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Agenda item 139

### Proposed programme budget for 2025

## **Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session**

### **Twenty-eighth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for 2025**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the revised estimates resulting from resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session ([A/79/554](#)). During its consideration of the report, the Committee received additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses on 22 November 2024.

2. In his report, the Secretary-General proposes, for 2025, requirements arising from resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session, held from 5 September 2023 to 10 September 2024, for which no provisions have been made in the proposed programme budget for 2025. The budgetary impact, excluding staff assessment, for 2025 relating to the five Assembly resolutions and two decisions is in the amount of \$4,454,700, as follows: resolution [78/282](#): \$389,400; resolution [78/317](#): \$934,100; resolution [78/318](#): \$884,000; resolution [78/322](#): \$209,400; resolution [78/330](#): \$60,000; decision 78/558: \$43,200; and decision 78/560: \$1,934,600.

#### **II. General considerations**

3. The Advisory Committee was provided, upon request, with information relating to assessments undertaken to identify activities within the proposed programme budget for 2025 that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during 2025 and the actions taken to absorb additional costs arising from General Assembly resolutions and decisions within offices and departments. The Committee was also



provided with information relating to 2024 expenditure against approved budgets and allotments by post and non-post requirements for the following offices and departments: Department of Economic and Social Affairs; Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States; Office of Legal Affairs; Department of Global Communications; Department of Operational Support; and Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. The Committee notes that it was informed that due to the liquidity situation only partial allotments were issued and that the entities need to accordingly manage the resources based on the partial allotments.

4. The Advisory Committee recalls that it was informed in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2024 that the Secretariat did not have a mechanism in place to separately track expenditure related to the funding approved under the revised estimates reports and that related to the funding approved under the proposed programme budget. The Committee considered that there was a need to account for all funds provided by Member States in a detailed and transparent manner ([A/78/7](#), para. VI.4), which had been endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution [78/252](#). The Committee recalls that it was informed again in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2025 that the Secretariat did not have a mechanism in place for comprehensive tracking of the human resources and expenditure related to individual mandates ([A/79/7](#), para. VI.11).

5. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its concern that the Secretariat has not established a system to track expenditures related to the mandates proposed in the revised estimates reports and the proposed programme budget, without which resource utilization and efficiencies cannot be monitored (see also [A/79/7](#), para. VI.11). The Committee emphasizes the importance of transparency and accountability in the utilization of Member States' resources, and recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to establish a system to track expenditure by mandate and include the related information on the use of resources in the next performance report.** The Advisory Committee will further discuss the issue of performance tracking in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2026.

6. **As regards existing departmental capacity, workload and functions of posts and positions with regard to ongoing mandates, the Advisory Committee stresses that such information should be provided as a matter of course in the context of requirements arising from resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and relating to new and modified mandates. The Committee reiterates its view that, in line with Assembly resolution [78/252](#), full, effective and efficient mandate delivery must always be the overriding factor in determining the Secretariat's resource requirements commensurate with it and its overall staffing structure, while identifying efficiencies and avoiding duplication of efforts, including through improved coordination and cooperation among departments and entities ([A/79/7](#), para. 16; see also [A/78/7](#), paras. 18 and 19).**

7. As regards requirements related to documentation and translation, the Advisory Committee recalls that it was provided with information regarding the use of computer-assisted translation and machine translation in speeding up the translation process and helping the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to cope with workload and deadlines ([A/78/7](#), para. I.113). The Committee was also informed that machine translation systems have helped to improve translation and other documentation services, as evidenced by the independent evaluation of eLUNa, where the potential for progression remains high and much better results could be obtained, indicating that translation services could work even more efficiently, for example by utilizing to a higher degree the capability of eLUNa to recycle documents by implementing, between 2023 and 2026, a reprise

methodology and applying a higher level of reprise discount for heavily recycled cyclical documents, leading to increased efficiencies (A/79/7, para. I.66). **The Advisory Committee recalls the related information provided to it by the Secretariat in connection with the proposed programme budget for 2024 (A/78/7, paras. I.98–I.100), in particular with regard to the new reprise methodology, or the use of recycled text, to be implemented over three years, until mid-2026, which is expected to result in savings over time (A/79/7, para. I.67).**

8. The Advisory Committee further recalls that the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management maintains a combined global documentation processing capacity, although the Committee was informed that such capacity was substantially lower than its annual workload and not suitable for being considered as a source of absorption capacity for new mandates, given the unpredictability of their volume, scope and timing (A/77/7/Add.28, para. 5). **The Advisory Committee reiterates its view that the Secretariat should make further efforts to optimize the use of the combined global documentation process capacity, so as to increase absorptive capacity, whenever feasible (A/78/7/Add.27, para. 7).**

### III. Resource requirements

#### **General Assembly resolution 78/282: International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica**

9. In its resolution 78/282, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish an outreach programme entitled “The Srebrenica Genocide and the United Nations”, starting its activities with preparations for the thirtieth anniversary in 2025, and also requested the Secretary-General to bring resolution 78/282 to the attention of all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and civil society organizations for appropriate observance (A/79/554, para. 2 (a)).

