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Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

Budget for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005

Report of the Secretary-General

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Summary

The present report contains the budget for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005, which amounts to \$44,134,700, inclusive of budgeted voluntary contributions in kind in the amount of \$2,144,700.

The budget provides for the deployment of 203 military observers, 27 military personnel, 143 international staff, 113 national staff and 10 government-provided personnel.

The total resource requirements for MINURSO for the financial period 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 have been linked to the mission's objective through a number of results-based frameworks, grouped by component: substantive civilian, military and support. The human resources of the mission in terms of number of personnel have been attributed to the individual components, with the exception of the Mission's executive direction and management, which can be attributed to the Mission as a whole. The financial resources for operational items have been linked to the support component by identifying quantitative outputs for expenditure classes under operational costs.

The explanations of variances in resource levels, both human resources and financial resources, have, where applicable, been linked to specific outputs planned by the Mission.

Financial resources

(Thousands of United States dollars. Budget year is from 1 July to 30 June.)

Category	Expenditures (2002-03)	Apportionment (2003-04)	Cost estimates (2004-05)	Variance	
				Amount	Percentage
Military and police personnel	6 214.8	6 717.6	6 050.7	(666.9)	(9.9)
Civilian personnel	18 191.5	20 291.8	18 701.0	(1 590.8)	(7.8)
Operational costs	14 002.7	14 520.1	17 238.3	2 718.2	18.7
Gross requirements	38 409.0	41 529.5	41 990.0	460.5	1.1
Staff assessment income	2 636.2	3 041.0	2 908.9	(132.1)	(4.3)
Net requirements	35 772.8	38 488.5	39 081.1	592.6	1.5
Voluntary contributions in kind (budgeted)	2 567.4	1 776.1	2 144.7	368.6	20.8
Total requirements	40 976.4	43 305.6	44 134.7	829.1	1.9

Human resources

	<i>Military observers^a</i>	<i>Military contingents^a</i>	<i>Civilian police^{a,b}</i>	<i>Inter- national staff^{a,b}</i>	<i>National staff</i>	<i>Government- provided personnel^{a,b}</i>	<i>Total</i>
Executive direction and management							
Approved 2003/04	—	—	—	13	1	—	14
Proposed 2004/05	—	—	—	13	1	—	14
Components							
Substantive civilian							
Approved 2003/04	—	—	81	166	—	10	257
Proposed 2004/05	—	—	81	166	—	10	257
Military							
Approved 2003/04	203	27	—	2	1	—	233
Proposed 2004/05	203	27	—	2	1	—	233
Support							
Approved 2003/04	—	—	—	119	111	—	230
Proposed 2004/05	—	—	—	119	111	—	230
Total							
Approved 2003/04	203	27	81	300	113	10	734
Proposed 2004/05	203	27	81	300	113	10	734
Net change	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

^a Represents the highest level of authorized/proposed strength.

^b As a result of the suspension of the activities of the Identification Commission, budgetary provisions have not been made for 157 international staff posts and 81 civilian police.

^c Includes national officers and national General Service staff.

The actions to be taken by the General Assembly are set out in section IV of the present report.

I. Mandate and planned results

1. The mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara was established by the Security Council in its resolution 690 (1991) of 29 April 1991. The most recent extension of the mandate was provided by the Security Council in resolution 1513 (2003) of 28 October 2003.
2. The Mission is mandated to help the Security Council achieve an overall objective, namely, to maintain international peace and security.
3. Within this overall objective, the Mission will, during the budget period, contribute to a number of expected accomplishments by delivering related key outputs, shown in the frameworks below. The frameworks are grouped by standard component: substantive civilian, military and support, which reflect, rather than determine, the common programmatic nature of the expected accomplishments and outputs contained in these components.
4. The expected accomplishments would lead to the fulfilment of the Security Council's objective within the time frame of the Mission, and the indicators of achievement show a measurement of progress towards such accomplishments during the budget period. The human resources of the Mission in terms of number of personnel have been attributed to the individual components, with the exception of the Mission's executive direction and management which can be attributed to the Mission as a whole. The financial resources for operational items have been linked to the support component by identifying quantitative outputs for expenditure classes under operational costs. Variances in the number of personnel, compared to the budget of 2003/04, have been explained under the respective components and have been linked to the corresponding outputs in the frameworks.
5. The Mission has established its headquarters in Laayoune, where the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General is located. In addition to this, sector headquarters have been established in Smara (Northern Sector) and Dakhla (Southern Sector), respectively, with a liaison office in Tindouf. The Mission provides administrative, logistical and technical support to its substantive civilian, military, civilian police and Identification Commission components, deployed both at its headquarters locations as well as in 10 military observer team sites throughout the Mission area.

