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Chairman: Mr. Mammadov (Vice-Chairman). (Azerbaijan)
*Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Saha

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In the absence of Mr. Yousfi (Algeria), Mr. Mammadov (Azerbaijan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 134: Financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (A/61/468 and A/61/551)

1. **Mr. Sach** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the revised budget for the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire for the period from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007 (A/61/468), recalled that the General Assembly, by its resolution 60/17 B, had appropriated the amount of \$420,175,200 for the maintenance of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). Subsequently, however, the Security Council, by its resolution 1682 (2006), had authorized an increase in the strength of the military and police components of the Operation of up to 1,500 additional personnel.

2. The current report therefore contained the proposed revised budget for UNOCI, amounting to \$472,889,300, an increase of \$52,714,100 or 12.5 per cent. The proposal provided for the establishment of 7 international posts, 17 national posts and 5 United Nations Volunteer positions, and reflected the additional resources required for the expansion of the Operation and related administrative and logistical support. The results-based budgeting frameworks set out the revised and additional outputs resulting from the increase in the Operation's military and police components. The estimates reflected actual deployment of military and police personnel for 2006/07, along with a delayed deployment factor for the remaining periods.

3. The report recommended that the General Assembly should appropriate an additional amount of \$52,714,100 for the maintenance of UNOCI for the period 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007 and that it should assess that amount at a monthly rate of \$4,392,841, should the Security Council decide to continue the mandate of the Operation.

4. **Mr. Saha** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/61/551), said that ACABQ was aware that UNOCI continued to operate in a complex and challenging political environment. Given that UNOCI was in an expansionary phase, ACABQ

had recommended approval of the full amount requested by the Secretary-General. It had also recommended that budgetary assumptions should continue to be refined in order to avoid high unencumbered balances. The Advisory Committee had noted the high quality of the revised budget document and the clear presentation of performance indicators, as well as the continued improvement in the Operation's vacancy rates, a trend it trusted would continue.

5. **Ms. Udo** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the African Group, paid tribute to the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union, the President of South Africa, the Secretary-General and the Security Council to achieve lasting peace and security in Côte d'Ivoire. She also commended the men and women of UNOCI for their gallant efforts in a challenging situation.

6. She welcomed the clear and comprehensive information provided in the proposed revised budget for UNOCI and supported the personnel increases authorized by Security Council resolution 1682 (2006). The request for 29 new posts was a step in the right direction, but she sought assurances that UNOCI would have sufficient resources for its increased workload, in particular adequate support for military and police personnel. Security Council resolution 1721 (2006), which took note of the decision of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2006/829), would further enhance the mandate of UNOCI; she likewise sought assurances that the Operation would in fact be able to execute that mandate.

7. She was pleased to learn that deployment of the additional troops was under way. Since the budget proposal had assumed a delayed deployment factor of 5 per cent for military and formed police units and 10 per cent for United Nations personnel, every effort must be made to ensure that deployments occurred in a timely fashion by coordinating closely with troop-contributing countries.

8. The African Group had always advocated synergies and regional cooperation among missions and the sharing of best practices, and had repeatedly called on the Secretariat to consider ways to retain critical staff when downsizing missions, including through reassignment to other missions. It was therefore pleased to note that staff from the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the

United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) had been identified for transfer to UNOCI. The group also welcomed the reduction in the vacancy rates for UNOCI and looked forward to further improvement.

9. **Mr. Sena** (Brazil), speaking also on behalf of Argentina, welcomed the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Secretary-General's proposal relating to the financing of UNOCI should be accepted, and also welcomed the clarity and comprehensiveness of the proposed revised budget document, especially with regard to the presentation of revised estimates and outputs. UNOCI should continue to reduce its high vacancy rate in order to ensure that it had adequate staff to fulfil its mandate. He expressed support for the mission and personnel of UNOCI and for the efforts of the African Union and ECOWAS to promote peace and development in Côte d'Ivoire.

10. **Mr. Kozaki** (Japan) enquired whether the surplus from the previous budget for UNOCI had been applied towards meeting the additional requirements of the Operation, as had been recommended by ACABQ in its comments on the performance report for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 and on the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007 for UNOCI (A/60/896). Furthermore, he noted the statement by ACABQ that it recognized that UNOCI was in an expansionary phase and recommended acceptance of the proposed revised budget pending further action by the Security Council; since the revised budget already covered the next 12-month period pursuant to Security Council resolution 1682 (2006), he wondered whether ACABQ anticipated further expansion of the Operation.