10. The estimated resource requirements for 2025 relating to the resolution, for which no provisions had been made in the proposed programme budget for 2025, total \$389,400, comprising \$135,600 under section 3, Political affairs, special political missions, thematic cluster I: special and personal envoys, advisers and representatives of the Secretary-General, and \$253,800 under section 28, Global communications, which are required for the programme budget for 2025. An additional amount of \$24,600 is required in 2025 under section 36, Staff assessment. Requirements for resources for 2026 onward would be included in the respective proposed programme budgets under section 3, Political affairs, special political missions, thematic cluster I: special and personal envoys, advisers and representatives of the Secretary-General, and under section 28, Global communications (ibid., paras. 6 and 14–16 and table 1).

11. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the new or expanded activities that need to be undertaken to implement the requests of the General Assembly include: the annual observance of the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica, at United Nations Headquarters, and in the field, at the national and regional levels, through the United Nations information centres; and the development and implementation of a programme of remembrance including year-long educational and outreach activities at United Nations Headquarters and in the field, communication products, educational and outreach activities with victims and survivors, and targeted content and engagement with key stakeholders aimed at addressing context-specific and time-bound concerns related to prevention (ibid., para. 5).

*Post resources*

12. The post resources consist of the proposed establishment of one post of Programme Management Officer (P-3) in the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and one post of Programme Management Officer (P-4) in the Department of Global Communications. Details of the post functions are provided in paragraphs 7 and 8 of the report of the Secretary-General. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with information regarding the requirements of an outreach programme, including planning, coordination and execution processes, and the activities and deliverables of the outreach programme, and was informed that the proposal provides a framework for cooperation that allows the possibility of leveraging the capabilities of both the Office and the Department.

13. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the post of Programme Management Officer (P-3) will provide substantive subject matter support in the preparation of outreach communications materials, including in consideration of past and current United Nations engagement in the country and the region, ongoing concerns regarding genocide denial and glorification of war crimes, and divisive narratives about events in the past. The Committee was also informed that current capacities of the Office relate to a global mandate and therefore fully dedicated capacity to a specific region or country of concern is not sustainable. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the activities required of the post are temporary in nature and relate mainly to substantive requirements in the initial period to establish the outreach programme and the required linkages with various stakeholders. In this regard, the Committee recalls the role of the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide in drawing on existing cooperation with other offices, departments and entities. The Committee therefore recommends the proposed post of Programme Management Officer (P-3) as a temporary P-3 post.**

14. As regards the post of Programme Management Officer (P-4), upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the post will provide overall coordination for the preparation of substantive content in drafts of various materials related to the education outreach programme and that it would be placed in the Outreach Division, under the Education Outreach Section, with an existing staffing component, funded through the regular budget, of two P-4, one P-3 (general temporary assistance), one P-2 and two General Service (Other level). **In view of the already existing staffing complement of the Education Outreach Section under the Department of Global Communications and taking into account the significant number of posts overall in the Department, the Advisory Committee recommends against the establishment of the proposed post of Programme Management Officer (P-4). All related non-post resources should be adjusted accordingly.**

*Non-post resources*

15. Non-post resources are indicated in table 1 for 2025, 2026 and subsequent years and in paragraphs 9 to 13 of the report of the Secretary-General. The resources for 2025 consist mainly of the following:

(a) Travel of staff: for the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, a recurrent amount of \$25,000 is proposed to cover the costs of travel of staff to engage in capacity-building and outreach activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina focused on prevention. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that four trips were envisaged for one staff member from New York to Sarajevo;

(b) Contractual services: for the Department of Global Communications, an amount of \$76,900 is proposed to cover the costs of development of a dedicated website related to the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica and to the outreach programme (\$30,000, of which \$25,000 is non-recurrent); development of content for education and outreach and translation in the six official languages of the United Nations and other relevant languages (\$20,000, recurrent); educational and outreach activities and events including exhibits, panel discussions and film screenings, among others (\$25,000, recurrent); and core personal computing services associated with the proposed establishment of the Programme Management Officer (P-4) post (\$1,900, recurrent);

(c) Supplies and materials: for the Department of Global Communications, an amount of \$30,200 is proposed to cover the costs of the creation of digital and branding assets and outreach activities across the United Nations information centre network (\$30,000, recurrent) and stationery and office supplies associated with the proposed establishment of the Programme Management Officer (P-4) post (\$200, recurrent). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that approximately 30 United Nations information centres need \$1,000 of seed money each to support their activities for the International Day and outreach programme activities and that the information centres are seeking partnerships and support from vetted external partners, the United Nations country teams, the resident coordinator offices, field offices of United Nations agencies, local governments and diplomatic communities, schools, local organizations and networks, museums and civil society organizations;

(d) Grants and contributions: for the Department of Global Communications, a recurrent amount of \$20,000 would be required to cover the costs of travel of speakers and panellists to attend the annual commemorative event at United Nations Headquarters.

