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Chairman: Mr. Bródi (Hungary)
*Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Ms. McLurg

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

Agenda item 146: Financing of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (A/63/756 and A/63/777)

1. **Mr. Yamazaki** (Controller), introducing the note by the Secretary-General on the financing arrangements for the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 (A/63/756), said that UNMIS had made every effort to offset the funding shortfalls that had been projected for the 2008/09 financial period, including its arrangements for rental aircraft and reducing its requirements in the areas of communications, medical services, special equipment and general temporary assistance.

2. The additional appropriation had been requested to enable the Mission to meet cash requirements for personnel costs, aircraft rental, fuel and inland freight for contingent-owned equipment. UNMIS did not have the internal capacity to absorb the net additional costs of \$56,173,100.

3. The General Assembly was being requested to appropriate the amount of \$56,173,100 for the maintenance of the Mission for the 12-month period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009, in addition to the amount of \$820,720,600 already appropriated for the same period; to assess the amount of \$46,810,916 for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 April 2009; and to assess further the amount of \$9,362,184 at a monthly rate of \$4,681,092, should the Security Council decide to continue the mandate of the Mission beyond 30 April 2009.

4. **Ms. McLurg** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's related report (A/63/777), said that during the first seven months of the current financial period the Mission's actual costs had consistently exceeded budget forecasts, resulting in projected additional requirements of \$65.1 million in three main areas, namely, personnel-related costs, fuel and aircraft rental. The Mission had also incurred additional costs of \$22.6 million for the current budget period in procurement and construction of projects that had been deferred from 2007/08. The additional requirements were partially offset by a projected unutilized balance of \$4.5 million across various objects of expenditure and \$7 million from the termination of rental

agreements for five aircraft. Taking into account reductions in various expenditures, a net additional requirement of \$56.2 million in the current financial period was requested.

5. The Advisory Committee noted that the increased budgetary requirements stemmed primarily from circumstances beyond the Mission's direct control, particularly with respect to personnel-related expenditures.

6. The Advisory Committee further noted that efforts had been made to offset higher costs in the areas of personnel, fuel and aircraft rental by reviewing overall operational requirements, reprioritizing activities and operations and delaying acquisitions and construction projects. For the remainder of the financial period, the Mission should strive to maximize the resources available and include in the performance report for the current period any further cost savings achieved. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended an additional appropriation of the full amount requested by the Secretary-General, with partial assessment as presented in paragraph 12 of its report. Such a course of action would enable the Mission to fully implement its planned activities.

7. **Mr. Tawana** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that the Group recognized that UNMIS had made every effort to offset escalating prices, including the termination of rental agreements on five aircraft. The Group would like to know what effect the termination would have on the Mission's effectiveness. It noted that additional requirements had been partially offset by reductions in certain expenditures.

8. The Group concurred with the Secretary-General's request for additional appropriations and with the Advisory Committee's observation that the increased budgetary requirements emanated largely from circumstances beyond the Mission's control, in particular with respect to personnel-related costs. It further concurred with the Advisory Committee's recommendation for appropriation of the full amount requested by the Secretary-General, with partial assessment, and noted all of that Committee's conclusions and recommendations.

9. **Mr. Yamada** (Japan) said that the established cycle of peacekeeping operation budgets helped to ensure that peacekeeping budgets were maintained with

clarity and predictability. In that context, his delegation had reservations about the Secretary-General's request for additional appropriations for UNMIS during the current financial period, which represented a deviation from the established budget cycle. It would therefore appreciate further elaboration on the explanations provided in the Secretary-General's note (A/63/756) and the Advisory Committee's report (A/63/777), including further information on the Mission's current cash balance.

Agenda item 118: Programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (continued)

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council: Additional requirements and review of logical frameworks for special political missions for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2009 (A/63/346/Add.6, A/63/760 and A/63/779)

10. **Ms. Van Buerle** (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/63/346/Add.6), said that the report contained the proposed revised budgets for the period 1 January to 31 December 2009 for four special political missions, namely the United Nations Representative on the International Advisory and Monitoring Board of the Development Fund for Iraq, the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIC), the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS), and the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN). The net additional appropriation sought amounted to \$15,051,600 under section 3, Political affairs, and \$2,523,200 under section 35, Staff assessment.

11. The report also contained the revised narrative and the logical framework of the budget of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004).

12. The most recent extension of the mandate and membership of the International Advisory and Monitoring Board was contained in Security Council resolution 1859 (2008), which extended the Board's mandate to 31 December 2009. By its resolution 1852

(2008), the Council had extended the mandate of UNIIC to 28 February 2009 to enable the Commission to continue its investigation without interruption and gradually transfer operations, staff and assets to The Hague with a view to completing the transition by the time the Special Tribunal for Lebanon started its operation, which would be followed by a four-month liquidation period.