Executive direction and management

6. Overall Mission direction and management are to be provided by the immediate Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Table 1
Human resources: Executive direction and management

	<i>International staff</i>							<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>National staff^a</i>	<i>United Nations Volunteers</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>USG -ASG</i>	<i>D-2 -D-1</i>	<i>P-5 -P-4</i>	<i>P-3 -P-1</i>	<i>Field Service</i>	<i>General Service</i>	<i>Security Service</i>				
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General											
Approved 2003/04	2	1	4	—	2	4	—	13	1	—	14
Proposed 2004/05	2	1	4	—	2	4	—	13	1	—	14
Net change	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

^a Includes national officers and national General Service staff.

Component 1: Substantive civilian

<i>Expected accomplishments</i>	<i>Indicators of achievement</i>
1.1 Progress towards the political settlement of the final status of Western Sahara	1.1.1 Increased dialogue through meetings and written communication between the parties 1.1.2 Acceptance by the parties, of the Secretary-General's proposal to achieve a political solution to the conflict in Western Sahara that provides for self-determination 1.1.3 No hostilities between the parties

Outputs

- Conducted bimonthly high-level political consultations between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the parties, neighbouring countries and key Member States
- Supported confidence-building measures through weekly political liaisons with the parties, neighbouring countries and key Member States in the region
- Conducted political briefings and escorted 15 visiting Member State delegations
- Prepared 4 reports to the Security Council on the situation concerning Western Sahara
- Prepared 180 summaries of international and regional media reports regarding issues of relevance to Western Sahara, for use in the preparation of assessments by political officers in the Mission, the Secretariat and by Member States

<i>Expected accomplishments</i>	<i>Indicators of achievement</i>
1.2 Progress towards the resolution of humanitarian issues, in particular, those related to prisoners of war (POWs), refugees and persons unaccounted for	1.2.1 The basic food needs of an estimated 155,000 Western Saharan refugees are met
	1.2.2 The continuation and expansion of confidence-building measures, to include telephone and mail services covering all 4 major refugee camps (none of which currently have this facility) and the Territory, as well as the start of a programme of family exchange visits
	1.2.3 A reduction in the number of POWs to nil from 900 in 2003/04

Outputs

- Provided regular assessments of the food situation to donor countries
 - Provided periodic political analysis and recommendations to the parties on confidence-building measures, persons unaccounted for, refugees and POWs
 - Linked refugee camps and the Territory by telephone and mail and carried out 100 family exchange visits
-

External factors

- Parties to the conflict will cooperate, regional stability will be maintained and donors will provide adequate food supplies
-

Table 2
Human resources: Substantive civilian

Category											Total
I. Civilian police^a											
Approved 2003/04											81
Proposed 2004/05											81
Net change											—
<i>International staff</i>											
II. Civilian staff	<i>USG -ASG</i>	<i>D-2 -D-1^a</i>	<i>P-5 -P-4^a</i>	<i>P-3 -P-1^a</i>	<i>Field Service^a</i>	<i>General Service^a</i>	<i>Security Service</i>	Subtotal	<i>National staff^b</i>	<i>Government- provided personnel</i>	Total
Office of the Identification Commission											
Approved 2003/04	—	2	39	34	18	63	—	156	—	10	166
Proposed 2004/05	—	2	39	34	18	63	—	156	—	10	166
Net change	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office of Political Affairs											
Approved 2003/04	—	—	2	6	—	—	—	8	—	—	8
Proposed 2004/05	—	—	2	6	—	—	—	8	—	—	8
Net change	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Office of the Police Commissioner											
Approved 2003/04	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	2	—	—	2
Proposed 2004/05	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	2	—	—	2
Net change	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal, civilian staff											
Approved 2003/04	—	3	41	40	18	64	—	166	—	10	176
Proposed 2004/05	—	3	41	40	18	64	—	166	—	10	176
Net change	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Grand total (I-II)											
Approved 2003/04											257
Proposed 2004/05											257
Net change											—

^a As a result of the suspension of the activities of the Identification Commission, budgetary provisions have not been made for 157 international staff posts and 81 civilian police.

