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Agenda items 139 and 98

Proposed programme budget for 2025

General and complete disarmament

Nuclear war effects and scientific research

Programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.1/79/L.39](#)

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

I. Introduction

1. At its 28th meeting, on 1 November 2024, the First Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.1/79/L.39](#) by a recorded vote of 144 to 3, with 30 abstentions. A statement of the programme budget implications of the draft resolution was before the Committee ([A/C.1/79/L.84](#)).

II. Mandate contained in the draft resolution

2. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 2, 3, 6, 12 and 13 of draft resolution [A/C.1/79/L.39](#), the General Assembly would:

(a) Decide to establish an independent Scientific Panel on the Effects of Nuclear War, consisting of 21 members, participating in their personal capacity, to be appointed by the Secretary-General on the basis of a public call for candidates, with a Chair selected from among this group, and encourages nominations from Member States, scientific and academic institutions, and from qualified individuals with specific expertise related to the work of the Panel;

(b) Also decide that the Panel should be tasked with examining the physical effects and societal consequences of a nuclear war on a local, regional and planetary scale, including, inter alia, the climatic, environmental and radiological effects, and their impacts on public health, global socioeconomic systems, agriculture and ecosystems, in the days, weeks and decades following a nuclear war, and that it should review and commission relevant studies, including modelling where appropriate, and



publish a comprehensive report, make key conclusions and identify areas requiring future research;

(c) Call upon the Panel to consult with the widest range of scientists and experts, and for the Secretary-General to facilitate those consultations, including through the provision, as required, of virtual meeting spaces, webcast and meeting room facilities at United Nations premises, for up to 10 days in 2025, and a further 10 days in 2026, and encourage these experts to contribute presentations, written reports and published material to assist the Panel in its work;

(d) Request the Chair of the Panel to brief the General Assembly at its eightieth and eighty-first sessions on progress in the work of the Panel;

(e) Decide to consider the final report of the Panel on nuclear war effects at its eighty-second session, in 2027.

III. Relationship between the mandate contained in the draft resolution and the proposed programme budget for 2025

3. The mandate contained in draft resolution [A/C.1/79/L.39](#) requires additional deliverables and activities under the following programme plans of the proposed programme budget for 2025:

- (a) Programme 3, Disarmament ([A/79/6 \(Sect. 4\)](#));
- (b) Programme 24, Global communications ([A/79/6 \(Sect. 28\)](#));
- (c) Programme 25, Management and support services ([A/79/6 \(Sect. 29C\)](#)).

IV. Deliverables and activities required to implement the mandate contained in the draft resolution

4. Pursuant to the mandate contained in paragraphs 2, 3, 6, 12 and 13 of the draft resolution, it is envisaged that an independent Scientific Panel on the Effects of Nuclear War, consisting of 21 members, participating in their personal capacity, to be appointed by the Secretary-General on the basis of a public call for candidates, would be established to examine the physical effects and societal consequences of a nuclear war on a local, regional and planetary scale, including, inter alia, the climatic, environmental and radiological effects, and their impacts on public health, global socioeconomic systems, agriculture and ecosystems, in the days, weeks and decades following a nuclear war, to review and commission relevant studies, including modelling where appropriate, and to publish a comprehensive report, make key conclusions and identify areas requiring future research. It is further envisaged that the Panel would consult with the widest range of scientists and experts and that the Secretary-General would facilitate those consultations, including through the provision, as required, of virtual meeting spaces, webcast and meeting room facilities at United Nations premises, for up to 10 days in 2025, and a further 10 days in 2026. It is also envisaged that the Chair of the Panel would brief the General Assembly at its eightieth and eighty-first sessions on progress in the work of the Panel and that the General Assembly would consider the final report of the Panel on nuclear war effects at its eighty-second session, in 2027.

5. For the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the implementation of the mandate would constitute an addition to the documentation workload of the Department of one pre-session document with an estimated word count of 15,000 words in 2026 and one pre-session document with an estimated word count of 40,000 words in 2027, to be issued in all six official languages.

