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Chair: Mr. Kridelka (Belgium)
*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Bachar Bong

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/77/L.34)

1. **The Chair** said that the Committee had before it the note by the Secretariat on the status of preparedness of documentation for the Fifth Committee during the second part of the resumed seventy-seventh session (A/C.5/77/L.34), which had been updated a number of times since its issuance. The Bureau had notified Committee members of those updates and would provide information on further updates as they arose, in accordance with established practice.

2. The Committee also had before it the tentative and provisional programme of work for the second part of the resumed session, which had been designed to make the best use of the time allotted. The programme of work would be monitored regularly and adjusted as necessary to reflect the pace of the discussions and the availability of documents.

3. **Mr. Ainomuhisha** (Uganda), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the programme of work for the second part of the resumed session, being dedicated to the consideration of peacekeeping operations-related matters, was of particular interest to the Group. The timely approval of peacekeeping mission budgets was essential, including for missions such as the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Timely action would enable continued mandate implementation and ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers.

4. The Group welcomed the timely issuance of reports for consideration by the Committee, including most of the reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and hoped that the supplementary information usually requested by Member States would be provided early enough to facilitate their consultations. Observing that it had once again been indicated in the tentative programme of work that the resumed part of the session would be concluded at the end of May, and believing that realistic timelines and deadlines should be set for the consideration of reports and agenda items, the Group wished to point out that such a tight deadline had, in the past, proved unrealistic; the Bureau should set a more practical deadline that would also allow the Secretariat and the technical and advisory bodies sufficient time to introduce their reports before the Committee.

5. The Committee should strive to conduct its work within the working hours indicated in the programme of work to avoid lengthy consultations lasting until late

June. It must also take the work-life balance of delegates seriously through proper use of the available time. The Group was ready to engage constructively to ensure the timely conclusion of the session within the allocated time frame.

6. **Mr. Peñalver Portal** (Cuba), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the timely issuance of reports prepared by the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee was crucial for the Fifth Committee to carry out its work effectively. The Group welcomed the continuation of in-person meetings, which remained vital for achieving delicate balances, successful outcomes and meaningful engagement among Member States. It was grateful to the women and men, both civilian and uniformed, who had served in peacekeeping missions and bore the brunt of the daily burden of implementing mandates in accordance with Security Council resolutions, including those who had made the ultimate sacrifice in pursuit of peace.

7. The Group was committed to a thorough consideration of the agenda items allocated to the Committee, including on improving the financial situation of the United Nations, which merited serious attention in order to ensure the smooth functioning of the Secretariat and the effective delivery of mandates. The Group also attached great importance to considering the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of peacekeeping operations, in particular the overview of such operations, cross-cutting issues, the support account for peacekeeping operations and the budgets of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, and the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy. It was essential to conclude deliberations on those multifaceted items on time so that peacekeeping operations had the resources necessary to fulfil their mandates. Moreover, the Group intended to focus its attention on ensuring that the formulation, presentation and approval of peacekeeping budgets was based on their mandates and on the real situation on the ground, rather than being arbitrary, across-the-board, cost-cutting exercises. In addition, the Group would engage with Member States on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, the triennial review of rates and standards for reimbursement for contingent-owned equipment, the delivery model for the Mine Action Service and the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), among other agenda items allocated to the Committee.

8. **Mr. Camelli** (Representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the

Republic of Moldova and Ukraine; the potential candidate country Georgia; and, in addition, Andorra, Monaco and San Marino, said that the European Union wished to pay tribute to the hard work, bravery and commitment of uniformed and civilian United Nations personnel, including those who had sacrificed their lives. Their dedication allowed the Organization to continue to be a beacon of peace. At a time of unprecedented conflict and ever more complex operating environments, the European Union remained a staunch supporter of United Nations peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts and was committed to strengthening peacekeeping in line with the eight priorities of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative. It worked closely with the United Nations and other partners such as the African Union on peace and security issues and welcomed their cooperation in achieving significant progress on financing the Peacebuilding Fund. Given that the General Assembly had given the Committee the mandate to allocate assessed contributions, it was important to conclude debates successfully in order to ensure more predictable and sustainable investment in the Fund.

9. As the second-largest collective contributor to United Nations peacekeeping budgets, the European Union was dedicated to ensuring that peacekeeping operations and their support functions were well financed, sufficiently staffed and adequately equipped to carry out their mandates. The Committee had a responsibility to enable long-term planning, and Member States must provide contributions to all missions in full, on time and without conditions, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The European Union attached great importance to performance and the cost-effective conduct of peacekeeping missions and welcomed the role of the service centres, having observed on the Committee's field trip in February 2023 that the United Nations Global Service Centre was instrumental in achieving cost efficiencies in innovative and demand-driven solutions.

10. The European Union welcomed progress in managing the liquidity situation of peacekeeping operations and the liquidation of closed peacekeeping operations, and looked forward to further progress regarding liquidation mechanisms and automatic disbursements for the four closing missions. It also welcomed the adoption in 2022 of the long-awaited resolution on cross-cutting issues (resolution 76/274), which provided guidance on important administrative and budgetary policy areas that would help the Secretariat to carry out peacekeeping operations and use resources more effectively to support mandate delivery.

It was now the Committee's responsibility to measure progress on important operational issues such as the women and peace and security agenda, the safety and security of peacekeepers, the environmental footprint of missions, gender parity, human rights and the continued fight against sexual exploitation and abuse. The Committee needed to provide further guidance to the Secretariat, including on the delivery model for the Mine Action Service.

11. During the Committee's field trip, several interlocutors had highlighted the importance of risk management, which the Board of Auditors had also emphasized in its recommendations, and it was necessary to follow up on such observations. In addition, the European Union welcomed the possibility of reassessing reimbursement rates for contingent-owned equipment in 2023.

12. Through trial and error, the Committee had identified the most productive path forward. First, policy discussions were more productive if focused on cross-cutting issues and delinked from budget amounts: his delegation would not introduce wording on cross-cutting policy in resolutions on the budgets of individual peacekeeping operations and invited its partners to continue to do the same. Second, it was possible to make informed decisions by conducting thorough mission-by-mission discussions, including assessing all three support functions as an integral part of peacekeeping, in combination with a comprehensive approach in order to conclude discussions and adopt allocations. In addition to upholding timelines and deadlines so that the Secretariat could implement resolutions in time, the Committee needed pragmatism and political will among all delegations in order to adopt adequate and sustainable budgets that ensured effective mandate implementation.

13. **Mr. Novicio** (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), commended peacekeeping personnel for working for peace in affected countries in order to prevent the outbreak of war and help to achieve a transition from conflict to sustainable peace. The Committee's commendable efforts to reach agreement on a resolution on cross-cutting issues at the second part of the resumed seventy-sixth session had been instrumental in providing missions with policy guidance and resources in the context of a changing peacekeeping landscape affected by, among other things, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Such momentum should be maintained so that an equivalent resolution could be adopted again by consensus during the seventy-seventh and subsequent sessions.

14. The States members of ASEAN favoured a focus on a series of issues during the Committee's consultations. First, adequate resourcing for the implementation of peacekeeping mandates, which would involve careful examination of the Secretary-General's original request for resources and of the related recommendations of the Advisory Committee. Then, enhancement of the peace and security agenda, including gender parity and the participation of women in peacekeeping. Next, reimbursements to troop- and police-contributing countries, whose contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security was invaluable. To that end, there should be continued and close consultations between those countries and the Secretary-General, continued progress on the settlement of their outstanding claims in connection with closed peacekeeping missions and work to take stock of progress in the application of the rates of reimbursement to those countries.

15. Next, strengthening transparency, accountability and support for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, reflecting the commitment of the ASEAN member States to a zero-tolerance policy, and their commitment to participating in the activities of relevant groups of friends, including on accountability for crimes against peacekeepers. They would welcome updates on the implementation of the Comprehensive Planning and Performance Assessment System and the increased use of digital technologies in peacekeeping missions, including to improve safety and security. In addition, investment in prevention and peacebuilding, remembering that no consensus had been reached on the financing of those activities since the second part of the resumed seventy-sixth session. The firm view of ASEAN was consensus should be pursued, and that assessed contributions for the Peacebuilding Fund should be based on the peacekeeping scale of assessment, given that the Fund supported initiatives related to the maintenance of international peace and security. Finally, improving the financial situation of the Organization, in connection with which ASEAN looked forward to updates on the use of \$100 million arising from unspent funds from the regular budget for 2021 that were supposed to have been credited to Member States. While the Secretary-General's action on liquidity management was commendable, Member States must continue to fulfil their financial obligations on time, in full and without conditions, as set out in the Charter, in order to ensure implementation of mandates which they themselves had established.