**16. The Advisory Committee encourages the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and the Department of Global Communications to seek efficiencies in utilizing their non-post resources to the extent possible and recommends: (a) a reduction of 15 per cent (\$3,800) to the proposed resources under travel of staff; and (b) a reduction of 30 per cent (\$9,100) to the proposed resources under supplies and materials.**

**General Assembly resolution 78/317: The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity**

17. In its resolution 78/317, the General Assembly endorsed the outcome document of the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, entitled “The Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity”. In the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States, the Secretary-General was requested, in his annual report to the Assembly at its eightieth session on the implementation of the Agenda, to present proposals to ensure a coordinated, coherent and effective United Nations system-wide capacity-development approach to small island developing States and to enhance the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Agenda; and to present recommendations for the strengthening of the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework and the Small Island Developing States Global Business Network and its Forum. The Secretary-General was also requested to convene an inter-agency task force to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to be completed by no later than the second quarter of 2025; and to prepare an annual report on progress in implementing the Agenda. The Assembly was also called upon to undertake a comprehensive midterm review of the Agenda, informed by regional preparatory meetings, to highlight solutions to address the gaps and challenges in the

implementation of the Agenda and identify priorities for the final five years of its implementation (*ibid.*, para. 2 (b)).

18. The estimated resource requirements for 2025 relating to the resolution, for which no provisions had been made in the proposed programme budget for 2025, total \$934,100, comprising \$24,500 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, \$683,800 under section 9, Economic and social affairs, and \$225,800 under section 10, Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, which are required for the programme budget for 2025. An additional amount of \$64,600 is required in 2025 under section 36, Staff assessment, and requirements for resources for 2026 onward would be included in the related proposed programme budget under sections 2 and 9 (*ibid.*, paras. 30–32).

19. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the new or expanded activities that need to be undertaken to implement the requests of the General Assembly are as follows:

(a) New activities to be undertaken by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as part of the implementation of the Agenda, including the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework, the production of a publication on progress in implementing the Agenda, and the preparation of proposals to ensure a coordinated, coherent and effective United Nations system-wide capacity-development approach to small island developing States;

(b) The Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States will jointly support the development of recommendations for the strengthening of the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework as well as an inter-agency task force to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework, and the Office will be the main entity responsible for implementing the Small Island Developing States Global Business Network and its Forum;

(c) The request for an annual report constitutes an addition to the documentation workload of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management of one report with a word count of 8,500 words in all six official languages in 2025 and annually thereafter until 2034 (*ibid.*, paras. 20–23).

#### *Post resources*

20. The post resources consist of the proposed establishment of one temporary post of Statistician (P-3) from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2034 for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to support the preparation of the new annual report on progress in implementing the Agenda, drawing on data from the monitoring and evaluation framework (*ibid.*, para. 26). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the post is proposed under subprogramme 4, Statistics, to coordinate the development and implementation of the indicator framework for the Agenda, facilitate data compilation, prepare the annual report on the Agenda and coordinate and collaborate with statisticians and data officers from regional economic commissions and United Nations country teams covering small island developing States. The Committee was informed that, as at 31 October 2024, the statistics posts in the Department comprised 11 P-5, 16 P-4, 15 P-3, 14 P-2 and 2 temporary P-5 positions to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, effective from 2017 until 2030.

21. The Advisory Committee was also informed of the current support for the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States from the Small

Island Developing States Unit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 2 General Service (Other level)) and the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 P-2) as well as the statistical data post resources of the regional economic commissions and the availability of data officers in the resident coordinator offices. The Committee notes the existing inter-agency mechanisms in support of small island developing States, the Inter-Agency Consultative Group on Small Island Developing States, and the posts supporting the work of the Group as well as the joint mandate between the Department and the Office in support of the small island developing States. **In view of the already existing staffing complement within the Secretariat and the wider development system supporting the work on the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States, the Advisory Committee recommends against the establishment of the proposed temporary post of Statistician (P-3). All related non-post resources should be adjusted accordingly.**

*Non-post resources*

22. Non-post resources are indicated in table 2 for 2025 and subsequent years until 2034 and in paragraphs 27 and 28 of the report of the Secretary-General. The resources for 2025 consist mainly of the following:

(a) Other staff costs:

(i) For the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, non-recurrent requirements of \$275,700 for general temporary assistance, specifically two Sustainable Development Officers at the P-3 level for nine months each in 2025 to conduct research and support the development of proposals, as well as convening and supporting the inter-agency task force. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that one position is to support the work with the inter-agency task force, in view of the request to produce the monitoring and evaluation framework by the second quarter of 2025; the position will gather non-statistics information from all three small island developing States regions in consultation with the regional commissions and will support formal and informal regular consultations with Member States on the development of the framework. The second position, along with the proposed consultants under subprogramme 4, Statistics (see para. 22 (b) below), is to support the long-term implementation of paragraph 40 of the Agenda. **In view of the already existing staffing complement supporting the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (see paras. 20 and 21 above), the functions to be provided by both Sustainable Development Officers, as well as the proposed requirements for experts to develop the indicator framework and consultants to support the work of the Agenda, the Advisory Committee recommends against the establishment of one temporary position of Sustainable Development Officer (P-3) for nine months. All related non-post resources should be adjusted accordingly;**

(ii) For the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, a non-recurrent amount of \$225,800 is required for other staff costs for general temporary assistance in 2025, including: \$126,800 for a Sustainable Development Officer (P-3) for nine months; and \$99,000 for a Programme Management Officer (P-4) for six months. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the P-3 position is required to assist in the preparation of a report with recommendations for the strengthening of the Small

