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### Fifth Committee

#### Summary record of the 36th meeting

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*Chair:* Mr. Bhattarai ..... (Nepal)  
*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

**Agenda item 131: Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors (continued)**

**(b) United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/70/5 (Vol. II), A/70/724 and A/70/803)**

1. **Mr. Mkumba** (Chair of the Audit Operations Committee of the Board of Auditors), introducing the financial report and audited financial statements for the 12-month period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 and report of the Board of Auditors on United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/70/5 (Vol. II)), said that the Board had issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statements of United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial year ended 30 June 2015.

2. The peacekeeping apportionment for the financial year 2014/15 had been \$8.57 billion, an increase of 8.6 per cent compared with the previous year's budget of \$7.89 billion. Expenditure had increased by 9.1 per cent in 2014/15 compared with 2013/14, and an amount of \$0.27 billion had been unutilized.

3. The year ended 30 June 2015 had been the second year that the financial statements had been prepared in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). The Administration had strengthened the systems and processes for the preparation of financial statements, which was reflected in greater accuracy and a reduction in the number of errors requiring rectification. However, there remained room for further improvement; the Administration needed to continue its efforts to strengthen IPSAS-based accounting standards and, in particular, to train field mission staff.

4. The Board noted that the overall rate of implementation of its recommendations had remained more or less static, with a marginal increase from 51 per cent in 2013/14 to 52 per cent in 2014/15. However, recommendations shown as implemented included recommendations that had been reiterated in the current report and that had been closed in the previous report only to avoid duplication. If those were excluded, the actual implementation rate in terms of remedial action fell to 28 per cent.

5. Noticeable improvements had been made in some areas previously highlighted by the Board, including reductions in delays in the write-off and disposal of

assets and in excess holdings of light passenger vehicles, improvements in compliance with the policy directive relating to advance purchase of tickets for official travel, and better utilization of budgeted flight hours.

6. However, there were continuing deficiencies in several areas. There had been no significant improvement in the level of variances between appropriations and expenditures in classes or subclasses of expenditure, and there had been instances of expenditure under classes and subclasses for which there was no appropriation. In addition, deficient budget formulation had led to redeployments between different classes of expenditure totalling \$291.36 million during 2014/15, about the same level as a percentage of the original budget as in 2013/14. In some instances, amounts redeployed under a particular expenditure class or subclass had remained partly unutilized at the end of the financial period.

7. Concerning asset management, the directive on property management issued by the Administration in February 2015 required that assets should be put to use immediately after their entry into inventory, with the exception of reserve and safety stock items. However, during the reporting period assets valued at \$37.79 million had been awaiting deployment for periods longer than six months. Furthermore, 9,550 assets, valued at \$14.71 million, had been transferred to missions after the completion of their life expectancy, while 5,720 items, valued at \$8.86 million, had been transferred to missions with less than one year of useful life remaining. A total of 7,810 items, valued at \$11.2 million, out of a total of 56,366 items, representing 14 per cent, had exceeded their life expectancy while lying unused in stock. Items valued at \$4.57 million had not been found during physical verification in three field missions. There was an evident need for closer linkages between acquisition planning and procurement and deployment of equipment.

8. Strategic deployment stocks had been set up in 2002 to facilitate quick start-up of new missions. That involved timely procurement of items as well as turnover of stocks to ensure that items in stock remained contemporary. As at 30 June 2015, there had been 3,687 items, valued at \$46.06 million, in the strategic deployment stocks inventory, but 55 per cent of the items had been more than a year old, and 579

items, valued at \$4.37 million, had already exceeded their useful life.

9. Concerning travel arrangements, the overall rate of non-compliance with the administrative instruction on the advance purchase of tickets had decreased from 52 per cent in 2013/14 to 48 per cent in 2014/15. However, non-compliance had increased in some missions, in some cases in respect of activities that could have been planned in advance.

10. Peacekeeping operations had incurred expenditure of \$750.92 million in air transportation during 2014/15, representing 26 per cent of the total expenditure of \$2.84 billion under operational costs. Aircraft had been unused by missions for more than 50 per cent of contracted days, and there remained a persistent mismatch between the flight hours available and those actually required or used by missions. The primary purpose of the Strategic Air Operations Centre was to make strategic and out-of-mission flights efficient, cost-effective and responsive to operational needs by taking into account the complexities, specificities and operational conditions of each mission. However, that objective had remained unfulfilled as the Centre had failed to carry out pre-flight and post-flight analysis of the bulk of flights.

11. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) had introduced unmanned aerial vehicle systems for reconnaissance purposes, but the average monthly utilization rate had only ranged from 8 to 44 per cent of anticipated utilization. The experience gained of actual utilization rates suggested there was scope for optimizing the number of systems leased and for reducing costs without compromising operational requirements.