16. **Ms. Luong** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, said that, as the second part of the resumed session focused on peacekeeping

operations, the three delegations wished to pay tribute to the military, police and civilian personnel who served in United Nations peacekeeping operations around the world, demonstrating selflessness in their pursuit of peace and security. Australia, Canada and New Zealand were committed to engaging constructively in the Committee's discussions in order to find consensus on all policy and budgetary issues connected with United Nations peacekeeping.

17. Australia, Canada and New Zealand welcomed the consensus reached during the seventy-sixth session on a resolution on cross-cutting issues, which had highlighted a number of priorities and had provided important policy guidance to the Secretariat and peacekeeping operations. The three delegations were committed to the routine adoption of similar resolutions and welcomed the outcomes of the January 2023 meeting of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment, including 57 issue papers and gender-responsive improvements to the Contingent-Owned Equipment Manual, as well as the consensus reached by the Working Group – following failure to reach consensus in 2020 – on the matter of increasing national cost data.

18. The operating environment for peacekeeping missions continued to become more complex and challenging, owing to greater misinformation and disinformation, multifaceted peace processes and evolving security situations, which increased threats and risks to peacekeepers and the communities that they protected. The ever-changing environment had not only increased the need for United Nations peacekeeping as a critical tool to support peace, but had also placed significant pressure on operations, further compounded by the rising costs of critical resources and supply chain challenges. Australia, Canada and New Zealand would therefore continue to advocate for adequate resources to ensure the full implementation of peacekeeping mandates and the efficient, effective and accountable use of resources.

19. The delegations' priorities for the session included advancing the women and peace and security agenda, recognizing that, despite progress, much still needed to be done to meet gender parity targets, remove barriers and improve conditions for the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping.

20. The three delegations remained concerned at the prevalence of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations and, while commending the work undertaken to date to combat that phenomenon, they urged continued and strengthened efforts to implement the Secretary-General's zero-

tolerance policy in that regard, with a victim-centred approach focused on prevention, accountability and support for victims' rights and in line with the United Nations system model policy on sexual harassment and the work of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment within the Organizations of the United Nations System.

21. Adequate resourcing was required to ensure the effective implementation of mandates, including protecting civilians, preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence and promoting and defending human rights. The safety and security of all peacekeepers must be improved, and they must have the tools and equipment necessary to address threats and deliver their mandates.

22. With regard to the Peacebuilding Fund, the renewed deferral of consideration of investing in prevention and peacebuilding was disappointing, particularly given that investing in peace now would reduce costlier responses to crises and conflicts at a later date and that the Peacebuilding Fund had delivered impressive results thanks to its flexibility and responsiveness. The Fund had served 67 Member States to date and remained entirely dependent on voluntary contributions. It was time for the Committee to conclude its consideration of assessed funding for the Fund.

23. **Mr. Muhith** (Bangladesh) said that the second part of the resumed session was of special importance to his country, which had long been a steadfast supporter of and long-standing contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations. It was currently the leading troop- and police-contributing country, with more than 7,000 peacekeepers serving in 11 missions, and a total of 166 of its peacekeepers had lost their lives in the line of duty.

24. The provision of adequate financing would increase the efficiency of peacekeeping operations and help in the delivery of objectives. That was more critical than ever in the context of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and Ukraine war, which had posed serious threats to international peace and security, including peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. All Member States must pay their assessments in full and on time in order to provide appropriate logistical support for peacekeeping personnel. In addition, the Secretariat must continue to improve budgetary performance and internal control by rigorously enforcing financial discipline, in accordance with the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, while bearing in mind that the budget of each peacekeeping operation must be based on its mandate and on the real situation on the ground.

25. Following the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, everything must be done to maintain the safety and security of peacekeepers while also considering the realignment of peacekeeping mandates with peacebuilding elements in order to reinforce resilience and enhance the capacity of governance institutions in host countries. The full, effective and meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping operations at all levels was also needed, in line with the guidelines set out in Security Council resolution [2538 \(2020\)](#). In its national action plan on women and peace and security, Bangladesh had taken initiatives to enhance the participation of women in peacekeeping operations.

26. In the previous session, the Committee had adopted a resolution on cross-cutting issues and had increased the rate of reimbursement to troop- and police-contributing countries by consensus. All delegations must continue to demonstrate the utmost flexibility and engage constructively to achieve a consensus-based outcome in the second part of the resumed seventy-seventh session.

27. **Mr. Velázquez Castillo** (Mexico) said that his country attached great importance to peacekeeping operations and their contribution to maintaining international peace and security, and was firmly committed to supporting them. Mexico commended the operations' military, police and civilian personnel for their readiness to serve with the United Nations and their steadfast engagement in highly complex situations often characterized by a high risk of prolonged conflict, natural disasters and emerging crises that represented serious threats to international peace and security. Delegations must therefore take a constructive approach to their deliberations and strive to act responsibly in approving a realistic and adequate budget that would enable each peacekeeping operation to meet its specific requirements and achieve its mandate.

28. The budget proposal presented by the Secretary-General represented an increase from the previous period, justified in part by the effects of inflation, rising fuel costs and the replacement of aircraft. As a contributor of financial and human resources to peacekeeping operations, Mexico was of the view that the Committee should approve the resources necessary for the 12 active missions, as well as the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe and the support account for peacekeeping operations, to operate efficiently and achieve their objectives.

29. With regard to transparency and accountability for the resources that Member States entrusted to the Secretary-General, it was essential for the Committee to

assess expenditure during the previous financial year, as well as the nature and relevance of new requirements compared against historical expectations and results. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Board of Auditors and OIOS should guide the Committee's deliberations.

30. The Committee's programme of work included cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping, such as protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, a review of the standard rate of reimbursement for contingent-owned equipment and the delivery model for the Mine Action Service. Although, with regard to the latter, his delegation believed that it was necessary to quickly clear up any doubts and implement the Advisory Committee's recommendations, it hoped that the Fifth Committee would reach general agreement that would provide the guidance necessary for the Secretariat to act.

31. With regard to the Peacebuilding Fund, Mexico remained open to consultations with other delegations in order to align their positions and jointly reach a viable solution that would enable the satisfactory conclusion of such an important agenda item with a view to maintaining and consolidating peace.

32. **Mr. Dai Bing** (China) said that financial resources were the foundation of United Nations governance. The peacekeeping budget was the Organization's largest, and China supported the Committee's efforts to review it in an evidence-based, scientific and prudent manner in order to provide the resources that peacekeeping operations needed to fulfil their mandates. The Secretariat had strengthened budget performance and had improved internal control to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. Given the relatively large increase in the budget proposal for the 2023/24 period, which might add to the financial burden of Member States, it should be reviewed carefully and comprehensively, his delegation supported the role of the Board of Auditors as an external audit body to provide valuable recommendations on improving budget management. China also supported the timely reimbursement of troop- and police-contributing countries.

33. China had supplied more than 50,000 peacekeepers in the past 30 years and had a standby force of 8,000 peacekeepers. It had taken practical action to fulfil its obligations and responsibilities and to maintain international peace and security, including in the current context of rising instability and increased challenges and threats to the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel, which was of serious concern to China as the largest contributor of troops among the permanent members of the Security Council and the

second largest financial contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations. China hoped that the Organization would strictly implement relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and allocate adequate resources to assess and mitigate risks to the safety of peacekeepers in order to achieve further progress in that regard.

34. A decision on investing in intervention and peacebuilding had been deferred three times since deliberations on it had begun in 2022. His delegation attached great importance to peacebuilding, having been actively engaged in discussions on the topic and having proposed a constructive solution that complied with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. The regulations and traditions of financial management within the Organization should be fully respected, and the historical responsibility of developed countries as major donors to the financing of peacebuilding must not be changed. In using assessed contributions for peacebuilding, it was imperative to respect the supervisory right of Member States, a concern shared by many countries that should be taken seriously and addressed prudently.