Island Developing States Partnership Framework and the Small Island Developing States Global Business Network and its Forum to be presented during the main part of the eightieth session of the General Assembly; to be dedicated to complementary work in preparing the report and other work relevant to the report's preparation, including analytical and research work; and in the preparation of policy briefs and workshops on partnerships for small island developing States to contribute to the report and its recommendations. The Committee was also informed that a portion of the work is supported by the Programme Management Officer (P-3) post in the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Office, and up to November 2024 by a Junior Professional Officer. As regards the P-4 position, the Committee was informed that the position will support the inter-agency task force in developing a monitoring and evaluation framework; provide analysis and guidance on targets and indicators to build the framework at the national, regional and global levels; and be complementary to the work of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. **Taking into consideration the existing staffing in support of the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States within the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the nature of the functions to be provided, as well as the availability of support from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the wider development system (see paras. 20 and 21 above), the Advisory Committee recommends the establishment of a temporary position of Sustainable Development Officer (P-3) for six months. All related non-post resources should be adjusted accordingly;**

(iii) For the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, recurrent resource requirements for documentation in the amount of \$24,500 are required in 2025 and thereafter until 2034 under other staff costs;

(b) Consultants: for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, non-recurrent requirements of \$228,000 in 2025 for one senior-level consultant on development indicators, providing executive leadership of the expert group process, and one consultant to conduct background research and data collection. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the consultants are proposed under subprogramme 4, Statistics, to support the implementation of paragraph 40 of the Agenda, along with the second Sustainable Development Officer (P-3) (see para. 22 (a) (i) above). The Committee was informed that there is currently no in-house expertise to conduct research and support the development of proposals in respect of the resolution and that development and implementation of an indicator framework for small island developing States requires highly specialized knowledge, experience and expertise with the particular group of countries. **Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee notes the availability of existing capacities working on the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States (see paras. 20 and 21 above) both within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and within the wider development system in support of the Agenda, as well as the proposed requirements for experts to develop the indicator framework for the Agenda. The Committee therefore recommends a reduction of 20 per cent (\$45,600) to the proposed resources under consultants;**

(c) Experts: for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, non-recurrent requirements of \$58,000 in 2025 to develop the indicator framework for the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States;

(d) Travel of staff: for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, non-recurrent requirements of \$10,000 in 2025 for the travel of staff of two regional economic commissions.



**General Assembly resolution 78/318: Modalities of the “World Social Summit” under the title “the Second World Summit for Social Development”**

23. In its resolution 78/318, the General Assembly decided, inter alia, that the “World Social Summit” under the title “the Second World Summit for Social Development” would be held at the level of Heads of State or Government in Qatar from 4 to 6 November 2025, and welcomed the offer by the Government of Qatar to host the Summit in 2025; and also decided that the Summit would adopt a concise, action-oriented political declaration that should have a social development approach and give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Assembly further decided that the Summit would consist of plenary meetings, an opening segment on the first day and a closing segment on the third day, and that the Summit would have two high-level round tables, each to be co-chaired by two Heads of State or Government, one from a developed country and one from a developing country. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide the necessary assistance and support for the organization of the Summit and its preparation (A/79/554, para. 2 (c)).

24. The estimated resource requirements for 2025 relating to the resolution, for which no provisions had been made in the proposed programme budget for 2025, total \$884,000, comprising \$248,800 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, \$576,400 under section 9, Economic and social affairs, and \$58,800 under section 28, Global communications, which are required for the programme budget for 2025. An additional amount of \$60,200 would be required in 2025 under section 36, Staff assessment (ibid., paras. 44 and 45).

25. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the new or expanded activities that need to be undertaken to implement the requests of the General Assembly relate to the substantive activities to support the Summit in Qatar from 4 to 6 November 2025, and its preparatory process, to be provided by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs; interpretation in all six official languages for the Summit from 4 to 6 November 2025 and translation in all six official languages of pre-session, in-session and post-session documents and the political declaration, representing an addition to the meetings and documentation workload of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management; and provision of webcasting and other services by the Department of Global Communications, and promotional activities undertaken at the regional and national levels through the network of United Nations information centres (ibid., paras. 37–39).

*Non-post resources*

26. Non-post resources are indicated in table 3 and paragraphs 38 to 43 of the report of the Secretary-General. The resources for 2025 consist mainly of the following:

(a) Other staff costs: (i) for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, non-recurrent requirements of \$306,400 for general temporary assistance for two positions at the P-3 level for 10 months each in 2025. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Department is the main provider in terms of preparing for and organizing the Summit; and (ii) for the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, resource requirements of \$248,800 in 2025, comprising non-recurrent requirements of \$58,900 for interpretation for the Summit and of \$189,900 for the translation of three pre-session documents, five in-session documents and one post-session document, as well as the political declaration;

(b) Experts: for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, non-recurrent requirements of \$70,000 for expert group meetings on thematic issues, events to

strengthen stakeholder engagement in the lead-up to the Summit and special events during meetings;

(c) Consultants: for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, non-recurrent requirements of \$20,000 to provide specialized senior-level expertise that is not available in-house. **While recognizing the need for specialized expertise in certain specific situations, the Advisory Committee expects the use of consultants to be kept to a minimum, including through building on and utilizing expertise readily available in-house. The Committee therefore recommends a reduction of 20 per cent (\$4,000) to the proposed requirements under consultants;**