^b Includes national officers and national General Service staff.

Component 2: Military

Expected accomplishments

Indicators of achievement

2.1 Maintenance of the ceasefire

2.1.1 No serious violations of the ceasefire and Military Agreement Number 1

Outputs

- Liaised daily with local commanders and monthly with high-ranking military officers from both parties
 - Visited 18,190 units and unit headquarters of the armed forces of the parties, representing 5,436 ground patrols from 9 team sites, 1,204,906 kilometres travelled, 82,432 person hours and 21,744 military observer ground-patrol days (4 military observers per patrol)
 - Inspected 4,150 units of the armed forces of the parties, representing 370 air patrols from 9 team sites and 650 air-patrol hours
 - Conducted 24 unannounced air and ground inspections of strong points along the 2,200-kilometre berm
 - Investigated alleged violations of the ceasefire as required
-

Expected accomplishments

Indicators of achievement

2.2 Reduction in mine threats on both sides of the berm

2.2.1 No person killed or injured by exploded mines or ordnance

Outputs

- Marked 50 mines and unexploded ordnance and monitored 70 disposal operations
 - Maintained 1 electronic database on mines and unexploded ordnance
 - Trained 2 local NGOs in mine awareness
-

External factors

- Parties to the conflict will cooperate
-

Table 3
Human resources: Military

Category											Total
<i>I. Military observers</i>											
Approved 2003/04											203
Proposed 2004/05											203
Net change											—
<i>II. Military contingents</i>											
Approved 2003/04											27
Proposed 2004/05											27
Net change											—
<i>International staff</i>											
<i>III. Civilian staff</i>	<i>USG -ASG</i>	<i>D-2 -D-1</i>	<i>P-5 -P-4</i>	<i>P-3 -P-1</i>	<i>Field Service</i>	<i>General Service</i>	<i>Security Service</i>	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>National staff*</i>	<i>United Nations Volunteers</i>	<i>Total</i>
Office of the Force Commander											
Approved 2003/04	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	2	1	—	3
Proposed 2004/05	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	2	1	—	3
Net change	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Grand total											
Approved 2003/04											233
Proposed 2004/05											233
Net change											—

* Includes national officers and national General Service staff.

Component 3: Support

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
3.1 Effective and efficient logistical and administrative support to the Mission	3.1.1 The number of major traffic accidents involving United Nations vehicles reduced to nil
	3.1.2 The availability rate of light passenger vehicles improved from 90 per cent to 95 per cent
	3.1.3 The coverage of the wide and local area networks extended to include all 12 locations in the Mission area
	3.1.4 The value of assets pending write-off and disposal reduced from 90 per cent to less than 10 per cent
	3.1.5 The recruitment time for international staff reduced from 4 months to 1 month and for local staff from 2 months to 3 weeks

3.1.6 Full compliance with the procurement standard, of 13 to 24 weeks, for lead times between the approval of requisitions and the delivery of goods

3.1.7 The lead time between the approval of requisitions and the delivery of recurring and fast-moving goods reduced by 2 weeks

Outputs

Service improvements

- Improved internal control mechanisms by installing a CARLOG system for 261 vehicles
- Trained 5 personnel in preventive maintenance
- Trained 3 personnel in Wide Area Network (WAN) maintenance
- Installed an automated security identification system
- Trained 2 personnel in the Galileo Asset Management System
- Trained 6 personnel in the areas of procurement, information technology and administration

Personnel

- Emplaced, repatriated and rotated 230 military personnel (203 military observers, 20 medical and 7 orderly personnel)
- Supplied 203 military observers with rations and 27 troops and 266 civilian personnel with bottled water
- Administered 143 international and 113 national civilian contracts