35. **Mr. Lu** (United States of America), paying tribute to the men and women who served as uniformed or civilian personnel in United Nations operations, said that a special debt of gratitude was owed to those who had given their lives in the cause of peace. Peacekeeping played a vital role in maintaining international peace and security by creating the space and trust necessary to find political solutions and by protecting civilians. The Committee's role was to provide policy guidance and resources to allow peacekeeping missions to efficiently and effectively carry out their mandates. The resolution on cross-cutting issues adopted by the Committee in 2022 – its first in six years – had included important reforms that would improve the living conditions of troops in forward bases, strengthen the meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping missions and improve the measurement of mission performance. In the second part of the resumed seventh-seventh session, the Committee should build upon the previous resolution and address additional priorities in the field and at Headquarters. His delegation encouraged the Committee to discuss all cross-cutting policy issues in the context of a cross-cutting resolution in order to provide the guidance necessary for personnel operating in difficult and dangerous conditions to do their jobs.

36. The United States would carefully examine the Secretary-General's budget request, which was almost \$360 million higher than the level approved for the 2022/23 financial period, and would closely review the assumptions that had informed the proposal, noting that

some of the increase had been driven by inflation and non-discretionary cost increases. His delegation would also review discretionary increases in the budgets of the individual missions to ensure that they accurately reflected the operating environment on the ground. Another area for discussion would be the triennial review of rates and standards for reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment, following the successful outcome of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment negotiations in January, which would improve equipment performance and medical capabilities and address the environmental footprint of missions. Special measures for preventing sexual exploitation and abuse would also be considered during the session, and the United States reaffirmed its commitment to a zero-tolerance policy, a survivor-centred response, accountability (especially for senior management) and prevention measures that addressed the root causes of sexual exploitation and abuse. The Committee must ensure that United Nations missions and offices were free from sexual harassment and that all members of the Organization's diverse community felt safe in their workplaces.

37. **Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom) said that his country was fully committed to the success of the United Nations peacekeeping agenda. It was more important than ever to uphold the values of the Organization and of its Charter in discussions and negotiations during the second part of the resumed session. Peacekeeping operations must receive adequate, cost-effective financing and staffing in support of full mandate delivery, including on fundamental issues such as human rights, gender and climate. Given the increasingly challenging operating environment and the difficult macroeconomic context, the Committee must endeavour to provide the Secretariat with certainty and resourcing for the 2023/24 financial year as soon as possible. His delegation would, as always, analyse the relevant reports and seek to ensure that the Committee's recommendations were evidence-based, data-driven and designed to ensure that mandates could be implemented in a manner consistent with the effective management of resources and budget discipline.

38. The United Kingdom looked forward to building on the success of the resolution on cross-cutting issues adopted in 2022 in order to develop further policy guidance on key issues and to take stock of progress in implementing the resolution. The inclusion of peacebuilding financing on the agenda for the second part of the resumed session was welcome, and the United Kingdom would work to achieve agreement on the issue.

39. It was important to focus on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions and across the United Nations, including by mitigating risks and supporting survivors. Such work was crucial to ensuring that the United Nations maintained trust and integrity within the communities that it served. Furthermore, peacekeeping was the greatest contributor to climate change within the United Nations system, and progress was needed on reducing the climate impact, including through efficient, professional and sustainable supply chain management and climate-efficient local procurement. Finally, in striving for continuous improvements in accountability, the United Kingdom welcomed the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and OIOS and looked forward to engagement on how to implement them.

40. **Mr. Laputin** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation attached particular significance to the administrative, budgetary and cross-cutting aspects of peacekeeping activities, including the effective management of peacekeeping operations, accurate budget planning and the streamlined and accountable use of resources allocated by Member States. The Committee had achieved significant progress with regard to the resolution on cross-cutting issues in 2022, and it would be advisable to continue to pursue a pragmatic approach by focusing on the renewal of provisions agreed upon at the previous session.

41. The Russian Federation was of the view that requests for additional savings should be focused on enhancing effectiveness, efficiency and accountability in peacekeeping operations. It was important to prevent reductions that might undermine the implementation of mandates allocated by the Security Council, and it was necessary to take into account the specificities of each mission when deciding upon appropriations.

42. With regard to the draft resolution on investment in peacekeeping, and as noted in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Peacebuilding Fund in 2022 (A/77/756), while the focus of the Fund's activities was anticipatory in nature, peacekeeping expenditure could be foreseen and planned in advance. In 2022, the Fund had approved the provision of technical assistance for a record \$231.5 million, of which \$28 million was spent on implementing cross-border programmes, \$75.5 million on support for transitional processes and \$86 million on advancing the rights and opportunities of women and young people. According to the report, the Fund would, for the sixth consecutive year, secure significant funds for the advancement of gender parity, which had already surpassed its internal benchmark by 17 per cent, reaching 47 per cent. The Fund should not have any difficulty in forecasting and planning

for expenditure for which assessed contributions were being requested, and the proposals and remarks of every delegation needed to be taken into account when drafting a balanced resolution.

43. It was important to ensure appropriate accountability, oversight and transparency by the Committee, the Advisory Committee and oversight bodies for the approval and disbursement of resources, as well as strict compliance by the Secretariat with budget procedures with regard to the use of assessed contributions from all 193 Member States.

44. **Mr. Yamanaka** (Japan) paid tribute to the dedication of uniformed and civilian personnel in United Nations peacekeeping operations and to their sacrifices in the name of peace, and said that his country remained a strong supporter of those operations, which played an important role in international peace and security. Japan would engage constructively in budget deliberations in order to ensure that missions were adequately funded to fully deliver their mandates. However, such an approach must be accompanied by the effective and efficient use of resources, and Japan would therefore concentrate on accountability, the impact of operations and the performance of each mission.

45. Japan welcomed the adoption in 2022 of the resolution on cross-cutting issues and considered that one of the responsibilities of Member States was to provide guidance to peacekeeping operations on a wide range of administrative and budgetary policies. In the second part of the resumed session, his delegation would engage in all discussions in a positive and constructive way in order to advance discussions on complex agenda items such as the closure of missions, investment in prevention and peacebuilding and reimbursement for contingent-owned equipment.

46. **Mr. Dabutha** (Botswana) said that the second part of the resumed session would provide the General Assembly with the opportunity to carefully consider the peacekeeping budget proposed by the Secretary-General and examine administrative matters and issues relating to the rules and regulations and staffing of peacekeeping missions. Of particular interest to his delegation were cross-cutting issues, including measures to ensure the safety and well-being of peacekeeping personnel and civilians, and procurement matters, including in the context of Assembly resolutions.

47. The increasing number of long-vacant posts remained a critical concern, and it was necessary to understand how that affected the Committee's work. It was also necessary to examine the role of regional and subregional actors in peacekeeping operations, in anticipation of an update on the request by the General

Assembly for the United Nations to deepen its cooperation and coordination with regional and subregional entities. His delegation wished to receive an assessment of the impact of programmatic activities and quick-impact projects on the delivery of mission mandates, two initiatives that had long been hailed in helping to save lives and assist organizations in gaining trust among local populations, thereby supporting efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts. Botswana would welcome further discussions on the initiatives, in addition to exploring opportunities for further expanding the budget for them.

48. **Mr. Yi Minhong** (Republic of Korea) said that his country had been a steadfast supporter of the Organization's role in protecting and promoting global peace and security. Since hosting the United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference in Seoul in December 2021, his Government had stepped up efforts to improve peace operations. During the second part of the resumed session, his delegation would engage constructively in budget deliberations in order to ensure that peace operations were funded in an adequate and sustainable fashion so that they could fulfil their mandates and further strengthen United Nations peace efforts. His delegation would also closely review the budget proposal so as to ensure efficiency and budget accountability in the financing of peacekeeping operations.