(d) Contractual services: (i) for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, non-recurrent requirements of \$90,000 for outreach, awareness-building, knowledge-sharing and an advocacy campaign. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the amount of \$60,000 is proposed for the development of digital and visual assets and \$30,000 for multimedia and content production and social media outreach; and (ii) for the Department of Global Communications, non-recurrent requirements of \$3,800 for webcasting services and \$35,000 for the development and dissemination of promotional materials. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the latter amount is for the creation of digital assets for promotional campaigns; gathering and generation of content and creation of short videos for use on both the website and social media platforms; development of branding materials and key messages; and translation of key assets, the website and press kits. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that efforts should be made to avoid duplication of functions and, as such, notes the proposed development of digital assets and social media outreach by both the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Global Communications. Furthermore, taking into account the existing expertise and capabilities available in the Secretariat on information technology platforms, the Committee recommends a reduction of 20 per cent (\$25,800) to the proposed requirements under contractual services overall and the absorption of \$3,800 for webcasting services of the Department of Global Communications;**

(e) Travel of staff: for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, non-recurrent requirements of \$50,000 to facilitate regional and national engagements for awareness-building, knowledge-sharing and outreach. **While recognizing that the nature of the work involved may require travel, the Advisory Committee is of the view that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs should maximize the use of virtual meetings, online platforms and remote tools, as well as utilize the United Nations information centres and resident coordinator offices for regional and national activities. The Committee therefore recommends a reduction of 20 per cent (or \$10,000) to the proposed resources under travel of staff;**

(f) Supplies and materials: (i) for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, non-recurrent requirements of \$10,000 for communications materials, including Summit-branded supplies and information folders, among other items; and (ii) for the Department of Global Communications, non-recurrent requirements of \$20,000 for promotional activities undertaken by United Nations information centres at the regional and national levels;

(g) General operating expenses: for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, non-recurrent requirements of \$30,000 to support the events and for accessibility.

### **General Assembly resolution 78/322: Multidimensional vulnerability index**

27. In its resolution 78/322, the General Assembly decided that the multidimensional vulnerability index would be maintained by a relevant existing United Nations entity, which would act as the secretariat of the index, an Independent Expert Advisory Panel, which would prepare recommendations on future technical updates to the index, and the Statistical Commission, which would provide technical reviews of future technical improvements to the index; also decided that the secretariat of the multidimensional vulnerability index would present a triennial report to the Assembly, commencing at its eightieth session, on future improvements to the index; and further decided that the Independent Expert Advisory Panel would comprise 15 independent experts, and that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States of the Secretariat should continue to act as interim secretariat for the multidimensional vulnerability index until a relevant existing United Nations entity was appointed to act as the secretariat of the index by the Secretary-General. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General, *inter alia*, to ensure that adequate resources were available to support the work on the multidimensional vulnerability index (*ibid.*, para. 2 (d)).

28. The estimated resource requirements for 2025 and subsequent years relating to the resolution, for which no provisions had been made in the proposed programme budget for 2025, total \$209,400, comprising \$150,700 under section 9, Economic and social affairs, and \$58,700 under section 10, Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, which are required for the programme budget for 2025. Requirements for resources for 2026 onward would be included in the related proposed programme budget under sections 2, 9, 10, 28 and 29C (*ibid.*, paras. 59 and 60).

29. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the new or expanded activities that need to be undertaken to implement the requests of the General Assembly include:

(a) Support by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for the implementation of the resolution as regards the establishment of a new secretariat of the multidimensional vulnerability index, whose work will be guided by an Independent Expert Advisory Panel and which will meet and produce a new report triennially, and the report is to be reviewed by the Statistical Commission prior to its submission to the General Assembly. In addition, the multidimensional vulnerability index framework includes vulnerability-resilience country profiles, which must also be further refined and piloted in Member States with different development contexts. Meetings of the Advisory Panel, the production of the report, support to the Statistical Commission and technical support to refine and pilot the vulnerability-resilience country profiles all constitute an addition to the Department's workload;

(b) The Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, as the interim secretariat for the multidimensional vulnerability index, will be jointly responsible for an assessment and review of relevant United Nations development system entities that could potentially host the secretariat of the index and for making recommendations on the most appropriate entity, and ensure a response to requests from government and regional partners for providing technical support with the integration of the index into national and institutional strategies;

(c) Support from the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management for interpretation and documentation services; the provision of

webcasting services for the meetings of the Independent Expert Advisory Panel by the Department of Global Communications; and information technology support for the meetings of the Advisory Panel by the Office of Information and Communications Technology (*ibid.*, paras. 48–52).