12. With regard to procurement and contracting, the Board had again noted instances of deviation from bidding requirements or established tendering processes, lack of competitive bidding, non-levying of liquidated damages, non-adherence to provisions relating to performance bonds and deficient contract management. A prompt payment discount, for example, amounting to \$524,670 had not been secured under contracts for fuel, rations and other items owing to delays in the processing of invoices and claims.

13. While the Administration had achieved substantial progress in various components of the global field support strategy over the five-year implementation period ending in June 2015, the end-state vision for each pillar had not been fully achieved. Despite the challenges arising from competing operational demands, the Administration should have been able to coordinate, prioritize and plan its activities more effectively and demonstrate how the objectives of the strategy had been achieved and what benefits had accrued to stakeholders.

14. Although governance and performance management had been identified as key elements, to be established at the beginning of the implementation period, the end-state vision and the key performance indicators had been introduced only in the second and third years of implementation. Articulation of the end-state vision and a plan for implementation of the strategy at the beginning of the implementation period would have facilitated its fulfilment.

15. The Global Field Support Strategy Steering Committee was the body with primary responsibility for providing guidance and corrective action for timely implementation of the overall strategy. However, as in 2013/14, the Committee had met only once in 2014/15. The lack of periodic monitoring and review of progress had detracted from effective and timely implementation.

16. A programme implementation plan had been developed in May 2013 consisting of 12 main activities and 176 subactivities. In its previous report, the Board had highlighted that 75 of the 176 subactivities had yet to be completed. The plan had not been updated until February 2015, just four months before the end of the implementation period, at which stage 40 subactivities had been pending. At the end of the implementation period, 11 subactivities had remained pending.

17. Despite a previous recommendation by the Board, no steps had been taken during the reporting period to reconstitute the resource efficiency group or to charge another review body with identifying and following through on identified efficiencies. In addition, key elements of the human resources pillar had yet to be put in place, and there had also been delays in taking forward the supply chain management pillar and in developing enabling capacities.

18. According to the Administration, the global field support strategy had resulted in net savings of

\$424.51 million up to 2013/14. However, the Board had found that some of the reported figures were only estimates based on the budget and could not be construed as actual realized benefits. Furthermore, in some cases, the Administration had been unable to provide a breakdown or documentation in support of costs and benefits, including amounts that had been reported to the General Assembly. Consequently, the Board had been unable to obtain sufficient evidence to fully validate the claims made by the Administration. The Board recognized that the benefits of a business transformation strategy such as the global field support strategy might be both tangible and intangible, but a benefits realization plan must capture empirically demonstrable costs and realized benefits on the basis of a consistent and objective methodology.

19. Concerning the use of information and communications technology (ICT) resources in peacekeeping operations, the Board noted that there were 163,886 ICT assets, with a purchase value of \$639.49 million, and that life expectancy had been fixed at four years for information technology assets and seven years for communication assets. A total of 50,573 ICT assets, or 31 per cent, valued at \$243 million, had exceeded their life expectancy and a large number of assets were unutilized or remained idle.

20. Despite a previous recommendation by the Board, no market research or cost-benefit analysis had been undertaken in respect of any of the 15 ICT standards formulated or extended during 2014/15. In addition, the disaster recovery and business continuity plans that had been scheduled for review in October 2013 had yet to be updated or reviewed. Systematic and periodic vulnerability assessments were essential in identifying security threats to information security systems, but four of the six missions reviewed had been unable to indicate that cybersecurity penetration testing had been performed. Furthermore, no information had been available on any training and awareness programmes in ICT security during 2014/15. Based on its findings, the Board had issued a number of recommendations designed to redress the weaknesses identified and improve governance and financial management.

21. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations

for the financial period ended 30 June 2015 (A/70/724), said that the report also contained information on the implementation of recommendations made for the financial periods ended 30 June 2013 and 30 June 2014.

22. The report provided information on the Secretariat's response to the Board's recommendations, including detailed information on the status of implementation, the department responsible and the estimated date of completion. A level of priority had also been assigned to each recommendation.

23. For the period ended 30 June 2015, those marked as high priority included budget formulation and management, asset and inventory management, rotation of strategic deployment stocks, monitoring of travel, right-sizing the air fleet and review of the requirements for unmanned aerial vehicle systems. With regard to procurement, the Board had recommended measures to strengthen training, oversight and internal controls, and allow the Organization to benefit from prompt payment discounts. Regarding the global field support strategy, high-priority recommendations related to governance, mainstreaming and cost-benefit analysis of the strategy.

24. For the periods ended 30 June 2013 and 30 June 2014, high-priority recommendations had included improvements in the write-off of assets, addressing delays in procurement, strengthening procedures in respect of construction contracts, and monitoring of quick-impact projects. The Board had also made recommendations on information security and the use of ICT assets.

