time of the consideration of the present report and clear justification should be systematically presented in future proposed budget and related documents, including realistic projected recruitment and potential upcoming vacancies, to the extent possible.** The Committee discusses vacancy rates in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations ([A/77/767](#)).

Vacant posts

43. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 March 2023, a total of 172 posts and positions were vacant, including 9 (3 P-5, 1 P-4, 2 P-3, 1 P-2, 1 Field Service and 1 National Professional Officer) that had been vacant for two years or longer (ranging from 24 to 53 months). The Committee notes that the vacant posts and positions increased from 114 in March 2021 to 147 in February 2022, and further increased to 172 as at 31 March 2023, while the long-vacant ones increased from 14 to 19, and then decreased to 9, for the same periods ([A/76/760/Add.10](#), para. 28). **The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly 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 were filled expeditiously (resolution 76/274, para. 33; and resolution 75/306, para. 17). In the same resolutions, the Assembly further requested the Secretary-General to review the posts that had been vacant for 24 months or longer and to propose in his next budget submission either their retention, with clear justification of need, or their abolishment. The Committee trusts that an update on the recruitment status of all vacant posts and positions will be provided to the Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report and in the next budget submission.**

Special post allowance

44. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, of the 11 staff on temporary assignment in receipt of special post allowance (1 D-2, 2 D-1, 3 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 Field Service), 3 (1 D-2 and 2 D-1) had been receiving it for over two years, with the longest since 1 March 2020 (the incumbent of the post of Principal Electoral Affairs Officer (D-1), with no recruitment action undertaken). **The Advisory Committee trusts that justification for the receipt of special post allowance by senior staff for extended periods, in particular temporary assignments to long-vacant posts and without recruitment activities, will be provided to the Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

45. **The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to include justifications for temporary assignments of staff receiving special post allowances for more than one year, including the length of those assignments and the recruitment status of the related posts, in the context of all future budget proposals. The Committee notes the absence of the**

information requested by the Assembly in the supplementary information package of the budget proposals (see A/77/779, para. 268). The Committee trusts that information on the receipt of special post allowance will be provided in the context of all future budget proposals as requested by the Assembly.

46. Subject to its recommendation in paragraphs 31 to 33, 37 and 39 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposals of the Secretary-General for civilian personnel. Any related operational costs should be adjusted accordingly.

3. Operational costs

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Category	Apportionment (2021/22)	Expenditure (2021/22)	Apportionment (2022/23)	Cost estimates (2023/24)	Variance	
					Amount	Percentage
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)=(4)-(2)	(6)=(5)÷(3)
Operational costs						
Civilian electoral observers	—	—	—	—	—	—
Consultants and consulting services	1 013.2	511.6	971.4	690.1	(281.3)	(29.0)
Official travel	3 103.4	3 396.6	2 948.2	3 440.9	492.7	16.7
Facilities and infrastructure	69 633.2	88 194.8	61 557.2	75 568.2	14 011.0	22.8
Ground transportation	16 106.1	31 245.8	18 684.7	21 673.5	2 988.8	16.0
Air operations	62 592.1	57 368.0	68 206.1	94 238.3	26 032.2	38.2
Marine operations	500.0	1 033.0	500.0	501.0	1.0	0.2
Communications and information technology	40 540.0	41 210.6	40 235.9	39 672.7	(563.2)	(1.4)
Medical	3 801.7	2 044.2	3 067.3	2 785.9	(281.4)	(9.2)
Special equipment	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other supplies, services and equipment	37 572.2	54 914.9	44 605.5	49 121.0	4 515.5	10.1
Quick-impact projects	3 000.0	2 976.2	3 000.0	3 000.0	—	—
Total	237 861.9	282 895.7	243 776.3	290 691.6	46 915.3	19.2

47. The proposed resources for operational costs amount to \$290,691,600 for 2023/24 (an increase of \$46,915,300, or 19.2 per cent), reflecting higher requirements under official travel, facilities and infrastructure, ground transportation, air operations, and other supplies, services and equipment, offset in part by lower requirements under other budget classes (see A/77/746, paras. 177–189).

48. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the increased requirements under operational costs that related to the additional uniformed personnel authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 2566 (2021) included higher requirements for the following:

(a) Higher costs for official travel, primarily for within-mission travel, in connection with ongoing construction projects related to new camps to accommodate the additional uniformed personnel;

(b) A larger number of flight hours for both fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft to accommodate the rotation of the additional uniformed personnel from the field to Bangui, which had resulted in higher costs for the rental and operation of air assets;

(c) Higher medical costs due to the anticipated higher costs for hospital services at level III and IV hospitals in Kampala and Nairobi owing to the deployment of the additional uniformed personnel;

(d) Higher costs for construction, alteration, renovation and major maintenance owing to the planned construction of new camps and accommodations and offices at Sam Ouandja and higher freight costs for the transportation of prefabricated buildings and construction materials in support of the deployment of the additional uniformed personnel;

(e) Higher costs for petrol, oil and lubricants for facilities and infrastructure, ground transportation and air operations owing to the anticipated increased consumption as a result of the deployment of the additional uniformed personnel.

Fuel costs, strategic storage and management

49. A total provision of \$79,867,700 is proposed for 2023/24 (an increase of \$18,215,700, or 29.6 per cent), reflecting increases due to three factors: higher fuel prices (\$9,480,900), higher consumption of fuel (\$4,714,600) and other costs (\$4,020,200, covering oil and lubricants, mobilization fees and operations and maintenance). The total amount is budgeted across three budget classes, with the increases reflected under: (a) facilities and infrastructure (\$8,808,500); (b) ground transportation (\$3,500,300); and (c) air operations (\$5,906,800). The increases in fuel prices budgeted for 2023/24, compared with those for 2022/23, are as follows: (a) diesel fuel, \$1.900 per litre, compared with \$1.649 per litre; (b) petrol fuel, \$1.817 per litre, compared with \$1.768 per litre; and (c) aviation fuel, \$1.724 per litre, compared with \$1.297 per litre.

50. It is indicated in the budget proposal that, following the severe fuel crisis experienced during the first half of 2022, the Mission has identified gaps in the supply chain. It is therefore proposed to upgrade fuel storage capacity in several locations from the current 30 days to 90 days of stock for strategic fuel reserves, and to increase the local fuel reserves at varying levels based on fuel security risks ([A/77/758](#), para. 37). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the increased requirements of \$2,800,000 for mobilization fees reflected the planned expansion of fuel storage capacities in 17 locations to meet 90 days of requirements for strategic and local stock reserves. The expansion of the fuel storage was based on the lessons learned from the 2022 fuel crisis experienced by the Mission. As a landlocked country, the Central African Republic relied on the importation of fuel through neighbouring countries. Even though the Mission had been able to import sufficient stocks by July 2022, the country had experienced a prolonged fuel shortage countrywide between April 2022 and February 2023.

51. The Advisory Committee notes from the budget performance report that there were unforeseen acute fuel shortages and delays in importing larger quantities of fuel by barge due to low river levels during the final quarter of the 2021/22 reporting period and that, owing partly to global supply constraints on fuel and partly to the failure of the newly appointed contractor to ensure the uninterrupted provision of fuel, the Mission experienced an acute fuel shortage during the second half of the 2021/22 period, requiring it to scale down or cancel some planned activities to reduce fuel consumption and guarantee the continued provision of fuel in support of core functions. This situation necessitated an urgent procurement of fuel from various sources in neighbouring countries, some of which had to be airlifted ([A/77/633](#), paras. 20 and 72). Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the fuel contractor assumed the responsibility of transporting the imported fuel products into the main supply hub in the country, where the products were then redistributed into the fuel distribution points in the regions by the contractor via the road network. In the event

of a restriction of movement, the Mission could provide a military escort by road to sustain its operations and, when road transportation was not possible, the Mission might, at the contractor's expense, opt to airlift fuel to the distribution points located in the affected areas to maintain business continuity.