*Non-post resources*

30. Non-post resources are indicated in table 4 for 2025 and subsequent years and in paragraphs 54 to 58 of the report of the Secretary-General. The resources consist of the following:

(a) Other staff costs: for the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, \$79,500 to cover interpretation for meetings of the Independent Expert Advisory Panel in 2028 and every three years thereafter; \$30,800 to cover documentation services for the triennial report in 2026 and every three years thereafter; and non-recurrent requirements of \$24,500 to cover documentation services for the electronic handbook with guidance for developing vulnerability-resilience country profiles in 2029;

(b) Consultants: (i) non-recurrent resources of \$44,000 are jointly required for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States for 2025, with \$22,000 under each entity, for a senior-level independent consultant with expertise in institutional assessments to undertake an assessment and review of relevant United Nations development system entities; (ii) non-recurrent resources of \$73,400 are jointly required for the Department and the Office for 2025, with \$36,700 under each entity, for a consultant to respond to requests from government and regional partners for providing technical support with the integration of the multidimensional vulnerability index into national and institutional strategies; (iii) non-recurrent resources of \$56,400 are required for the Department for 2026 for a consultant to support the development and refinement of the vulnerability-resilience country profiles handbook; and (iv) non-recurrent resources of \$314,600 are required for the Department for 2027 for consultancies, including: \$93,000 for a senior-level consultant with expertise in the area of development indicators and composite index construction; \$37,600 for a consultant to support the Independent Expert Advisory Panel; \$120,000 for an international consultant to lead the pilot testing of the vulnerability-resilience country profiles in four developing countries; and \$64,000 for four national consultants to pilot test the vulnerability-resilience country profiles in four developing countries. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the resources are proposed to be divided equally under the Department and the Office, as the future secretariat for the multidimensional vulnerability index has yet to be decided; the consultants will be jointly engaged and supervised by the Department and the Office with a coordinated approach, and the outputs will be jointly reviewed by both entities;

(c) Experts: \$92,000 would be required for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for in-person travel of the Independent Expert Advisory Panel to triennial meetings in 2025 and every three years thereafter;

(d) Travel of staff: non-recurrent resources of \$42,800 would be required for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2027, for the travel of staff to pilot test the vulnerability-resilience country profiles in four developing countries;

(e) Contractual services: (i) \$6,000 for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for the design and layout of the electronic handbook with guidance for developing vulnerability-resilience country profiles in 2027 and 2028; (ii) \$3,000 for the Department of Global Communications for webcasting services for the meetings of the Independent Expert Advisory Panel in 2028 and every three years thereafter;

and (iii) \$14,500 for the Office of Information and Communications Technology for information technology support for the meetings of the Advisory Panel in 2028 and every three years thereafter.

31. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with information regarding the establishment and duties of the interim secretariat for the multidimensional vulnerability index; the role of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in sensitizing United Nations agencies and stakeholders on the index, including its use and implementation; and the role of the Department in providing guidance to the secretariat of the index and providing support for the implementation of the index.

### **General Assembly resolution 78/330: Multilingualism**

32. In its resolution 78/330, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure that further updates of the Procurement Manual would be reflected in all six official language versions in an appropriate time frame; and recognized the need to strengthen the human resources capacity of the Office of the Coordinator for Multilingualism in order to facilitate successful implementation of the United Nations Strategic Framework on Multilingualism across the Secretariat in a timely manner, and requested the Secretary-General to submit a proposal in that regard (*ibid.*, para. 2 (e)).

33. The estimated resource requirements for 2025 relating to the resolution, for which no provisions had been made in the proposed programme budget for 2025, total \$60,000 and consist of non-recurrent requirements under non-post resources, namely contractual services under section 29B, Department of Operational Support, for reflecting further updates of the Procurement Manual in all six official languages in 2025 (*ibid.*, paras. 63–65 and table 5). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Procurement Manual is currently available in all six official languages; a number of sections were updated earlier in 2024 in the English version and are awaiting translation into the other languages; a comprehensive review of the Manual is ongoing, to be completed in 2025, thereby requiring translation of portions of the Manual; resources for 2026 onward for updating the Manual will be included in the proposed programme budget under section 29B.

### **General Assembly decision 78/558: Enhancing action on sea level rise**

34. In its decision 78/558, the General Assembly decided to request the Secretary-General to prepare a report, including by inviting contributions from Member States, to be submitted near the conclusion of the seventy-ninth session or early in the eightieth session of the General Assembly, to provide information on challenges related to sea level rise and on ways and approaches to address sea level rise; and decided to request the President of the General Assembly to organize a one-day high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly, no later than the last day of the general debate of the Assembly at its eighty-first session, to further consider sea level rise, which would result, without setting a precedent for similar meetings, in a concise, action-oriented and intergovernmentally negotiated declaration agreed by consensus (*ibid.*, para. 2 (f)).

35. The estimated resource requirements for 2025 relating to General Assembly decision 78/558, for which no provisions had been made in the proposed programme budget for 2025, total \$43,200 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management. An additional amount of \$5,200 is required in 2025 under section 36, Staff assessment. Requirements for resources for 2026 would be included in the related proposed programme budget under

sections 2 and 29C, Office of Information and Communications Technology (ibid., paras. 75–77).

36. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the new or expanded activities that need to be undertaken to implement the requests of the General Assembly are with regard to the workload of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Office of Information and Communications Technology (ibid., paras. 69–71).

#### *Non-post resources*

37. Non-post resources are indicated in table 6 for 2025 and 2026 and in paragraphs 73 and 74 of the report of the Secretary-General as follows:

(a) Other staff costs: for the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, non-recurrent requirements of: (i) \$43,200 to cover documentation services for one post-session document in 2025; (ii) \$11,200 to cover interpretation for the one-day high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly in 2026; and (iii) \$24,500 to cover documentation services for the concise, action-oriented and intergovernmentally negotiated declaration in 2026;

(b) Contractual services: for the Office of Information and Communications Technology, non-recurrent requirements will arise in the amount of \$3,200 in 2026 for information technology support for the high-level meeting.