Facilities and infrastructure

- Maintained 16 United Nations facilities in 12 locations
- Supported and maintained 267 prefabricated buildings in 12 locations
- Completed the two-year prefabricated accommodation refurbishment plan, replacing deteriorated accommodation equipment in 10 locations
- Maintained 954 items of accommodation equipment, 114 sea containers, 71 items of pumping and fuel storage equipment and 231 items of refrigeration equipment in 12 locations
- Operated, maintained and repaired 64 generators in 16 facilities, including the provision for 1,101,500 litres of fuel and 9,000 litres of lubricant

Ground transportation

- Maintained 261 light vehicles in 12 locations, including the provision for 1,093,800 litres of fuel and 109,300 litres of lubricant
- Maintained 37 heavy/special vehicles in 9 locations, including the provision for 254,400 litres of fuel and 25,500 litres of lubricant

Air transportation

- Managed contracts for 3 fixed-wing aircraft and 3 helicopters, representing 2,880 logistical flight hours and 2,940 logistical and air patrolling flight hours, respectively, including the provision for 4,041,000 litres of fuel and 7,271 litres of oils and lubricant
- Transported passengers 10,200 kilometres
- Loaded and transported 755 metric tons of cargo

Communications

- Supported, in 12 locations, 4 PABX telephone systems and 11 satellite earth stations for 490 users
- Supported VHF, HF and microwave communication systems in 12 locations

Information technology

- Supported, maintained and repaired 426 desktops, 60 laptops, 277 printers and 14 servers in 12 locations
- Provided continuous service and support to 440 users throughout the MINURSO Wide Area Network

Medical

- Provided continuous Level I medical services to 490 personnel

Other supplies and services

- Handled 22,300 kilograms of freight for 293 users

External factors

- Parties will comply with the status-of-forces agreement and suppliers will be able to deliver as contracted

Table 4

Human resources: Component 3, Support

	<i>International staff</i>							<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>National staff^a</i>	<i>United Nations Volunteers</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>USG -ASG</i>	<i>D-2 -D-1</i>	<i>P-5 -P-4</i>	<i>P-3 -P-1</i>	<i>Field Service</i>	<i>General Service</i>	<i>Security Service</i>				
Division of Administration											
Approved 2003/04	—	1	7	10	59	36	6	119	111	—	230
Proposed 2004/05	—	1	7	10	59	36	6	119	111	—	230
Net change	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

^a Includes national officers and national General Service staff.

II. Resource requirements

1. Overall

(Thousands of United States dollars. Budget year is 1 July to 30 June.)

Category	Expenditure (2002-03) (1)	Apportionment ^a (2003-04) (2)	Cost estimates (2004-05) (3)	Variance	
				Amount (4) (3)-(2)	Percentage (5) (4) (2)
Military and police personnel					
Military observers	4 372.0	5 448.8	5 408.1	(40.7)	(0.7)
Military contingents	1 281.4	673.4	642.6	(30.8)	(4.6)
Civilian police	561.4	595.4	—	(595.4)	(100.0)
Formed police units	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	6 214.8	6 717.6	6 050.7	(666.9)	(9.9)
Civilian personnel					
International staff ^b	16 845.8	18 524.0	16 695.8	(1 828.2)	(9.9)
National staff ^c	1 345.7	1 767.8	2 005.2	237.4	13.4
United Nations Volunteers	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	18 191.5	20 291.8	18 701.0	(1 590.8)	(7.8)
Operational costs					
General temporary assistance	—	—	—	—	—
Government-provided personnel	35.9	120.0	119.7	(0.3)	(0.3)
Civilian electoral observers	—	—	—	—	—
Consultants	27.1	10.0	10.0	—	—
Official travel	453.9	347.3	526.0	178.7	51.5
Facilities and infrastructure	2 600.9	2 297.6	2 093.9	(203.7)	(8.9)
Ground transportation	1 595.9	3 803.8	2 900.0	(903.8)	(23.8)
Air transportation	5 868.4	5 511.8	7 253.5	1 741.7	31.6
Naval transportation	—	—	—	—	—
Communications	1 584.2	676.6	2 500.2	1 823.6	269.5
Information technology	568.7	778.5	775.9	(2.6)	(0.3)
Medical	107.3	88.0	193.9	105.9	120.3
Special equipment	—	15.0	29.8	14.8	98.7
Other supplies, services and equipment	1 160.4	871.5	835.4	(36.1)	(4.1)
Quick-impact projects	—	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	14 002.7	14 520.1	17 238.3	2 718.2	18.7
Gross requirements	38 409.0	41 529.5	41 990.0	460.5	1.1
Staff assessment income	2 636.2	3 041.0	2 908.9	(132.1)	(4.3)
Net requirements	35 772.8	38 488.5	39 081.1	592.6	1.5
Voluntary contributions in kind (budgeted) ^d	2 567.4	1 776.1	2 144.7	368.6	20.8
Total requirements	40 976.4	43 305.6	44 134.7	829.1	1.9