52. Concerning fuel management at MINUSCA, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the Fuel Unit had been established in 2014 with two fuel distribution points in Bangui. Currently, there were 17 fuel distribution points with five major depots at the sector headquarters in Bangui, Kaga Bandoro, Bria and Bouar, in addition to the field office in Bambari. At each of the fuel depots mentioned, the Mission stored strategic fuel reserves and local reserves, which required supervision, including quality control checks, by the Fuel Unit. Further, the number of uniformed personnel had significantly increased since 2014, by 48.3 per cent, to the current level. The Mission had implemented the electronic fuel management system (eFMS-2), which provided real-time information and was managed at the Fuel Unit level in tracking daily refuelling transactions. An upgrade of eFMS-2 to eFMS-3 was expected in the near future, which would provide enhanced fuel usage tracking and fraud prevention (see also [A/76/760/Add.10](#), paras. 35 and 36; and [A/75/822/Add.7](#), paras. 41 and 42).

53. The Advisory Committee was further informed that MINUSCA operated a turnkey fuel contract for the provision of fuel services, which included maintenance and operation. The fuel contract provided for measures related to the contractor's performance, as well as safeguards for the non-fulfilment of contractual obligations.¹ **The Advisory Committee notes the absence of information in the budget performance report on the liabilities of the contractor due to the failure to ensure the uninterrupted provision of fuel (see para. 51 above), as well as actions undertaken by the Mission to pursue compensation from the contractor as stipulated in the fuel contract. The Committee trusts that related information will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.** The Committee discusses fuel costs and management in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations ([A/77/767](#)).

Facilities and infrastructure

54. A provision of \$75,568,200 is proposed for 2023/24, reflecting an increase of \$14,011,000 (or 22.8 per cent), attributable mainly to petrol, oil and lubricants (\$8,808,500, or 27.5 per cent), construction, alteration, renovation and major

¹ The measures are as follows:

(a) The Mission has the right to apply scalable performance credits for the inability of the contractor to attain the agreed minimum acceptable performance levels associated with the services provided by the contractor under the agreement;

(b) In the event of non-performance by the fuel contractor, the contract provides for remediation at the contractor's sole expense. MINUSCA may engage its own personnel and equipment and/or third parties in order to effect a remedy to the underperformance of the contractor, which is required to reimburse the United Nations for the costs incurred in remediation;

(c) MINUSCA has the right to recover actual damages from the contractor upon the contractor's breach of the contract, including failure by the contractor to deliver required quantities of fuel and/or fuel drums, or failure to maintain the minimum strategic and/or local fuel reserve volumes of fuel at any location;

(d) The contractor is required to maintain a valid performance security throughout the contract validity period, which cannot be cancelled until six months after the end of the contract period.

Other safeguards provided for in the contract include termination of the contract and/or withholding of payment in respect of any invoice if, in the opinion of the United Nations, the contractor has not performed its obligations in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement.

maintenance (an increase of \$4,011,400, or 88.4 per cent) and acquisition of generators and electrical equipment (an increase of \$1,344,400, or 47.7 per cent). Other increases include, for example, (a) sanitation and cleaning materials (an increase of \$100,900, or 10.8 per cent), with underexpenditure of \$183,600 (or 23.1 per cent) for the 2021/22 period and expenditure of \$576,400 (or 61.4 per cent), as at 31 March 2023, against the provision of \$938,500 for 2022/23; and (b) acquisition of furniture (\$128,400, or 35.5 per cent) for accommodation and office furniture.

Ground transportation

55. The proposed provision of \$21,673,500 reflects an increase of \$2,988,800 (or 16 per cent), attributable primarily to higher costs for petrol, oil and lubricants. The Committee notes from the information received that, under acquisition of vehicles for the 2021/22 period, the expenditure amounted to \$5,379,500, against the appropriation of \$759,500, representing an increase of \$4,620,000 (or 608.3 per cent) (see [A/77/633](#), para. 90). The Advisory Committee notes from the report of the Board of Auditors that the Mission made massive year-end purchases, deviating from the demand plan and redeploying part of its budget to acquire information technology equipment and vehicles that were already held in excess (see para. 6 above).