**38. Taking into consideration the contained nature of the meeting and documentation requirements, as well as the availability of automation tools for documentation processing and translation and the existing expertise and capabilities available in the Secretariat on information technology platforms, the Advisory Committee recommends that all the additional resource requirements under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and section 29C, Office of Information and Communications Technology, be absorbed from within existing resources.**

#### **General Assembly decision 78/560: Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction**

39. In its decision 78/560, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene the first and second sessions of the Preparatory Commission for the Entry into Force of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction and the Convening of the First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement from 14 to 25 April and from 18 to 29 August 2025, respectively, and to convene at least one session of 10 working days in 2026, with full conference services for the duration of the substantive sessions; and also requested the Secretary-General to make proposals in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2025 in order to strengthen the capacity of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat to continue to provide the Preparatory Commission, including any intersessional work that might be convened by the Co-Chairs, with the assistance necessary for the performance of its work, including meeting and secretariat services and the provision of essential background information and relevant documents (ibid., para. 2 (g)).

40. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the requirements for 2025 have been partially included in the proposed programme budget for 2025. Therefore, additional resources in the amount of \$1,934,600, comprising \$1,375,900 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference

management, \$170,600 under section 8, Legal affairs, \$108,800 under section 28, Global communications, \$21,400 under section 29B, Department of Operational Support, \$196,300 under section 29C, Office of Information and Communications Technology, and \$61,600 under section 34, Safety and security, would be required for the programme budget for 2025. An additional amount of \$175,600 is required in 2025 under section 36, Staff assessment (*ibid.*, paras. 96 and 97).

41. The new or expanded activities to be undertaken to implement the requests of the General Assembly are indicated in paragraphs 80 to 87 of the report of the Secretary-General and are summarized as follows:

(a) For the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the implementation of the mandate requires interpretation in all six official languages for the first and second sessions of the Preparatory Commission in 2025, consisting of 9 days with 36 meetings for the first session, and 10 days with 40 meetings for the second session. It is also envisaged that there will be one session of the Preparatory Commission in 2026 consisting of 10 days with 40 meetings. These requirements constitute an addition to the meetings workload of the Department in 2025 and 2026. With regard to documentation services, the envisaged 23 pre-session, four in-session and two post-session documents in 2025 as well as 14 pre-session, two in-session and one post-session documents will be required in all six official languages in 2026. These requirements constitute an addition to the documentation workload of the Department in 2025 and 2026;

(b) For the Office of Legal Affairs, the implementation of the mandate requires the performance of additional functions, including the provision of administrative services for the convening of the Preparatory Commission; substantive servicing of the meetings of the Commission and of other committees; administrative and substantive support for any intersessional work; preparation of documents; recruitment of consultants; provision of support to the Co-Chairs and the Bureau of the Commission; assistance to delegations; maintenance of the Commission web page on the website of the Agreement in all official languages; and administration of the trust fund established by resolution 69/292 and expanded by resolution 78/272. New or expanded activities would also be required of the Office within its overall programme of work to promote a better understanding of the Agreement and prepare for the entry into force of the Agreement;

(c) For the following departments and offices, the implementation of the mandate requires resources to cover additional requirements for: webcasting services, meetings coverage and overtime for the two sessions of the Preparatory Commission in 2025 and one session in 2026 by the Department of Global Communications; maintenance of premises and overtime for staff for meetings scheduled outside of normal working hours for the two sessions of the Commission in 2025 and one session in 2026 by the Department of Operational Support; services as detailed in paragraph 86 by the Office of Information and Communications Technology for the two sessions of the Commission in 2025 and one session in 2026, as well as intersessional work in both years; and overtime costs for security personnel for the two sessions of the Commission in 2025 and one session in 2026 for the Department of Safety and Security.

#### *Post resources*

42. The post resources consist of the proposed establishment of one post of Legal Officer (P-3) in the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, with responsibilities as indicated in paragraph 89 of the report of the Secretary-General. It is indicated in the report of the Secretary-General that the post and related non-post requirements under section 8, Legal affairs, would be required until such time as the

secretariat to be established under article 50 of the Agreement commences its functions and would be included in the relevant section of the related proposed programme budget (*ibid.*, para. 98).

43. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the functions are expected to continue indefinitely until such time as the secretariat is established under article 50 of the Agreement and commences its functions. The Committee was also informed that this would depend on the decisions of the Conference of the Parties at its first meeting, which will follow within one year of the entry into force of the Agreement, and that the entry into force of the Agreement is not yet imminent. The Committee was further informed of the staffing of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (1 D-2, 1 D-1, 1 P-5, 1 P-4, 3 P-3, 1 P-2, 1 General Service (Principal level) and 1 General Service (Other level)) and that staff from the Division have been assigned to provide secretariat services to the intergovernmental conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction since its establishment in 2017, in addition to their other responsibilities.