49. The Republic of Korea attached great importance to cross-cutting issues related to peace operations, and closely aligned itself with the Action for Peacekeeping and Action for Peacekeeping Plus initiatives, placing particular emphasis on enhancing performance accountability, digital innovation and the women and peace and security agenda, among other priorities. His delegation looked forward to the discussion of administrative and budgetary aspects such as protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, in the hope that the Committee could obtain a tangible outcome and give much-needed guidance to the Secretariat and to missions. As a major voluntary contributor, the Republic of Korea strongly supported peacebuilding efforts and firmly believed that only a sustainable peace continuum could ensure last peace.

50. **Mr. Machado** (Uruguay) said that his Government was convinced of the importance of peacekeeping operations in promoting global peace and security. Historically, Uruguay had been one of the major contributors of peacekeeping contingents, especially in relation to the size of its population, and was committed to providing continued support. Currently, Uruguay had over 1,000 personnel in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the

Congo (MONUSCO) and UNDOF, as well as police personnel and experts in other missions. As a troop- and police-contributing country, Uruguay urged all Member States to ensure adequate financing that would enable peacekeeping operations to receive the resources necessary to achieve their mandates effectively in complex operating contexts. The lack of resources affected not only the missions' mandates but also their capacity to address constant security threats, which could put at risk the physical integrity of one of the most precious assets of the United Nations: its personnel in the field.

51. His delegation was concerned about the increase in operating costs due to external factors, in particular inflationary processes such as rises in fuel prices and rental and operating costs for aircraft. It was the Committee's role to ensure that the approved budgets enabled missions to cover the increases without affecting their capacity to fulfil their mandates.

52. The General Assembly should adopt the recommendations of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment, including the proposed update of reimbursement rates for contingent-owned equipment, which would more accurately reflect the costs associated with such equipment and maintenance, given that such resources are especially critical for developing countries.

53. Owing to the importance of peacebuilding activities, especially in the context of missions in transition, the Committee would once again address the subject of financing the Peacebuilding Fund, as requested by the Secretary-General in March 2022. Uruguay would continue to engage constructively to guarantee that the allocation of resources would enable the Fund to respond appropriately to existing demands. The Committee had before it the delicate task of addressing the issue, given the financial difficulties for some delegations of incorporating additional resources in a context of declining world growth and high inflation. Different responsibilities existed with regard to the international peace and security agenda that should be reflected in calculations used to determine contributions to the Fund. As with special political missions, such contributions should be established according to the scale of assessments for peacekeeping.

54. **The Chair** said he took it that the Committee wished to approve the proposed programme of work on the understanding that adjustments would be made as necessary during the course of the session.

55. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 135: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (*continued*) (A/77/5 (Vol. II), A/77/766 and A/77/802)

56. **Mr. Hu** Xuewen (Chair of the Audit Operations Committee of the Board of Auditors), introducing the financial report and audited financial statements for the 12-month period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 and report of the Board of Auditors on United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/77/5 (Vol. II)), said that the Board had issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statements, which presented fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the United Nations peacekeeping operations as at 30 June 2022, and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

57. Of the 41 pending recommendations from the Board's previous reports, 19 had been implemented, 21 were under implementation and 1 had been overtaken by events. In its current report (A/77/5 (Vol. II)), the Board had made 20 new recommendations: 8 on risk management, 8 on budget and finance, and 4 on supply chain management.

58. The Board had paid particular attention to the audit of United Nations risk management in the area of peacekeeping operations. The Administration had accepted all of the Board's risk management-related recommendations, three of which were particularly critical to ensuring more mature risk management. First, the Board recommended that the Administration provide the appropriate elements to fuel a strategic discussion at the level of the legislative bodies, with a view to building a more consensual, sound and practical basis for risk-taking in peacekeeping operations. Second, the Administration should clarify the roles of the first and second lines of defence in the management of risks, taking concrete steps to increase their empowerment, involvement and accountability. Third, the Administration should conduct a thorough review of all existing accountability requirements, in order to streamline and better articulate risk management with key internal control, strategic programming, budgeting and performance frameworks.

59. With respect to budget and finance, the Board had noted issues related to the implementation of the cross-borrowing mechanism between missions, the accumulated surplus in the peacekeeping cost-recovery fund, a liability related to two peacekeeping missions closed in the 1960s, the reconciliation between general accounting and budgetary accounting based on

statement V of the financial statements, and the valuation of employee benefits liabilities.

60. With respect to supply chain management, the Board had considered the quality of resource and demand planning, and the implementation of the category management initiative launched in 2019.

61. The Board had also made a number of other audit observations, including regarding the need to find a sustainable funding solution for the acquisition of new equipment for the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and to better manage medicines and medical supplies in peacekeeping missions.

62. **Ms. Costa** (Director, Finance Division), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2022 (A/77/766), said that, in section II of the report, additional comments from the Administration beyond those already included in the report of the Board of Auditors (A/77/5 (Vol. II)) were provided in response to the Board's recommendations, where necessary. The Secretary-General took into account in his report (A/77/766) the requests of the General Assembly in its resolution 76/235 B that he ensure the full implementation of the recommendations of the Board and the related recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in a timely manner, and that he indicate an expected time frame for the implementation of the Board's recommendations, including information on the priorities for, status of and offices responsible for their implementation. That information had been provided both for the new recommendations contained in the Board's current report (A/77/5 (Vol. II)) and for outstanding recommendations from previous financial periods. In addition, the Secretary-General took into account in his report (A/77/766) the Assembly's request, also contained in its resolution 76/235 B, that he provide a full explanation for the delays in the implementation of all outstanding recommendations of the Board, the root causes of the recurring issues and the measures to be taken.

63. In its report (A/77/5 (Vol. II)), the Board had paid particular attention to enterprise risk management in peacekeeping operations, noting a number of positive developments. That work had led to six audit findings and eight recommendations, which the Administration had accepted. Nevertheless, as some of the Board's recommendations had resource implications, the allocation of priorities in connection with the related activities would be determined by available resources.

64. Of the 265 recommendations made by the Board over the six previous financial periods up to 30 June 2021, 80 per cent had been implemented and 12 per cent had been overtaken by events. In annex II to its report (A/77/5 (Vol. II)), the Board had provided a summary of the status of implementation of the 41 recommendations issued during the six previous financial periods. Of those, 19 (46 per cent) had been implemented, 21 (51 per cent) were under implementation, and 1 (2 per cent) had been overtaken by events. Of the 21 recommendations under implementation, the Administration had requested the closure of 6. As at February 2023, the remaining 15 recommendations were still under implementation. Detailed information on those 21 recommendations was included in section III of the Secretary-General's report (A/77/766).

65. **Mr. Bachar Bong** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/77/802), said that the Advisory Committee noted the emphasis on risk management in the report of the Board of Auditors (A/77/5 (Vol. II)) and considered that priority should be given to the effective implementation of the existing enterprise risk management policy, which had not yet reached maturity.

66. The Advisory Committee recalled that, pursuant to resolution 66/257, the General Assembly was responsible for determining the risk tolerance of the Organization. The level of risk-taking in peacekeeping operations involved strategic decisions of the governing bodies, including through the definition of the mission mandates and the risk tolerance of the Organization, as well as tactical decisions at the mission level, which depended on changing circumstances, guided by extant doctrine, policies and processes, as currently established.

67. The Advisory Committee concurred with the recommendation of the Board to clarify the roles of the first and second lines of defence in the management of risks and to formalize the participation of the Department of Peace Operations in the second line of defence.

68. With respect to the Board's recommendation to create a chief risk officer function in each peacekeeping mission within existing resources, the Advisory Committee trusted that the responsibilities of the chief risk officers would be clearly defined and delineated and that the risk owners would ensure oversight. The Advisory Committee concurred with the Board's recommendations relating to budget and finance.

69. The Board's annual reports were an essential pillar of the Organization's oversight framework. The

Advisory Committee trusted that the Board would continue to ensure the transparency and accountability of administrative and financial matters in peacekeeping operations.

70. **Mr. Tur de la Concepción** (Cuba), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group recognized the external oversight role of the Board of Auditors and appreciated the high quality of its work, which contributed to ensuring compliance with the Financial Regulations and Rules, the Staff Regulations and Rules and other United Nations policies, thereby improving the management, efficiency and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations.