11. **Mr. Banny** (Côte d'Ivoire) called for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1721 (2006), which provided a framework for resolving the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. His Government was committed to implementation of that resolution and, to that end, had identified priority areas for action, including the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of militias; establishment of credible electoral rolls; restoration of State authority; redeployment of the civil administration and public services throughout the country; organization of elections; and restructuring of the armed forces.

12. UNOCI had played a key role in separating the warring factions in the country and had a key role to play in restoring peace and democracy. It must be

provided with the resources to fulfil its mandate. He trusted that the international community would continue to support the Operation and expressed his thanks to the troop-contributing countries in particular.

13. **Mr. Saha** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), replying to the representative of Japan, said that the "expansion" referred to in the Advisory Committee's report meant the expansion arising out of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1682 (2006). As for the application of prior surpluses to meet additional costs, ACABQ would take into account the performance report for 2006/07 when reviewing the budget estimates for 2007/08.

14. **Mr. Sach** (Controller), replying to the representative of Nigeria, said that the proposed revised budget figures for UNOCI were based on the additional requirements arising out of Security Council resolution 1682 (2006). The Secretariat would assess the budgetary implications of Security Council resolution 1721 (2006) and would first try to absorb any new costs within the revised budget currently before the Committee. If that was not sufficient, revised estimates would have to be presented. The level of financing to support police and military contingents, as indicated in the proposed revised budget, was adequate for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1682 (2006).

Agenda item 119: Improving the financial situation of the United Nations (*continued*) (A/61/556)

15. **Mr. Berti Oliva** (Cuba) said the current year was an important one for the financial situation of the Organization. Many administrative and budgetary reforms had been proposed, the unfortunate decision to impose a spending cap had been reversed, and a methodology for calculating the new scale of assessments would have to be approved. Although the Organization's financial situation had improved somewhat, it nevertheless remained alarming. Reliance on the assessed contributions of a small group of countries made the Organization's financial situation a precarious one.

16. At the 2005 World Summit, the participants had pledged to provide the United Nations with adequate resources, on a timely basis, to enable the Organization to implement its mandates and achieve its objectives. However, as at 31 October 2006, the Organization's

largest contributor owed 80, 31 and 67 per cent, respectively, of the total amounts outstanding for the regular budget, peacekeeping operations and the international tribunals.

17. The decision to reduce the share paid by the major contributor had led to an increase in the contributions assessed on other Member States. That had posed difficulties for many developing countries, particularly in view of the growing inequality of the international economic system. It was unacceptable that the United States of America, after having lobbied for the reduction of its contributions, should still fail to meet its commitments. Given that situation, the General Assembly should adjust the maximum assessment rate upward, in accordance with its resolution 55/5 C.

18. The Cuban Government had met its financial commitments in relation to the regular budget and the international tribunals and had reduced its arrears with regard to peacekeeping operations, despite the effects of the continuing economic embargo imposed by the United States. In particular, Cuba's inability to use the United States dollar for international transactions, including payments to international organizations, exposed it to currency fluctuations that hindered its efforts to meet its obligations to the Organization.

19. Once again, the Secretary-General's report on the financial situation of the Organization had not been submitted far enough in advance. That report merited in-depth discussions and close follow-up during informal consultations. His delegation reserved the right to comment further on the report under other agenda items.

20. **Mr. Pirkouhi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Organization's need for secure and predictable funding without conditions should not be predicated on the agenda of any Member State. At the end of 2005 there had been an attempt to make funding conditional on reform of the Organization. However, the spending cap imposed in the name of forcing the Organization to be more efficient had in fact undermined its performance and precipitated a financial crisis. The expanding mandates of the Organization required additional resources.

21. Paradoxically, the Member State which had benefited the most from the reformed scale of assessments continued to be in arrears and accounted for 81 per cent of the total shortfall in regular budget

contributions. As a result, other Member States were financing the agenda of that Member State. Such a situation was inefficient and even harmful. The Organization could not respond effectively and efficiently to growing demands unless Member States paid their contributions in full, on time and without conditions.

Other matters

22. **The Chairman** drew attention to a letter dated 2 November 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.5/61/11), which had been submitted under agenda item 122, "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations".

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.