56. A provision of \$711,100 is proposed for the acquisition of vehicles for the 2023/24 period, reflecting a decrease of \$12,700 (or 1.8 per cent) compared with the approved resources of \$723,800 for 2022/23. Upon enquiry regarding the vehicle replacement plans for the 2023/24 period, the Committee was informed that the Mission would implement the write-off and replacement of light passenger vehicles in two phases:

(a) The first phase would involve the write-off of 148 light passenger vehicles, with their replacement by 74 minibuses that had been acquired in the 2021/22 and 2022/23 periods (pending arrival in the Mission). That exercise was scheduled to be completed in the first quarter of the 2023/24 period;

(b) The second phase would involve the write-off and corresponding one-to-one replacement of 17 light passenger vehicles that had been included in the proposed budget for the 2023/24 period.

Upon further enquiry, the Committee was informed that the recommendation of the Board related to the higher ratio of light passenger vehicles held by the Mission and that the Mission's plan to address the issue was to replace the excess light vehicles with minibuses. **Taking into account the excessive holdings of light passenger vehicles and the massive year-end purchases of information technology and vehicles that were already held in excess by the Mission (see para. 6 above), the Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of \$355,600, or 50 per cent, to the proposed provision of \$711,100 for the acquisition of vehicles.**

Air operations

57. The proposed provision of \$94,238,300 for 2023/24 represents an increase of \$26,032,200 (or 38.2 per cent), primarily for higher requirements under: (a) services (an increase of \$9,051,900, or 68.6 per cent) due to a new commercial contract for an unmanned aircraft system; (b) rotary-wing aircraft (an increase of \$6,933,800, or 29.8 per cent) owing to the anticipated higher number of flight hours (7,176 hours, compared with 5,966 flight hours approved for the 2022/23 period); (c) fixed-wing aircraft (an increase of \$4,141,600, or 27 per cent) for higher guaranteed flight costs due to the planned addition of one DHC-8 fixed-wing aircraft and one C-130 aircraft on a cost-sharing arrangement, as well as the anticipated higher number of flight hours (5,753 hours, compared with 5,148 flight hours approved for the 2022/23 period); and

(d) petrol, oil and lubricants (an increase of \$5,906,800, or 39.8 per cent) (see paras. 49 and 50 above) (A/77/746, para. 184).

58. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Mission's air assets included in its proposed budget for the 2023/24 period included 7 fixed-wing and 13 rotary-wing aircraft, with the planned changes in the contracts as follows: (a) addition of one DHC-8 fixed-wing aircraft and one C-130 aircraft on a cost-sharing arrangement to ensure the continued availability of aircraft to support all Mission air transportation requirements; and (b) replacement of an AN-74 aircraft with a DHC-8 fixed-wing aircraft owing to the expiration of the contract. Upon further enquiry, the Committee was informed that, for the C-130 aircraft, the planning assumption was to cost-share with the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) on an estimated 30 per cent basis for the 2023/24 period and that the arrangement was planned on an ad hoc basis (as and when needed). **The Advisory Committee is of the view that information on the cost-sharing of aircraft by missions, and related costs and percentages of use by each mission, should be clearly reflected in future budget proposals for all missions involved. The Committee trusts that the related information for MINUSCA and MONUSCO for 2023/24 will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

59. As for the new unmanned aircraft system, upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the new commercial contract was scheduled to be operational from July 2023. The system included enhanced features and capabilities, including tasking lines, range and flight duration, which would significantly improve the coverage of the country and areas of concern. The vertical take-off and landing capability, mobility and flexibility of the new service would remove the need for a landing strip, thereby allowing the Mission to launch from any operating base in the country. Further, an improved imagery system would make it possible to distinguish if an individual was armed (a capability unavailable under the current system provided under a letter of assist), which would enable the Force Commander's decision-making and improve the Mission's ability to protect civilians. The table below provides a comparison between the capabilities of the current and proposed systems.

<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Current system (orbiter)</i>	<i>Proposed system (vertical take-off and landing)</i>
Tasking lines	4	5
Range	100 km/50 km (orbiter 2)	150 km
Flight duration	4 hours	6 hours
Launch/recovery	140'x140' level clearing	Vertical take-off and landing
Camera with capability of distinguishing an armed individual	No	Yes

60. The Advisory Committee was further informed that the budget assumption was that the full services of the new unmanned aerial system would be operational as described in the scope of work throughout the planned deployment period.