71. The Group was concerned at the delay in the implementation of some of the recommendations made in the Board's current and previous reports. The rate of implementation of the Board's recommendations had decreased from 60 per cent in 2020/21 to 46 per cent in 2021/22. Nine recommendations had been under implementation for over three years. The Secretariat should intensify its efforts to implement the Board's recommendations in order to enhance transparency, efficiency and the smooth functioning of operations. All entities should implement accepted recommendations as a matter of priority. The Secretary-General should establish robust accountability mechanisms for unjustified delays in implementation and provide a full explanation of the root causes of recurring issues and the measures to be taken.

72. The Group noted that the Board, in its current report (A/77/5 (Vol. II)), had made recommendations that were similar or related to those in previous reports, and had set new goals relating to peacekeeping operations. The Board had also highlighted significant shortcomings, such as deficiencies in the quality check of the data entered into the digital supply chain planning tool and in the key performance indicators for demand planning. The Group looked forward to examining the corrective actions being taken by the Secretariat to address those shortcomings.

73. The Group was concerned that the cash ratio of peacekeeping operations had been only 0.48 in 2022, mainly owing to the non-payment of assessed contributions, and called upon all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions. Greater emphasis should be placed on fraud awareness and prevention in peacekeeping missions. The Group looked forward to receiving more information on that matter during informal consultations.

74. The Group would carefully review the reports and financial statements placed before the Committee, in

order to identify potential concerns or systemic issues; it would build on the findings contained therein in the forthcoming consultations, in particular with respect to risk management and its articulation with the United Nations accountability system and internal control mechanisms, the delegation of authority, the Umoja enterprise resource planning system, the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, information and communications technology, asset management and procurement.

75. The Group requested the Secretariat to explain how the accumulated surplus in the peacekeeping cost-recovery fund had reached \$115 million as at 30 June 2022. While the Group acknowledged the need for a financial buffer, it wondered about the purpose of keeping such a high level of accumulated surplus. The Group also noted that the Board, in its previous report (A/77/5 (Vol. I)), had identified a surplus of over \$400 million dollars in 10RCR, the cost-recovery fund, and wished to understand how such a large surplus had been accumulated.

Agenda item 151: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/C.5/77/29 and A/C.5/77/30)

76. **The Chair** drew the Committee's attention to the note by the Secretary-General on proposed budgetary levels for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 (A/C.5/77/29) and the note by the Secretary-General on approved resources for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 (A/C.5/77/30).

Cross-cutting issues (A/77/278 (Part II), A/77/736, A/77/747, A/77/748, A/77/757, A/77/816, A/77/831 and A/77/832)

77. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the triennial review of the rates and standards for reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment (A/77/757), said that the contingent-owned equipment system had been adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/222 to simplify the mechanism for reimbursement to countries that provided equipment and self-sustainment support services to formed military and police contingents in field missions. The rates of reimbursement and the associated procedures and the standards were reviewed every three years by the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment, which made recommendations to the Assembly. Once approved, the recommendations were reflected in the Contingency-Owned Equipment Manual.

78. A pre-session organizational meeting of the Working Group had been held in November 2022 to elect the Bureau and adopt the agenda. The Working Group had then met in January 2023, with approximately 275 delegates from about 75 countries in attendance to discuss 118 issue papers prepared by Member States and the Secretariat and national cost data submitted by 34 States. The constructive engagement of Member States had resulted in the adoption by consensus of 57 proposals with 62 actionable recommendations.

79. Member States had agreed to increase the wet lease reimbursement rates for major equipment and self-sustainment by 1.57 per cent, resulting in an estimated increase, subject to approval by the General Assembly, of \$13.610 million per annum, based on the budget parameters for contingent-owned equipment for the 2022/23 period. The recommendations – which included the introduction of a new classification methodology for armoured personnel carriers based on capability rather than value; new major equipment such as all-terrain vehicles, police crowd control vehicles, mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles and equipment for temporary deployments; and changes to policies related to reimbursement for, and transportation of, ammunition, in the interests of effective management and to improve safety – would help to achieve the objectives of the Working Group and ensure that peacekeeping operations had the means to fulfil their mandates.

80. **Mr. Saunders** (Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse ([A/77/748](#)), said that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution [71/278](#) and subsequent resolutions, the report provided information on measures taken to strengthen the United Nations system-wide response to sexual exploitation and abuse, including progress in implementing the Secretary-General's four-pronged strategy of prioritizing the rights and dignity of victims, ending impunity through strengthened reporting and investigations, engaging with Member States, civil society and external partners, and improving strategic communications for education and transparency. The report also outlined the Organization's efforts to eradicate sexual exploitation and abuse and prioritize victims' rights and dignity, and identified challenges and areas requiring further attention. A separate document contained statistics and general information on allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving United Nations personnel.

81. Despite clear progress, allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving all categories of United Nations personnel had continued to be reported

in 2022, a consequence of misconduct rooted in the abuse of power, gender inequality, violence, entrenched harmful practices and situations of vulnerability caused by economic and social disparities. The impacts of war, climate shocks and disease on populations in areas in which the United Nations operated heightened the risk of such behaviour, including as a result of close interaction between the Organization's personnel and populations in vulnerable situations. Although the majority of United Nations personnel upheld the Organization's standards, often while working in harsh and dangerous conditions, incidences of misconduct detracted from their efforts. Nonetheless, misconduct should be anticipated, along with the costs of prevention and response, including support to victims.

82. He had been asked by the Secretary-General to intensify system-wide engagement to reinforce the implementation of the strategy for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, in order to provide strategic and operational advice and support, examine how to streamline resources and reduce duplication, and focus on programme delivery at the country level, while continuing to improve transparency and strengthen internal and external partnerships.

83. Although much had been accomplished in recent years, more work was needed in order, for example, to ensure effective delivery of measures at the country level, work coherently and consistently across the United Nations system and with partners, and strengthen interventions aimed at improving transparency, accountability and support to victims. Eliminating sexual misconduct from the Organization was a core responsibility of each entity of the United Nations system and an integral part of its work.

84. **Ms. Cohn** (Director, Mine Action Service), introducing the report of the Secretary-General containing a summary of the findings and recommendations of the independent review of the delivery model of the Mine Action Service ([A/77/747](#)), said that the review had been conducted by an external consulting firm, which had assessed the cost-effectiveness of the current collaboration between the Mine Action Service and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), compared alternative approaches to mandate delivery and recommended the most efficient and cost-effective way to deliver mine action services.

85. The review had highlighted the positive aspects of the current form of collaboration, including the speed, agility and responsiveness of UNOPS in providing expertise, recruiting personnel and procuring specialized services and equipment. Potential areas for

improvement included the UNOPS fee structure, the lack of competition and a lack of Secretariat capacity, resulting in the de facto assumption by UNOPS of core Mine Action Service functions, including those related to programme design and budget development. Three delivery models were analysed: enhanced collaboration between the Mine Action Service and UNOPS; direct delivery by the Secretariat; and a bespoke model with a strengthened Mine Action Service determining the best approach to implement its programmes depending on the context (i.e. by UNOPS, by the Secretariat or with other implementing partners). According to the review, all three delivery models, including the status quo, required the Mine Action Service and the Secretariat to have adequate leadership and expertise in order to fully assume responsibility for programme design, monitoring and reporting functions, so as to achieve maximum cost-effectiveness and efficiency and ensure accountable governance and transparency.

86. The Secretariat agreed with the three recommendations of the review: to provide the Mine Action Service and the Secretariat with adequate resources to carry out programme design, monitoring and reporting functions; to enhance the cost-efficiency, effectiveness and good governance of the current collaboration between the Mine Action Service and UNOPS in order to maintain the delivery of life-saving programmes; and to take a cautious, phased, programme-by-programme approach to identify the appropriate delivery model for each setting and to transition programmes accordingly.

87. The Secretary-General had invited the General Assembly to take note of the report. With feedback from Member States, the Secretariat planned to work within existing resources to implement the recommendations, and any budgetary requirements would be submitted in the context of the proposals for peacekeeping and special political missions.