^a Reflects adjusted distribution of approved resources between military and police personnel and operational costs categories of expenditure.

^b Cost estimates for 2004/05 are inclusive of a 10 per cent vacancy rate compared to a 5 per cent vacancy rate applied in 2003/04.

^c Costs estimates for 2004/05 are based on full deployment compared to a 1 per cent vacancy rate applied in 2003/04.

^d Amount for 2004/05 is inclusive of contributions valued at \$243,400 from the Government of Algeria, \$1,701,300 from the Government of Morocco and \$200,000 from the Frente POLISARIO.

2. Contingent-owned equipment: major equipment and self-sustainment

7. Requirements for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 are based on standard reimbursement rates for major equipment and self-sustainment in the total amount of \$131,400 as follows:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Estimated amount (Thousands of US dollars)</i>
Major equipment	15.2
Self-sustainment	
Catering (kitchen facilities)	—
Office equipment	5.5
Electrical	6.7
Minor engineering	3.7
Laundry and cleaning	5.3
Tentage	—
Accommodation	9.2
Miscellaneous general stores	10.5
Communications	19.1
Medical services	48.9
Explosive ordnance disposal	—
Observation	7.3
Identification	—
Nuclear, biological and chemical protection	—
Field defence stores	—
Unique equipment	—
Subtotal	116.2
Total	131.4

3. Non-budgeted contributions

8. The estimated value of non-budgeted contributions for the period 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 is as follows:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Estimated value (Thousands of US dollars)</i>
Status-of-forces agreement ^a	3 472.4
Voluntary contributions in kind (non-budgeted)	—
Total	3 472.4

^a Inclusive of \$88,200 from the Government of Algeria and \$3,384,200 from the Government of Morocco.

III. Analysis of variances¹

Reference

This section describes the single largest contributing factor involved in each resource variance according to specific standard options encompassed in the four standard categories listed below:

- **Mandate:** Variances caused by changes in the scale or scope of the mandate, or changes in the expected accomplishments as driven by the mandate;
- **External:** Variances caused by parties or situations external to the United Nations;
- **Cost parameters:** Variances caused by United Nations regulations, rules and policies;
- **Management:** Variances caused by management actions to achieve planned results more effectively (e.g., by reprioritizing or adding certain outputs) or efficiently (e.g., by taking measures to reduce personnel or operational inputs while maintaining the same level of outputs), and/or from performance-related issues (e.g., by having underestimated the costs or quantities of inputs required to produce a certain level of outputs, or by delayed recruitment).

	<i>Variance</i>	
Civilian police	(\$595.4)	(100%)

- **Management: reduced inputs and outputs**

9. With the total suspension of the activities of the Identification Commission, the civilian police component, whose purpose is to support and provide protection for the Identification Commission, is not required. While the authorized strength remains unchanged in the event that the Identification Commission is reactivated by the Security Council, no budgetary provisions have been included for civilian police.

	<i>Variance</i>	
International staff	(\$1,828.2)	(9.9%)

- **Management: reduced inputs and outputs**

10. Reduced requirements are due primarily to the suspension of the activities of the Identification Commission, which has led to a decrease in the number of budgeted international posts from 184 in 2003/04 to 143 in 2004/05. In addition, the

¹ Resource variance amounts are expressed in thousands of United States dollars.

vacancy factor applied to international staff has increased from 5 per cent to 10 per cent.