44. The Advisory Committee was informed that a limited number of the functions resulting from the requirements in decision 78/560 could be absorbed by some of the staff previously assigned to service the intergovernmental conference, which had been taken into account when determining the resource proposals for 2025, and that the workload involved in servicing an intergovernmental conference for the purpose of elaborating a treaty and the workload resulting from the requirements in decision 78/560 are not identical. Nevertheless, the Committee notes that, in addition to the 10 posts indicated above within the Division, the following 5 posts were approved in relation to the Agreement and became effective on 1 January 2024: 1 Legal Officer (P-4), 1 Programme Management Officer (P-4), 1 Associate Programme Management Officer (P-2) and 2 General Service posts (1 General Service (Principal level) and 1 General Service (Other level)). The Committee was informed that not all of the five posts can be assigned to provide technical and legal support to the Preparatory Commission, which requires legal expertise. **Taking into consideration that the entry into force of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction is not yet imminent, the functions to be provided by the P-3 Legal Officer, as well as the existing staffing resources available for the Agreement in the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, the Advisory Committee recommends the establishment of a temporary post of Legal Officer (P-3) at this stage.**

#### *Non-post resources*

45. Non-post resources are indicated in table 7 for 2025 and 2026 and subsequent years and in paragraphs 90 to 95 of the report of the Secretary-General. The main requirements are as follows:

(a) Other staff costs: (i) for the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, requirements of \$1,375,900 in 2025 to cover interpretation (\$604,200) and documentation services (\$645,500), including overtime (\$126,200); (ii) for the Department of Global Communications, requirements of \$89,300 in 2025 for meetings coverage, including overtime; (iii) for the Department of Operational Support, requirements of \$15,000 in 2025 to cover overtime of staff; and (iv) for the Department of Safety and Security, requirements of \$61,600 to cover overtime of security personnel. **The Advisory Committee is not convinced that the proposed amount is fully justified and recommends a reduction of 20 per cent (\$17,900) to**



**the proposed resources for meetings coverage for the Department of Global Communications;**

(b) Consultants: for the Office of Legal Affairs, resources of \$60,000 would be required in 2025 to provide technical expertise in the preparation of background information for the Preparatory Commission. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, for 2024, the amount of \$346,600 was approved for consultants required to support the Agreement and that, as at 31 October 2024, \$125,400 had been committed for ongoing consultancies. **The Advisory Committee is not convinced that the proposed amount is fully justified and expects that expertise readily available in-house will be used. The Committee recommends a reduction of 30 per cent (\$18,000) to the proposed resources under consultants;**

(c) Contractual services: (i) for the Department of Global Communications, requirements of \$42,200 in 2025 to provide webcasting services, with \$22,700 already included in the proposed programme budget for 2025; and (ii) for the Office of Information and Communications Technology, non-recurrent requirements of \$241,300 in 2025 to provide technical and conference services, with \$45,000 already included in the proposed programme budget for 2025. **The Advisory Committee is not convinced that the proposed amount is fully justified and recommends that the additional resource requirements of \$19,500 pertaining to the Department of Global Communications for webcasting services be absorbed from within existing resources;**

(d) General operating expenses: for the Department of Operational Support, resources of \$6,400 in 2025 are required for the maintenance of premises.

46. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the requirements for 2026 and subsequent years will be determined on the basis of initial work to be undertaken by the Preparatory Commission, whose first session will be held in April 2025 in accordance with General Assembly decision 78/560. The Secretary-General would submit any relevant resource requirements that may arise from the sessions of the Preparatory Commission to the Assembly in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (*ibid.*, para. 99). **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretariat will strengthen its efforts to elicit extrabudgetary funding and broaden its donor base to achieve sufficient, predictable and sustained levels of unearmarked funding in support of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction. The Committee trusts that the next programme budget submission will include an update on these efforts.**

## **IV. Conclusion**

47. Section IV of the report contains the actions requested of the General Assembly. **Subject to its comments and recommendations in paragraphs 13, 14, 16, 21, 22 (a) (i) and (ii), 22 (b), 26 (c)–(e), 38, 44 and 45 (a)–(c) above, the Advisory Committee recommends:**

(a) **Approval of the proposal of the Secretary-General amounting to an additional appropriation in the amount of \$3,832,900, representing a potential charge against the contingency fund for 2025, comprising:**

(i) **\$1,649,200 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management;**

- (ii) **\$131,800 under section 3, Political affairs, special political missions, thematic cluster I: special and personal envoys, advisers and representatives of the Secretary-General;**
  - (iii) **\$152,600 under section 8, Legal affairs;**
  - (iv) **\$1,082,700 under section 9, Economic and social affairs;**
  - (v) **\$242,200 under section 10, Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States;**
  - (vi) **\$235,100 under section 28, Global communications;**
  - (vii) **\$81,400 under section 29B, Department of Operational Support;**
  - (viii) **\$196,300 under section 29C, Office of Information and Communications Technology;**
  - (ix) **\$61,600 under section 34, Safety and security;**
- (b) **Approval of the establishment, effective 1 January 2025, of one new temporary post at the P-3 level under section 3, Political affairs, special political missions, thematic cluster I: special and personal envoys, advisers and representatives of the Secretary-General, to support the activities mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution [78/282](#); and one new temporary post at the P-3 level under section 8, Legal affairs, to support the activities mandated by the General Assembly in its decision 78/560.**
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