Compensation and performance-based payment terms might apply in four cases.² The table below provides data on utilization of the current system for the 2020/21 to 2022/23 periods as at 31 January 2023. **Noting that the utilization rates of the current unmanned aerial system have been between 65 to 83 per cent from the 2020/21 to 2022/23 periods, the Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of \$905,200, or 10 per cent, to the proposed increase of \$9,051,900 for the new unmanned aerial system budgeted under services for air operations.** The Committee further discusses matters under air operations in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations ([A/77/767](#)).

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total availability in hours for the period</i>	<i>Inherent availability in hours</i>	<i>Percentage of inherent availability</i>	<i>Actual hours of operation</i>	<i>Utilization rate (percentage)</i>
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(2)/(1)	(4)	(5)=(4)/(2)
2020/21	8 760	8 250	94	4 586	65
2021/22	8 760	8 188	93	6 790	83
2022/23	5 160	4 828	94	3 978	83

Communications and information technology

61. While the proposed resources of \$39,672,700 for 2023/24 represent an overall decrease of \$563,200 (or 1.4 per cent), there is an increase of \$1,352,700 (or 19.9 per cent) proposed under communications and information technology equipment for the planned acquisition of various items. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed increase included the planned acquisition of computing devices to replace obsolete devices for an amount of \$990,000. The Committee notes from the report of the Board of Auditors that the Mission carried a total of 6,225 computing devices as at 30 June 2022, i.e. an excess above the projected holding by 2,010, and that, in June 2022, the Mission purchased another 900 laptops, 900 docking stations and 500 monitors, with a total cost of \$1.4 million, of which \$0.9 million was redeployed from the aviation budget (see para. 6 above). **Taking into account the excess holding and purchases of computing devices at the Mission, the Advisory Committee recommends against the proposed provision of \$990,000 for the acquisition of computing devices under communications and information technology equipment.**

Medical

62. While the proposed resources for 2023/24 reflect an overall decrease of \$281,400 (or 9.2 per cent) under medical ([A/77/758](#), para. 176), the proposed increase for medical services amounts to \$499,100 (or 154.2 per cent). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the increase was attributable primarily to: (a) the provision of fees to reimburse troop-contributing countries for medical services provided to Mission civilian personnel, for which a provision had not been included in the approved budget for the 2022/23 period (\$350,000); (b) anticipated higher costs for hospital services at level III and IV hospitals in Uganda and Kenya owing to the deployment of the additional uniformed personnel authorized by the Security Council in its resolution [2566 \(2021\)](#) (\$102,000); and (c) an EarthMed

² The cases are as follows: (a) the contractor does not guarantee the reliability terms and conditions, which is set at 95 per cent of the tasked hours; (b) the contractor does not meet the agreed performance indicators concerning the provision of intelligence analysis services (deduction of up to 15 per cent of the annual base cost); (c) the contractor downgrades the service from full to initial operational capability status, which is penalized with a 50 per cent deduction on the monthly fee; and/or (d) application of liquidated damages should the vendor fail to comply with contractual terms during the life of the contract.

annual subscription licence for medical personnel to access the portal for their daily activities (\$47,100).

63. In addition, the Board of Auditors reports that some shortcomings remain in the management of medicines and medical supplies. For instance, at MINUSCA different categories of medicines had expired but were still in stock as of September 2022, for a value amounting to \$73,914. For some categories of medicine, there was no available alternative in the warehouse, as no procurement had been initiated due to the lack of identification and disposal (see para. 5 above).

Other supplies, services and equipment

64. The Advisory Committee discussed the management of individual contractors in its previous report (A/76/760/Add.10, paras. 53 and 54). The proposed provision for individual contractual services for 2023/24 reflects a decrease of \$1,069,000 (or 9.9 per cent), owing to the removal of provisions for administrative and management fees in relation to the management of individual contractors by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) (A/77/758, para. 179). It is indicated that the associated administrative management functions will be managed in-house with the proposed establishment of the four posts contained in paragraphs 99, 102, 105 and 106 of the budget proposal. The Committee notes that the four posts are the following: 1 post of Finance and Budget Officer (P-3), 1 post of Senior Finance and Budget Assistant (national General Service), 1 post of Human Resources Officer (National Professional Officer) and 1 post of Human Resources Assistant (national General Service) (see paras. 27 and 33 above).

65. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that MINUSCA had had contractual arrangements with UNOPS for the 2021/22 and 2022/23 periods, covering the following: services for mine action support; the project for the rehabilitation and development of the Kolongo municipal landfill; the implementation of activities related to community violence reduction; and technical support services for the management of local individual contractors. For the 2022/23 period, a total of 922 individual contractors had been engaged via UNOPS and, for the 2023/24 period, MINUSCA planned to terminate its agreement with UNOPS for the management of local individual contractors and take over those functions internally to address the issue raised by the Board of Auditors that the option of engaging UNOPS to manage individual contractors, instead of self-management by MINUSCA, had increased the cost and the financial burden of the Mission and was therefore not regarded as the best option financially. Accordingly, the budget proposal for the 2023/24 period included the reduction of \$1.1 million as a result of the transfer of the associated functions to the Mission.

V. Other matters

Special Criminal Court

66. The Advisory Committee notes that, in response to its previous request endorsed by the General Assembly (A/76/760/Add.10, para. 42; and resolution 76/282), the budget proposal includes information and two tables relating to financial resources for joint projects with the Special Criminal Court, and expenditure of MINUSCA programmatic funds in support of the Court from its inception (A/77/758, para. 157 (a) and tables). **The Advisory Committee welcomes the inclusion of the information on joint financial support to the Special Criminal Court and trusts that related information will be updated in future budget submissions.**

Cost recovery

67. Concerning non-spendable revenue for return to Member States, the Advisory Committee recalls that the Mission did not project such revenue for 2022/23 (see [A/76/760/Add.10](#), para. 52) and notes that no such projection for 2023/24 is reflected in the information provided to the Committee. The Committee further notes from the information it received, upon enquiry, that, for the 2021/22 period, the total amount of \$2,151,300 under other/miscellaneous revenue reported in the budget performance report includes non-spendable revenue for credit return in peacekeeping cost recovery funds (\$333,600) (see para. 73 below). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide a breakdown of other/miscellaneous revenue, including non-spendable revenue for return to Member States, in all future budget performance reports for peacekeeping operations (see also [A/77/767/Add.7](#), para. 47).** The Committee discusses the matter further in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations ([A/77/767](#)).

Mine action

68. Information on the Mission's programme to mitigate the threat of explosive ordnance, and weapons and ammunition management, is provided in the budget proposal ([A/77/758](#), paras. 150–155). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that there were no conventional demining activities in the Central African Republic, as there were no regular minefields to be cleared. The explosive ordnance threat had first appeared in the country in June 2020 and had since increased steadily. When the explosive ordnance threat had emerged, there had been no suitable national response and the MINUSCA Force's explosive ordnance disposal capacity had been suitable only for self-sustainment. That had led to a change of the Mission's mandate in 2021 to address the explosive threat. In view of Security Council resolution [2605 \(2021\)](#), the Mine Action Service (UNMAS) had been called on to fill the gap in explosive threat management, which was in line with the recommendation of the independent strategic review on the United Nations response to explosive ordnance threats ([S/2021/1042](#)) that UNMAS support to MINUSCA should be enhanced and appropriately resourced to provide additional in-mission search-and-detect and explosive ordnance disposal training to improve force capability. The new role of UNMAS responded to Council resolution [2659 \(2022\)](#) (para. 43). MINUSCA troops had the responsibility to carry out search-and-detect operations to identify explosive ordnance, conduct explosive ordnance disposal and post blast investigations, while UNMAS provided complementary activities to ensure the safety and security of troops and their mobility to operate effectively. Further, in line with Council resolution [2659 \(2022\)](#), UNMAS also provided technical mine action support to the national authorities in the Central African Republic to build and strengthen the country's capacity to manage the growing explosive threat.