	<i>Variance</i>	
National staff	\$237.4	13.4%

- **External: exchange rate variances**

11. Increased requirements reflect currency fluctuations and have resulted in provisions incorporating a lower conversion rate for salaries paid in the local currency.

	<i>Variance</i>	
Official travel	\$178.7	51.5%

- **Management: additional inputs and additional outputs**

12. The most significant factor contributing to the variance is the increased requirement for the training of both substantive civilian and support personnel. The planned training courses will result in increased efficiency and effectiveness in areas such as administration, ground transportation, air operations, security, procurement, conflict resolution and humanitarian issues.

	<i>Variance</i>	
Facilities and infrastructure	(\$203.7)	(8.9%)

- **Management: reduced inputs and same outputs**

13. The variance is due primarily to reduced requirements for prefabricated accommodation in relation to the refurbishment programme at the military observer team sites. The proposed requirements reflect the final set of replacements under this programme.

	<i>Variance</i>	
Ground transportation	(\$903.8)	(23.8%)

- **Management: reduced inputs and same outputs**

14. Lower requirements are due to the fact that approximately 40 per cent of the light vehicle fleet is being replaced in the current period, which has led to a reduction in the number of vehicles requiring replacement in the next period.

	<i>Variance</i>	
Air transportation	\$1,741.7	31.6%

- **Management: additional inputs and same outputs**

15. The most significant factor contributing to the variance is the increase in costs associated with the change in the configuration of the helicopters deployed in the

Mission area. The Mission will utilize MI8-MTV instead of MI8 helicopters, which are better suited to desert conditions.

	<i>Variance</i>	
Communications	\$1,823.6	269.5%

- **Management: additional inputs and same outputs**

16. Additional requirements are the result of two factors: firstly, the Mission's communications equipment replacement programme was not carried out consistently in previous periods. As a result, some of the communications equipment the Mission is currently using is either obsolete or has exceeded its useful life and requires replacement. The second factor relates to the upgrading of the existing communications system, primarily, the expansion of the Wide Area Network (WAN) to include the Dakhla and Smara sector headquarters to enable secure communications between the team sites and sector headquarters.

	<i>Variance</i>	
Medical	\$105.9	120.3%

- **External: cessation of existing arrangements for specialist medical services**

17. The arrangement whereby specialist medical services were provided at no cost to the Mission has ceased with the closure of the hospital at which these services were provided. Consequently, additional requirements are attributable to the fact that specialist medical services for MINURSO personnel has to be sought elsewhere and obtained at commercial rates.

	<i>Variance</i>	
Special equipment	\$14.8	98.7%

- **Management: additional inputs and same outputs**

18. Additional requirements relate to the acquisition of equipment for security personnel in the Mission area.

IV. Actions to be taken by the General Assembly

19. **The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara are:**

(a) **Appropriation of the amount of \$41,990,000, for the maintenance of the Mission for the 12-month period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005;**

(b) **Assessment of the amount in paragraph (a) above at a monthly rate of \$3,499,167, should the Security Council decide to continue the mandate of the Mission.**

V. Summary of follow-up action taken to implement requests and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the United Nations Board of Auditors

A. Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Request recommendation

The Advisory Committee cautions against the apparent tendency to habitually replace information technology and communications equipment merely to keep up with the new state-of-the-art developments in equipment and software. There appears to be little evidence that these regular changes automatically increase the productivity and efficiency of mission operations (A/57/772/Add.2, para. 28).

Action taken to implement request recommendation

The decision to replace information technology and communications equipment is carefully matched to the Mission's operational requirements and is taken only when it is the most cost-effective course of action to maintain/improve productivity and efficiency. Replacement decisions take into account the severe environmental conditions under which communications and information technology equipment is expected to operate.

B. United Nations Board of Auditors²

Request recommendation

The Board recommends that the Administration ensure that aviation officers attend formal training courses as prescribed in the Air Operations Manual (para. 85 (a)).

The Board recommends that the Administration ensure that all peacekeeping missions submit procurement plans to the Supply Section in a timely manner so as to expedite the complete development of an overall procurement plan (para. 126).