88. **Mr. Bachar Bong** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the summary of the findings and recommendations of the independent review of the delivery model of the Mine Action Service (A/77/816), said that the Advisory Committee had found that model A (enhanced collaboration) and model B (direct delivery by the Secretariat) were not the most effective options and that the report did not present a clear time-bound plan for model C (bespoke approach). The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that a comprehensive, updated report be submitted at the seventy-ninth session, exploring alternative and/or additional options, including the decentralized performance of demining activities by

missions, such as through military contingents. The updated report should include: the actions and resources required to strengthen the capacity of the Mine Action Service, based on a staffing review and a workload analysis of existing capacities; cost-recovery mechanisms and the possibility for administrative and other support services, including direct procurement, to be provided by, among others, the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi and the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe; a cost-benefit analysis and other details of asset acquisition and management by missions and UNOPS; baseline information, including cost estimates and realistic timelines for implementing the various options; and lessons learned and best practices from other entities in the field. The report should also reflect the strengthening of governance and oversight mechanisms.

89. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/77/831), he said that the Advisory Committee acknowledged ongoing efforts to strengthen the United Nations system-wide response, and encouraged the Secretary-General, in his role as Chair of CEB, to pursue a clearer delineation of roles and promote synergies between entities. The report also contained observations on the overall increased number of allegations, the need for system-wide staff resources dedicated to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, risk management, services for victims, the timely completion of investigations and the implementation of effective accountability measures.

90. Introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the triennial review of the rates and standards for reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment (A/77/832), he said that the Advisory Committee noted the positive outcome of early engagement with Member States, which had contributed to the consensus on reimbursement rates for major equipment and self-sustainment, and recommended the approval of the recommendations of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment in 2023.

91. **Ms. Ndiaye** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), introducing the report of OIOS on its activities on peace operations for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2022 (A/77/278 (Part II)), said that the report contained an overview of OIOS activities pertaining to peace operations, including all peacekeeping, special political and peacebuilding operations and the Headquarters entities that directly supported them, such as the Department of Peace Operations, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and the Department of Operational Support.

92. OIOS had issued a total of 156 oversight reports relating to peace operations in 2022. The 68 internal audit and evaluation reports issued in that year had been published on the OIOS website. They included 312 recommendations, all but two of which had been accepted by programme managers. None of the recommendations had been classified as critical, a designation within the enterprise risk management system referring to recommendations that addressed risks that, because of their potential impact, required the immediate attention of management. A total of 194 recommendations had been closed following implementation. OIOS had also cooperated effectively with management and staff in entities covered by its oversight activities, and had coordinated with the Board of Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit in order to enhance synergies and efficiencies in the discharge of the three bodies' mandates. There had been no inappropriate limitations on the scope of work of OIOS during the reporting period.

93. OIOS aimed to provide recommendations that improved risk management, governance and the operations of entities that implemented and supported peace operations. In its workplan for 2022, the Office had given priority to the following: implementation of the reforms of the management, peace and security and development pillars of the Organization; strengthening of the organizational culture; procurement and supply chain management, including managing the risk of fraud and corruption; management of mission drawdown or transition; and strengthening of the protection against retaliation (whistle-blower) system. It had also focused on strengthening the centralized, business-enabling functions that supported mandate implementation by peace operations (the second line of defence), as well as the cross-cutting programmes and strategies of the Organization.

94. The strengthening of the enterprise risk management, delegation of authority and information management systems of the Secretariat and its entities in recent years had enabled the Internal Audit Division to focus more effectively on areas of higher residual risk and to improve compliance with policies and performance in order to facilitate mandate fulfilment. The Division had reported on results in such areas as lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to strengthen business continuity, procurement and the supply chain, air operations, and conduct and discipline.

95. The Inspection and Evaluation Division had supported results-based management by helping four peacekeeping entities to strengthen their evaluation capacity. It had also evaluated political affairs-related matters in peacekeeping missions, the situation of the

women and peace and security agenda in field-based missions and rule of law programmes in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and MONUSCO, and had conducted a triennial review of the 2019 evaluation of the UNMISS Civil Affairs Division.

96. In 2022, OIOS had issued 87 investigation reports and closure memorandums related to peace operations, of which 30 per cent had addressed allegations of fraud, 26 per cent allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse and 27 per cent personnel-related allegations. The average time taken by the Investigations Division to complete an investigation had been 10.2 months, compared with 12.8 in 2021. The Division had initiated 366 new investigations, an increase of almost 20 per cent compared with 2021.

97. **Mr. Tur de la Concepción** (Cuba), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that peacekeeping missions remained one of the most effective multilateral tools for preventing the outbreak or recurrence of conflict. However, those missions often operated with reduced resources and faced challenges including broad mandates, complex political and security environments and threats to United Nations personnel, while transnational threats continued to jeopardize stability in some host countries. The Group believed that accountability and transparency were of the utmost importance for all of the Organization's activities, requiring ongoing evaluation and improvement.

98. The Group was firmly committed to the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and called for greater efforts to ensure that the Organization did not remain silent or passive in response to reported incidents, and to protect and support victims through a victim-centred approach. It looked forward to examining progress towards adopting a more unified, system-wide approach to the issue, and called on the Secretary-General, as Chair of CEB, to ensure synergy in efforts and a clear delineation of the roles of each entity involved, including the role of the Special Coordinator in the overall sexual exploitation and abuse prevention architecture, in order to avoid the duplication of functions, streamline coordination and harmonize implementation of the strategy. The Group would also examine efforts made to strengthen accountability for sexual exploitation and abuse. In his next report, the Secretary-General should include a comprehensive overview of system-wide resources dedicated to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, in order to optimize administrative and financial arrangements for the continued and coordinated implementation of the strategy. The report should also contain updates on additional challenges, such as agreement on the

exchange of information on allegations within the United Nations system, the development of a system-wide tracking tool to monitor assistance and protections for victims, and a safe environment for reporting cases.

99. With regard to the triennial review of the rates and standards for reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment, the Group noted the key outcomes of the deliberations of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment in 2023 and looked forward to discussing aspects such as the introduction of a new classification methodology for armoured personnel carriers, the inclusion of new major equipment, changes to ammunition policies, the strengthening of environmental management provisions, the expansion of categories of ageing equipment eligible for rotation at the expense of the United Nations, the improvement of deployment timelines, the inclusion of mental health professionals in medical facilities, and updates and changes to the Contingent-Owned Equipment Manual. Further information on the quantitative and qualitative benefits related to the Working Group's recommendations should be included in future reports.

100. Demining activities must be performed in the most efficient and effective ways possible, leveraging existing capacities. In addition to the 2022 review of the disadvantages of the current delivery model of the Mine Action Service, more information was needed on the cost-effectiveness of the current partnership between the Mine Action Service and UNOPS, alternative approaches to mandate delivery, and partnerships with other United Nations entities, international non-governmental organizations or commercial entities, in order to determine the most efficient and cost-effective way to deliver mine action services.

101. Lastly, the Group noted that the number of recommendations relating to peace operations made by OIOS in 2022 that had been closed in the same year was lower than the equivalent figure for 2021.

102. **Mr. Ainomuhisha** (Uganda), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Group was grateful to all uniformed and civilian personnel who had served the United Nations, as well as those at Headquarters supporting the work of peacekeepers in the field, including those who had been killed in the pursuit of global peace and security.

103. The United Nations would support 11 active peacekeeping operations in 2023/24 at a cost of \$6.812 billion, which was \$359.5 million higher than the approved resources for 2022/23 and \$366.8 higher than for 2021/22. The increase was attributable primarily to higher military and police personnel costs

and operational costs, the latter relating mainly to air operations, facilities and infrastructure, information and communications technology and ground transportation, including fuel and inflation. Since 7 of the 11 peacekeeping missions were in Africa, characterized by different operational environments, the Group echoed the call by the General Assembly for greater coordination with regional and subregional organizations in the implementation of mission mandates.

104. The Group attached great importance to the adequate financing of missions, and emphasized that their unique and complex mandates required a mission-by-mission approach in considering resource requirements, which the Group believed was the only logical budgetary practice. Programmatic activities and quick-impact projects also played an important role in supporting the implementation of mandates and in confidence-building, and all planned projects needed to be implemented in a timely, responsible and accountable way. If implemented effectively and impactfully, quick-impact projects could help to counter misinformation and disinformation, which had been encountered by some missions. The Group encouraged the consideration of troop- and police-contributing countries as implementing partners for quick-impact projects, playing an enhanced role in their areas of operation.