6. For the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the implementation of the mandate would require provision for the travel costs of the selected Chair of the Panel to attend 10 days of consultations in New York in 2025 and a further 10 days in 2026.
7. For the Department of Global Communications, the implementation of the mandate would require webcasting services for 20 meetings over 10 days in 2025 and for 20 meetings over 10 days in 2026.
8. For the Office of Information and Communications Technology, the implementation of the mandate would require videoconference services, without interpretation, for 20 meetings over 10 days in 2025 and for 20 meetings over 10 days in 2026.
9. In accordance with established practice, the date of the meetings would be determined in consultation with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management.
10. With regard to virtual meeting spaces referenced in operative paragraph 6, it should be noted that the Secretariat does not have a mandate to service virtual meetings with remote simultaneous interpretation. Furthermore, there is currently no definition of a virtual or hybrid meeting and what would be required to service those meetings. The United Nations videoconferencing platform, Unite VC, is principally used to provide connections from United Nations country offices and offices away from Headquarters to various intergovernmental bodies to facilitate the participation of United Nations officials and Member States invited to speak at a meeting. In implementing the mandate, the Secretariat would need to assess the viability of expanding a connection to anywhere in the world, as some of the same practical, legal and technological challenges that were identified during the provision of virtual or hybrid modalities for business continuity at the onset of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic exist for the United Nations videoconferencing system.
11. Specifically, it may be recalled that, by endorsing the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its first report on the proposed programme budget for 2023 ([A/77/7](#)), the General Assembly, through its resolution [77/262](#), decided that the provision of hybrid and virtual meetings beyond business continuity required a mandate from the General Assembly, along with approved legal parameters and technical requirements. By that same resolution, the Assembly furthermore decided that the Committee on Conferences could review the necessary requirements for the provision of hybrid and virtual meetings, on the basis of a rigorous assessment by the Secretariat, for the consideration of the Assembly. Pursuant to the aforementioned resolution, in his report on the pattern of conferences ([A/78/96](#)), the Secretary-General highlighted the requirements and challenges that require clarification based on the experiences gathered during business continuity.

V. Budgetary implications

A. Conference-servicing requirements

12. Details of the additional conference-servicing requirements are provided in table 1.

Table 1
Additional resource requirements for conference services
 (United States dollars)

<i>Budget section</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>2026</i>	<i>2027</i>
Section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management			
Other staff costs			
Documentation	–	43 200	115 100
Section 28, Global communications			
Contractual services			
Webcasting	5 900	5 900	–
Section 29C, Office of Information and Communications Technology			
Contractual services			
Videoconference services	46 000	46 000	–
Total	51 900	95 100	115 100

B. Non-conference-servicing requirements

13. Details of the additional non-conference-servicing requirements are provided in table 2.

Table 2
Additional resource requirements for non-conference services
 (United States dollars)

<i>Budget section</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>2026</i>
Section 4, Disarmament		
Experts	9 500	9 500
Total	9 500	9 500

14. The requirements for 2026 and subsequent years would be reflected under the following sections of the proposed programme budget for the respective years:

- (a) Section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management;
- (b) Section 4, Disarmament;
- (c) Section 28, Global communications;
- (d) Section 29C, Office of Information and Communications Technology;
- (e) Section 36, Staff assessment.

VI. Summary of resource requirements

15. The budgetary implications for 2025 amount to \$61,400 as shown in table 3.

Table 3
Additional resource requirements (before recosting)
 (United States dollars)

<i>Budget section</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>2026</i>	<i>2027</i>
Section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management	–	43 200	115 100
Section 4, Disarmament	9 500	9 500	–
Section 28, Global communications	5 900	5 900	–
Section 29C, Office of Information and Communications Technology	46 000	46 000	–
Section 36, Staff assessment	–	5 200	13 800
Total, including staff assessment	61 400	109 800	128 900

VII. Potential for absorption during 2025

16. No provision has been made in the proposed programme budget for 2025 for the implementation of the mandate contained in the draft resolution. At this stage, it is not possible to identify activities within the relevant sections of the proposed programme budget for 2025 that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during 2025. It is therefore necessary that the additional resources be provided through an additional appropriation for 2025.

VIII. Conclusion and action requested of the General Assembly

17. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution [A/C.1/79/L.39](#), additional resource requirements in the amount of \$61,400 would arise under the following sections of the proposed programme budget for 2025:

- (a) Section 4, Disarmament (\$9,500);
- (b) Section 28, Global communications (\$5,900);
- (c) Section 29C, Office of Information and Communications Technology (\$46,000).

18. The total amount of \$61,400 would require an additional appropriation for 2025 to be approved by the General Assembly and, as such, would represent a potential charge against the contingency fund.