69. **The Advisory Committee has expressed the view that every effort should be made to ensure that demining activities are performed in the most efficient and effective ways possible, leveraging all existing capacities, including those in the field, and that the possibility for administrative and other support services, including procurement, to be provided by the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, and the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, and other entities should be explored ([A/77/816](#), paras. 4 and 40).** The Committee has made observations and recommendations in its recent report on the summary of the findings and recommendations of the independent review of the delivery model of the United Nations Mine Action Service ([A/77/816](#)), which is before the General Assembly. The Committee discusses the matters further in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations ([A/77/767](#)).

Environmental activities and efficiency gains

70. It is indicated that MINUSCA will continue to implement its overall environmental strategy, with an amount of \$606,700 projected for efficiency gains (A/77/758, paras. 39 and 136). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, since the Government had embarked on a project to construct a major solar farm in Bangui due to the significant increase in power demand, MINUSCA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy and the electrical power agency (ENERCA), had developed a plan to explore possibilities for connecting to the renewable energy project mainly for its headquarters and locations in Bangui, in an effort to promote reliance on renewable energy and reduce reliance on fossil fuel and carbon emission. **The Advisory Committee recalls General Assembly resolution 76/274 (paras. 83 and 84) and trusts that detailed information on the implementation of energy efficiency projects, including the impact on fuel consumption, estimated costs and efficiency gains, will continue to be provided in future budget proposals.** The Committee discusses related matters in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/77/767).

Efforts to combat misinformation

71. Upon enquiry regarding the Mission's efforts to combat misinformation, the Advisory Committee was informed that MINUSCA was observing a lull in media content hostile to the Mission, but no studies had yet been conducted to explain the trend or to assess the different strategic communication instruments applied, except for a perception survey to gauge how Guira FM was perceived by the population (97 per cent of the population found the programme schedule very satisfactory). However, the decrease in media content hostile to the Mission followed in the wake of a sustained awareness-raising campaign by the Mission's Strategic Communications and Public Information Service on various fronts, including community outreach (public meetings and roadshows) and radio (spots, sketches and outside broadcasts), as well as engagement with the media and a local club of fact-checkers. Further, the Mission recognized the contribution of national institutions and organizations to the decrease in the prevalence of disinformation and misinformation campaigns. It was believed that all parallel efforts combined had yielded the results currently being experienced. The Committee was further informed that Public Information Officers, in all 11 regional offices and Bangui, continued to monitor and implement outreach and media activities to combat disinformation and correct false information about the work of MINUSCA. They also supported media monitoring and fact-checking initiatives. The Committee discusses related matters in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/77/767).

Status of forces agreement

72. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Mission had recorded 40 violations of the status of forces agreement since March 2022. Most of the incidents related to tax privileges and customs duties, the arrest and detention of MINUSCA staff members, obstruction of freedom of movement, and seizures and searches of contingent-owned equipment. The Head of Mission had established transparent communication with national authorities, prioritizing the resolution of incidents on the ground in a constructive manner and conducting regular joint visits in the field. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Mission will continue engaging with the host country to improve the cooperation.**

VI. Conclusion

73. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly with respect to the financing of the Mission for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 are indicated in section V of the performance report (A/77/633). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with a breakdown of the amount of \$2,151,300 under other/miscellaneous revenue, as follows: (a) other revenue, comprising realized foreign exchange gains at year end (\$969,900) and refund of prior-period expenses (\$847,800); and (b) non-spendable revenue for credit return in peacekeeping cost recovery funds (\$333,600) (see para. 67 above). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the unencumbered balance of \$316,600 for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022, as well as other revenue and adjustments amounting to \$9,759,300 from other/miscellaneous revenue (\$2,151,300) and cancellation of prior-period obligations (\$8,001,300), offset by investment loss (\$393,300), for the period ended 30 June 2022, be credited to Member States.**

74. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly with respect to the financing of the Mission for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 are indicated in section IV of the proposed budget (A/77/758). **Taking into account its observations and recommendations above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed resources be reduced by \$2,767,300 from \$1,157,676,000 to \$1,154,908,700. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate the amount of \$1,154,908,700 for the maintenance of the Mission for the 12-month period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.**