105. Human resources being the Organization's most important resource, the Group advocated for a conducive working environment that included decent, adequate and safe accommodation that met United Nations standards for uniformed and civilian personnel serving in peacekeeping operations. Missions should increase their investment in planned, durable construction instead of in prefabricated buildings. With regard to procurement, the Secretary-General should incorporate host country content into procurement for construction projects in all peacekeeping operations, using local materials and contractors, and the Group hoped to receive further information thereon. For the 2023/24 period, the nationalization of 35 posts had been proposed, but efforts should be made to nationalize more posts and finalize recruitment for national posts and positions. A regional approach to recruitment for national posts could be explored if there was insufficient local capacity to fill vacant national posts within host countries.

106. Lastly, the Group welcomed the recommendations of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment following the triennial review of the rates and standards for reimbursement to Member States, and looked forward to discussions on the Mine Action Service, especially in the light of the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

107. **Ms. Schmied** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein, said that peacekeeping operations faced many challenges, in particular in terms of the protection of civilians, the promotion of sustainable peace and the security of personnel. Although, at the seventy-sixth session (see [A/C.5/76/SR.18](#)), the Committee had adopted a resolution aimed at providing important guidance to the Secretary-General on many cross-cutting issues, numerous aspects required further attention.

108. First, the two delegations were deeply concerned about the large number of cases of sexual exploitation and abuse that were reported each year, which indicated that much remained to be done before a lasting change could be achieved in the culture, behaviour and attitudes within the Organization. As highlighted in the Advisory Committee's report, the implementation of the zero-tolerance policy for inaction required all staff to be aware of the applicable standards and prohibitions, as well as a safe environment for reporting cases. The Secretary-General's continued efforts to raise awareness were appreciated. Victims must continue to be at the centre of all efforts to implement the zero-tolerance policy and must receive the support that they required.

109. Second, the delegations welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to improve gender mainstreaming and the full and meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping, as well as the progress achieved in recent years on the representation of women in peacekeeping operations. Nevertheless, long-term efforts were still needed in order to achieve gender equality and ensure that the women and peace and security agenda was implemented in all peacekeeping missions.

110. Lastly, it was important to reduce the environmental footprint of peacekeeping operations, and the delegations welcomed the progress made in that regard in implementing the multi-year environmental strategy. Further work was, however, necessary to ensure that operations were also environmentally sustainable.

111. Stressing the importance of OIOS for the effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations peace operations, the delegations welcomed the findings in the Office's reports on peace operations and encouraged the Secretary-General to implement its recommendations as soon as possible in order to promote accountability.

112. **Mr. Kattanga** (United Republic of Tanzania), said that peacekeeping operations remained one of the most dependable instruments for promoting world peace and security. The Sustainable Development Goals could not be achieved without peace. His country was among the top 10 contributors of troops to United Nations

peacekeeping missions and was prepared to deploy additional troops if requested. The country continued to participate actively in regional peace initiatives, including as a member of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

113. The proposed resource requirements of \$6.812 billion for peacekeeping operations for 2023/24 were slightly higher than the approved resources for 2022/23, and his delegation appreciated the Secretary-General's efforts to ensure that budgeted resources were clearly linked to mandated activities. The United Republic of Tanzania would continue to contribute financially to peacekeeping operations by paying its assessed contributions in full and on time, and urged other Member States to honour their obligations so that the United Nations peacebuilding architecture was predictably resourced with modern equipment and capable peacekeepers to ensure a meaningful and sustained positive impact. Political support and adequate resources were critical for the success of peacekeeping operations, and the Committee should therefore approve the resources in a timely manner.

114. **Ms. Valles** (Philippines) said that her country had been actively involved in United Nations peacekeeping since 1963, having deployed almost 15,000 peacekeepers to 21 peacekeeping operations and special political missions over 60 years. The Philippines had prioritized the safety of peacekeepers against a complex political and security backdrop, sometimes involving transnational crimes that threatened the stability of host countries. United Nations peacekeeping missions should have adequate resources to address peacekeepers' needs and guarantee their safety and security.

115. In addition, the Philippines continued to prioritize the strengthening of accountability and the system-wide zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse in support of victims' rights and dignity. Her country supported the regular review and updating of the Contingent-Owned Equipment Manual with regard to policies and procedures on reimbursement rates for troop- and police-contributing countries in order to sustain and upgrade peacekeeping capabilities in mission areas.

116. Her country was committed to increasing the meaningful participation of women in uniformed roles and supported the call to integrate gender perspectives into all aspects of peacekeeping at all levels of command. It welcomed the contributions of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations in advancing key areas of the women and peace and security agenda by supporting field operations in implementing their mandates. As stated in the OIOS reports, some priorities

of the agenda needed to be better integrated into the results and monitoring framework in order to measure progress and strengthen accountability. More information would be appreciated on the Departments' efforts to enhance coordination, reporting lines, operating modalities and the adequacy of resources for the effective implementation of the agenda.

Agenda item 155: Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus ([A/77/595](#), [A/77/722](#) and [A/77/767/Add.1](#))

Agenda item 159: Financing of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti ([A/77/620](#) and [A/77/775](#))

Agenda item 160: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo ([A/77/589](#), [A/77/723](#), [A/77/734](#) and [A/77/767/Add.4](#))

Agenda item 163: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(a) **United Nations Disengagement Observer Force** ([A/77/594](#), [A/77/725](#), [A/77/754](#) and [A/77/767/Add.2](#))

(b) **United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon** ([A/77/602](#), [A/77/740](#) and [A/77/767/Add.9](#))

Agenda item 165: Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara ([A/77/598](#), [A/77/731](#) and [A/77/767/Add.3](#))

Agenda item 166: Financing of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur ([A/77/638](#) and [A/77/780](#))

117. **Mr. Ramanathan** (Controller), introducing the reports of the Secretary-General on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 ([A/77/595](#)) and on the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 ([A/77/722](#)) for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, said that the proposed budget of \$57.4 million for UNFICYP for the 2023/24 period represented an increase of 6.3 per cent, or \$3.4 million, compared with the approved budget for 2022/23.

118. Introducing the final performance report of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti ([A/77/620](#)), he said that it contained details of assets, of liabilities and of the funds balance as at 30 June 2022 for both MINUJUSTH and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), given that both missions had been financed from the same special account. The Secretary-General proposed that the cash balance of \$7.73 million available in the special account

for MINUSTAH and MINUJUSTH as at 30 June 2022 be credited to Member States.

119. Introducing the reports of the Secretary-General on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 ([A/77/589](#)) and on the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 ([A/77/723](#)) for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, he said that the proposed budget of \$40.7 million for UNMIK for the 2023/24 period represented a reduction of 3 per cent, or \$1.2 million, compared with the approved budget for 2022/23.

120. Introducing the reports of the Secretary-General on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 ([A/77/594](#)), on financing arrangements for the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 ([A/77/754](#)), and on the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 ([A/77/725](#)) for the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), said that additional requirements of \$2.1 million for the 2022/23 period related to substantial changes in cost parameters since the adoption by the General Assembly of its resolution [76/289](#). proposed budget of \$70.9 million for the 2023/24 period represented an increase of 9.8 per cent, or \$6.3 million, compared with the approved budget for 2022/23.

121. Introducing the reports of the Secretary-General on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 ([A/77/602](#)) and on the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 ([A/77/740](#)) for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, he said that the proposed budget of \$551.1 million for UNIFIL for the 2023/24 period represented an increase of 9.6 per cent, or \$48.2 million, compared with the approved budget for 2022/23.

122. Introducing the reports of the Secretary-General on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 ([A/77/598](#)) and on the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 ([A/77/731](#)) for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, he said that the proposed budget of \$65.2 million for MINURSO for the 2023/24 period represented an increase of 7.6 per cent, or \$4.6 million, compared with the approved budget for 2022/23.

123. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 ([A/77/638](#)) for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, he said that UNAMID had incurred expenditure of \$64.9 million in the 2021/22 period, representing a resource utilization rate of 82.3 per cent.