13. With regard to UNPOS, the General Assembly had been requested to initially approve a six-month requirement for 2009, since the intention had been to dispatch a security assessment mission to Somalia, the assessment and recommendations on which would be reflected in a supplementary budget for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2009. Under current conditions, the relocation of UNPOS could proceed only with the prior or parallel deployment of an appropriate security dynamic. The originally planned relocation date of July 2009 would therefore need to be delayed and the proposed revised budget for UNPOS assumed that the mission would remain in Nairobi until the end of the year. In the meantime, the Council had also adopted resolution 1863 (2009), which extended the scope of UNPOS. The impact of that resolution in conjunction with the interaction between UNPOS and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) was still being assessed but might result in additional requirements.

14. With regard to UNMIN, by its resolution 1864 (2009), the Council had renewed the mandate of that Mission until 23 July 2009 to continue the monitoring and management of arms and armed personnel in line with the 25 June Agreement among the political parties. The substantive operation would be followed by a four-month liquidation period.

15. The action requested of the General Assembly was set out in paragraph 83 of the Secretary-General's report.

16. **Ms. McLurg** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's related report (A/63/779), said that the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should approve the revised budget for the United Nations Representative on the International Advisory and Monitoring Board of the Development Fund for Iraq, as proposed by the Secretary-General.

17. It recommended a slight reduction in the proposed revised budget of UNIIC related to the rental

of armoured vehicles during the liquidation period. In view of the small size of the mission, the Advisory Committee was of the opinion that the liquidation period of the Commission could be expedited. Efforts should also be made to reduce the operational costs related to the liquidation period. The resulting savings should be reflected in the second performance report for the biennium 2008-2009.

18. With regard to the revised budget of UNPOS, the Advisory Committee recommended approval for the establishment of the four additional security personnel posts requested by the Secretary-General. It noted, however, that the proposal for UNPOS had not been updated to reflect the most recent political developments, including measures related to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1803 (2009). The Advisory Committee had been informed that the Secretary-General intended to submit revised budget proposals for the Office to the General Assembly at the second part of its resumed sixty-third session. It therefore recommended that the General Assembly should defer action on the proposed budget for UNPOS for 2009, with the exception of the proposals for additional security staff, pending submission of the Secretary-General's updated budget proposal.

19. Lastly, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should approve the resources requested by the Secretary-General for UNMIN as well as the revised narrative and logical framework for the budget of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004).

20. The Advisory Committee's specific recommendations were summarized in paragraph 29 of its report.

21. **The Chairman** drew the attention of the Committee to a letter dated 10 March 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/63/760).

22. **Mr. Diab** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that although his delegation supported the good-offices role of the Secretary-General, expansion of the concept of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council had given rise to doubts about the application of the results-based

approach to funding them. In particular, there were clear deficiencies in the budget of the Office of the Special Envoy for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) and his delegation had been calling the attention of Secretariat officials to them for over two years. It had pointed out that the establishment of mutual diplomatic relations between Syria and Lebanon was a bilateral issue between two sovereign States, and for the Special Envoy to expand his mandate to include it was a violation of Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, which prohibited interference in the internal affairs of Member States. The response of Secretariat officials had been that Security Council resolution 1680 (2006) contained language encouraging Syria to respond positively to the request made by Lebanon to delineate their common border and establish full diplomatic relations, to which he had responded in turn that encouragement by the Security Council of a State to do something did not grant a mandate to the Secretariat to follow up on the issue.

23. On the other hand, the expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement mentioned in the budget did not include reference to the provision of paragraph 2 of resolution 1559 (2004), which called for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon. That omission demonstrated the selectivity and lack of objectivity of the budget's authors. The focus on bilateral issues between Syria and Lebanon was intended to divert attention from the real problem in the region, which was continued Israeli occupation of Arab territory. Moreover, inclusion in the Special Envoy's mandate of objectives not covered by resolution 1559 (2004), even though other structures had been created to implement those tasks, resulted in duplication of work. The expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement in the budget for the Special Envoy also violated paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 55/231 in that they measured success based on the achievements of individual Member States rather than of the Secretariat. Even though, in accordance with section XI, paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 63/263, the Secretariat had consulted with Syria on revision of the narrative and logical framework of the budget, the budget continued to refer to bilateral relations between Syria and Lebanon in a way that amounted to interference in bilateral relations between two States.