Action taken to implement request recommendation

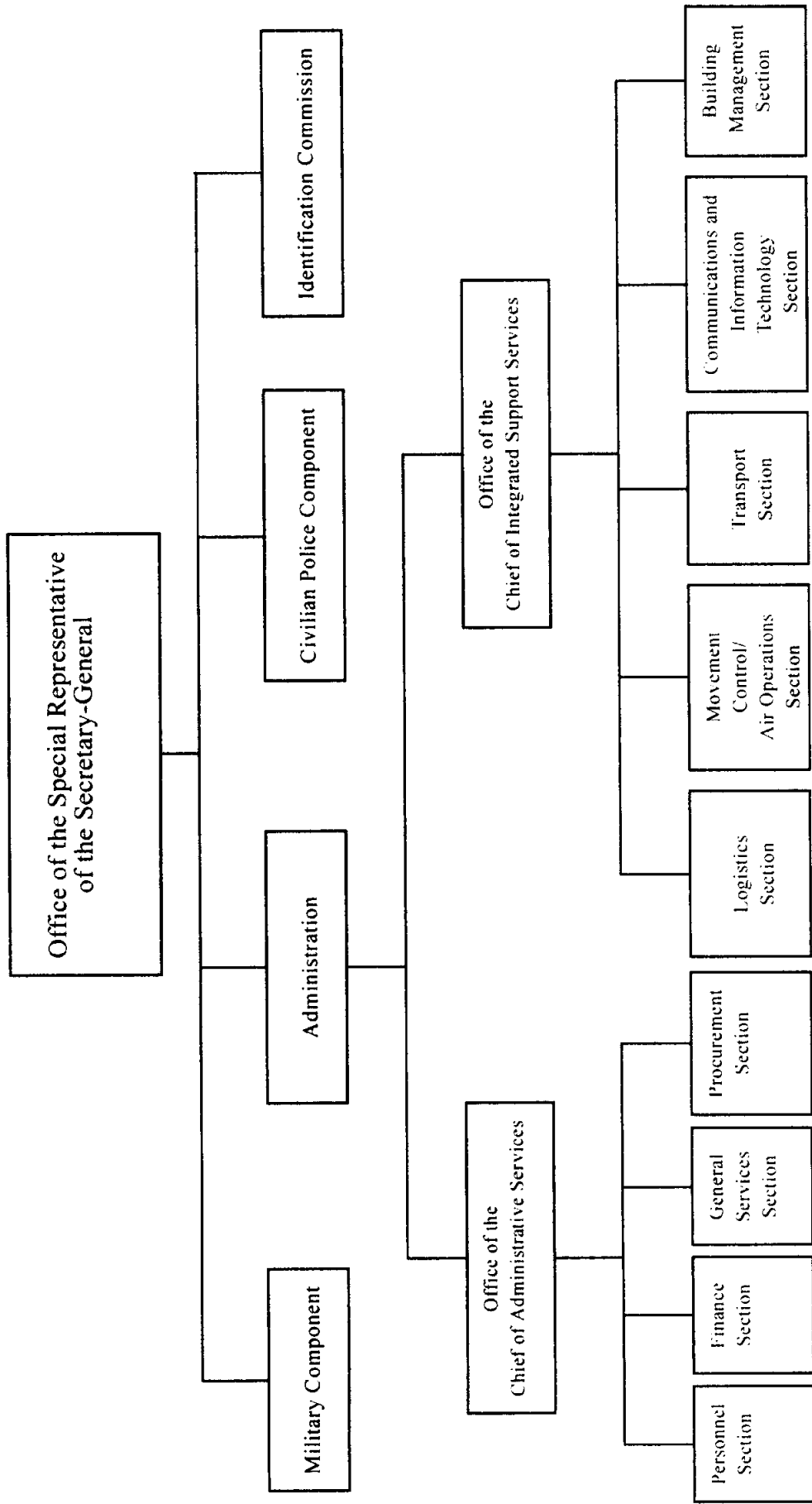
Ten staff were trained in the areas of air safety, air operations and movement control during the 2002/03 fiscal year. Provisions have been made in the 2003/04 budget to train four staff in air operations and proposed training requirements for 2004/05 include the training of six staff in air operations and air safety.

This recommendation has been implemented.

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 5*, vol. II and corrigendum (A/57/5 (vol. II) and Corr.5), chap. II, sect. C.

Annex

Organization chart





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