124. **Mr. Bachar Bong** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), speaking on the matter of the related reports of the Advisory Committee ([A/77/767/Add.1](#), [A/77/767/Add.2](#), [A/77/767/Add.3](#), [A/77/767/Add.4](#), [A/77/767/Add.9](#), [A/77/775](#) and [A/77/780](#)), said that the Advisory Committee had provided observations and recommendations regarding posts, including vacancies and vacancy-rate management, in some cases with differences in appreciation, and also observations and recommendations regarding operational resources, including information on some of the significant variances found in areas such as petrol, oil and lubricants. It had also covered other matters, such as environmental initiatives. Mission-specific observations and recommendations could be found in the individual related reports.

125. With regard to the final performance report for MINUJUSTH, the Advisory Committee concurred with the proposal to credit the cash balance of the special account to Member States, keeping in view the provisions of paragraphs 8 and 9 of General Assembly Resolution [72/291](#). With regard to the report on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 of UNAMID, the Advisory Committee had noted the appropriation for the maintenance of the operation during the reporting period and the expenditure incurred, and the substantial outstanding contributions from Member States, amounting to approximately \$132 million. Taking into account the peculiarity of UNAMID and the history of its financial positions, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Assembly take note of the unencumbered balance of \$13 million; take note of other revenue for the period ended 30 June 2022; and defer, until its consideration of the final performance report of the Operation, a decision on the treatment of the total amount of \$54 million representing the unencumbered balance and other revenue.

126. With regard to the proposed budgets for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, the Advisory Committee had noted the increases for UNIFIL, UNDOF, MINURSO, UNFICYP and the reduction for UNMIK, and had recommended reductions totalling \$8.7 million for all of those operations. In the particular case of UNDOF, the Advisory Committee had recommended the appropriation of \$1 million, and the assessment of that amount, in connection with the 2022/23 financial period.

127. **Ms. Ndiaye** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), introducing the report of OIOS on the evaluation of the contribution of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to

the rule of law ([A/77/734](#)), said that, during the period covered by the report, UNMIK had focused on the rule of law needs of the non-majority communities, in particular in northern Kosovo, through coordination and information-sharing efforts among donors, civil society and local rule of law actors. The OIOS evaluation had found that support for judicial integration in northern Kosovo had been effective in helping to reduce the case backlog, thereby improving user satisfaction, and had noted the support given by UNMIK to expanded free legal aid to vulnerable groups, in partnership with local civil society.

128. Despite improvements over the years, the administration of justice in Kosovo continued to require strategic, sustainable and coordinated interventions. However, UNMIK activities addressed short-term operational needs. OIOS had made three important recommendations to UNMIK: to address the overarching needs in a coordinated manner with other influential rule of law actors in Kosovo; to design and implement more strategic interventions, focused on the gaps identified in the sector throughout the territory; and to communicate these activities to the Kosovo authorities and all communities to improve the perceptions about the Mission and build mutual trust among all the actors. As the background to those recommendations, OIOS had also called for an improved performance monitoring and reporting framework.

129. **Mr. Alshahin** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation wished to reiterate that responsibility for the financing of UNDOF must be borne by the aggressor – the occupying Power – in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions. The Disengagement of Forces Agreement and all relevant resolutions stipulating that the occupied Syrian Golan was an integral part of the Syrian Arab Republic must be fully respected; full support and assistance must be provided to UNDOF at all stages of redeployment in the area of separation and along the ceasefire line. The role of UNDOF was to observe the implementation of the Agreement and ensure the full implementation of the mandate established by the Security Council. Continued Israeli attacks against Syria and the area of separation and deep into Syrian territory using false pretexts must be condemned. His delegation periodically provided the Security Council with information regarding those attacks, which showed that Israel did not care about the presence of UNDOF. Those violations must stop, the Israeli authorities must be held accountable, and UNDOF must be adequately financed, to enable it to accomplish its mandate fully.

130. His delegation welcomed the increase in the number of UNDOF personnel and the re-establishment

of position 17 A to enhance the visibility and allow observation of the entirety of the area of separation. Mission personnel must be able to fulfil their tasks from all the positions in the area of operation, in other words, be able to monitor, observe and document repeated Israeli violations and attacks. His delegation also welcomed the implementation of quick-impact projects in the area of separation, and their funding from the UNDOF budget. Given the projects' positive effect, it was important to increase the number of such projects, and the amounts allocated to them. However, that must not be undertaken at the expense of the mandate of UNDOF.

131. It should be noted that, unlike other missions active in the Syrian Arab Republic and the region, UNDOF was focused exclusively on military objectives and monitoring the implementation of the Disengagement of Forces Agreement, and it therefore had no connection to the domestic affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic. His delegation had taken note of the proposal to reassign the national post of associate translator, making it an associate data analyst post. It had also taken note of the proposal to continue one temporary position of military liaison officer in the office of the Head of Mission/Force Commander. It called for an increase in the number of national posts and temporary positions on the Bravo side, as that was where most positions were located.

132. **Ms. Plakalovic** (Serbia) said that Serbia, as a matter of principle, was committed to ensuring consistent respect for Security Council resolution [1244 \(1999\)](#), as a legally binding document providing the basis for a framework ensuring the status-neutrality of the international presence in the province. The presence and activities of UNMIK were of paramount importance for Serbia. Her delegation had been pleased to note, in the report on the proposed budget for UNMIK ([A/77/723](#)), the reference to the Mission's mandate of ensuring conditions for a peaceful and normal life for all inhabitants of Kosovo and Metohija, and of supporting the protection of human rights and the rule of law and the implementation of the Law on the Use of Languages for all communities. Her delegation also welcomed the stated priority of continued contribution to the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina. In that connection, it wished to emphasize that some of the key objectives of UNMIK and resolution [1244 \(1999\)](#) had not been fulfilled. UNMIK must remain engaged in all issues relevant to the consistent implementation of the resolution, with its mandate unchanged in content and scope.

133. Her delegation called for the Organization to adopt a more active approach to the issue of Kosovo and

Metohija. It opposed all attempts to marginalize that matter, particularly in the light of the obvious continuing unstable situation on the ground, with frequent tension and incidents having intensified at the end of 2022 and beginning of 2023. That had made the international presence and the role of UNMIK all the more necessary. Frequent attacks on the property of the Serbian Orthodox Church were unacceptable, and the state of Serbian religious and cultural heritage, including monuments on the UNESCO List of World Heritage in Danger, was particularly worrisome. Recalling once again the failure to achieve the key objectives for which UNMIK had been established, her delegation wished to highlight the question of the return of more than 200,000 internally displaced persons. Continued incidents and attacks targeting Serbs and their property, as well as religious and cultural heritage, had resulted in less than 2 per cent of internally displaced persons achieving a sustainable return, indicating a need for UNMIK to devote additional attention and engagement to that issue.

134. With regard to the proposed confidence-building projects, her delegation had noted that there was no detailed overview and no essential description of the planned activities. Aware that UNMIK had limited funds for individual projects, and given that the Serbian community faced numerous problems and obstacles of predominantly systemic and institutional nature, it would be beneficial for UNMIK to consult that community when selecting concrete projects. It was regrettable that the budget proposal failed to mention the unsolved issue of property rights of displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija; that matter should have received due attention during budget planning. Provision should be made for adequate resources in that connection, either through projects or by establishing a post that would deal with raising awareness and advocating for the resolution of the question of the rights of displaced persons, often grossly violated through the action of the so-called Kosovo institutions. Serbia would continue to call if not for an increase in, then at least for the maintenance of, the present level of the budget. The risk of worsening the situation on the ground should not be forgotten, as the long-term consequences could be serious. Her delegation continued to highlight the importance of providing adequate personnel and financing for UNMIK, which must have the financial and human resources to effectively and proactively contribute to the stabilization of conditions in Kosovo and Metohija within the framework of its mandate. The reports of Secretary General and of the Advisory Committee ([A/77/723](#) and [A/77/767/Add.4](#)) provided a solid basis for the Committee's informal consultations. Her delegation stood ready to actively engage in

consideration of the issue, in order to make sure that the proposed funds were sufficient for the successful operation of the Mission. It welcomed the proposal of the Secretary-General to provide increased sums for programmatic activities and confidence-building projects, viewing that action as proof that those lines of action had proved useful and had enabled the Mission to make a more proactive contribution to improvements in specific fields covered by its mandate. The full implementation of those projects was important to achieving concrete results in terms of trust-building, the safe return of internally displaced persons and the improvement of human rights and the rule of law.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.