24. The indicators of achievement in the budget also included “facilitation of increased extension of authority of the Government of Lebanon throughout Lebanese territory, in particular along its borders”. The focus on borders demonstrated that the Special Envoy wanted to expand his mandate to include border demarcation and arms smuggling. The third expected accomplishment, “facilitation in support of a strengthened response by all Member States to the provisions of Security Council resolution 1680 (2006)”, and the accompanying indicator of achievement, “encouragement by the Special Envoy for increased efforts to implement Security Council resolution 1680 (2006), taking into account progress made in this respect”, also granted latitude to the Special Envoy to overstep his mandate and intervene in the internal affairs of a Member State. Resolution 1680 (2006) only provided for “encouragement” of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Syria and Lebanon, whereas the sixth and seventh outputs listed in the budget provided for “good offices and consultations with the Governments of Lebanon and its neighbours” and “good offices and facilitation of bilateral and multilateral dialogue between Lebanon and its neighbours”. The disturbing impression was therefore created that the Special Envoy had some role to play in arranging bilateral relations between Lebanon and Syria and between Lebanon and Israel. Similarly, continued inclusion of the phrase “relevant Security Council resolutions” gave the impression that the Special Envoy intended to expand his mandate to include Security Council resolutions unrelated to resolution 1559 (2004), even though other structures had been created to implement those resolutions.

25. The Secretariat should revise the narrative and logical framework of the budget by deleting all such elements. The call in paragraph 2 for all remaining foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon was the only provision of resolution 1559 (2004) not referred to in the current revision. An expected accomplishment providing for withdrawal of foreign forces and an indicator of achievement that referred to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory were both needed and his delegation would continue to press for their inclusion. It would also continue to have reservations about results-based budgeting as long as it failed to be applied in a manner consistent with mandates.

26. **Mr. Khachab** (Lebanon) said that his delegation fully supported the Secretary-General’s request for additional funds for the liquidation of the Independent Investigation Commission. Like all other political missions, the Commission required full funding and support to ensure adequate functioning and the fulfilment of its mandate.

27. His delegation took note of paragraph 4, section XI, of resolution 63/263, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to revise the narrative and logical framework of the budget for the Special Envoy, taking into account recent developments and the concerns raised by Member States. It also wished to reiterate its appreciation to the many delegations that had supported Lebanon’s request to have that paragraph added.

28. His delegation noted that the indicators in the addendum reflected recent developments, including resumption of the national dialogue and progress in the establishment of diplomatic relations between Lebanon and Syria. Those positive developments highlighted Lebanon’s commitment to enhance and strengthen bilateral relations with Syria through the establishment of diplomatic relations and the resolution of all pending issues, including the delineation of the two countries’ common border.

29. Any foreign presence on Lebanese land, in its airspace or in its waters constituted a violation of Lebanon’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. Lebanon had long held that the violation of Lebanese sovereignty by Israel fell within the mandate of the Special Envoy. It noted that the continued Israeli occupation of Ghajar, Shaba’a Farms and Kfarchouba fell under the revised indicator of achievement related to air, land and sea violations and that the question of the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanon must also be clearly addressed in future reports of the Secretary-General.

30. **Ms. Norman** (United States of America) said that the United States strongly supported the efforts of the Secretary-General and his special representatives and special envoys together with the Department of Political Affairs. With respect to the International Advisory and Monitoring Board for Iraq, her delegation continued to support its critical work and role in providing oversight to the Development Fund for Iraq and noted with favour the Secretary-General’s

plan to fund 2009 requirements from the unencumbered balances from 2008.

31. Her delegation was pleased with the progress in the transition from the Investigation Commission to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. The transition should be seamless, with no gaps in coverage between the two bodies. Her delegation noted the Advisory Committee's comments on the resource requirements and possible ways to reduce costs during the liquidation period and would welcome further clarification on possible areas of savings.

32. A successful political settlement in Somalia was of great interest to the United States and vital to regional stability. Her delegation commended UNPOS for its work under difficult circumstances and for its utilization of the common support services available through the United Nations Office at Nairobi. It noted that the reduction in requirements for 2009 was mainly due to the inability of UNPOS to relocate to Somalia owing to the current security environment. Her delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations regarding the request for additional security posts.

33. It was encouraging that the improved political situation in Nepal had resulted in a downsizing of UNMIN. Her delegation noted, however, that planning assumptions for UNMIN in 2009 had had to be revised as a result of the extension of the Mission's mandate and the delayed plan for its liquidation. It therefore encouraged the Secretary-General to continue to explore cost savings during the further downsizing period.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.