25. After thorough scrutiny, all recommendations had been accepted by the Administration. By February 2016, of the 144 recommendations 86 had been implemented and 47 were currently in progress. The Administration was confident that its commitment to the timely and full implementation of the recommendations made by the Board would improve the management of resources and increase the efficiency of the Secretariat.

26. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/803), said that the Advisory Committee had repeatedly expressed concern over the reissuance of recommendations by the Board of Auditors, as an indication of systemic problems in

the management of peacekeeping operations and the need to strengthen internal controls. The persistent shortcomings identified by the Board in successive financial periods also indicated the need for greater accountability in peacekeeping operations, particularly on the part of senior managers handling risks associated with their respective areas of responsibility. The Secretary-General should implement immediate accountability measures, particularly with regard to budget formulation, air operations, travel management and procurement.

27. The Advisory Committee agreed with the observations of the Board of Auditors on budget formulation and management, asset management, travel management, air transportation, procurement and contracting, medical services, environmental protection and waste management, and the global field support strategy. The report of the Advisory Committee on cross-cutting issues related to United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/70/742) took up a number of matters raised by the Board in further detail.

28. **Mr. Chamlongrasdr** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Board of Auditors, as an independent external audit and oversight body, played a critical role in ensuring compliance with the principles of fair presentation and full disclosure in the financial statements of United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Group continued to be impressed with the timely submission, reader-friendly format and high quality of the Board's reports.

29. The Group noted that the financial statements had been prepared in accordance with IPSAS, and welcomed the efforts made to improve the preparation of financial statements, increase accuracy and reduce the number of errors. It encouraged continued efforts to strengthen IPSAS-based accounting processes and, in particular, to train field mission staff.

30. The Group also noted that, for 2014/15, the Board had issued a total of 13 main recommendations, compared with 21 in the previous report. However, the same areas continued to be challenges for the Administration. The implementation rate had increased only marginally, from 51 per cent in 2013/14 to 52 per cent in 2014/15. The Board's recommendations should be implemented in full and in a timely manner. To that end, the Administration should establish time frames and priorities for implementation and hold office holders accountable for shortcomings. Implementation

of some recommendations required substantive, often systemic, action, entailing a longer time frame for compliance. The Administration should present proposals in respect of issues requiring a change in systems for consideration and approval by Member States.

31. Having noted the Board's observations and recommendations, the Group was concerned that despite progress in implementation of the global field support strategy, significant shortcomings had been identified and the end-state vision had not been achieved. The Group would seek further information.

32. The Group also noted that other areas needed urgent improvement, especially enterprise risk management, the provision of medical services, environmental protection and waste management in field missions. The Group was seriously concerned at the increase in fraud and presumptive fraud from 39 cases in 2013/14 to 52 cases in 2014/15. There must be greater emphasis on fraud awareness and a comprehensive mechanism for fraud prevention.

33. **Mr. Khalizov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation was pleased to note that the Board of Auditors had issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statements of United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial year ended 30 June 2015, and welcomed the Board's conclusion that peacekeeping operations remained financially stable, with sufficient cash resources to sustain core operations. He reaffirmed his delegation's support for the Board's efforts to identify weaknesses in business processes, such as budget formulation and financial management, procurement and contracting, asset management, implementation of construction projects, risk management, provision of medical services, and environmental protection and waste management in field missions. However, 2016 was not the first year that the Board had identified shortcomings in the implementation of the global field support strategy. His delegation agreed with the Board that it was difficult to judge the real benefits of its implementation given that the claims that the strategy had resulted in savings were based only on budgetary indicators, the accuracy of which required verification.

34. His delegation was very concerned that tens of millions of dollars had been spent on the leasing of unmanned aerial vehicles without any clear strategy or rules as to their use and without clear qualitative and



quantitative indicators that would make it possible to assess their effectiveness. The deployment of such systems in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali had shown a lack of adequate analysis of actual needs and the absence of a uniform approach to procurement.

35. As stated in the Secretary-General's overview report on the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/70/749), the Organization lacked a regulatory framework for unmanned aerial systems that would enable vendor registration, performance and effective contract management. That amounted to a failure to comply with paragraph 39 of General Assembly resolution 69/307 on cross-cutting issues in peacekeeping, in which the Assembly highlighted the need to ensure consistency, transparency and cost-efficiency in budgeting for unmanned aerial systems. His delegation would continue to engage in substantive discussions on that important matter in the context of the budget estimates for 2016/17 for those peacekeeping operations that were requesting resources for the acquisition of unmanned aerial vehicles, and hoped that it would remain a focus of attention for the Board of Auditors, bearing in mind its significant financial implications. The Secretary-General should implement the Board's recommendations expeditiously, including those contained in previous reports but not yet implemented by the Secretariat.

**Agenda item 148: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations** (*continued*)

*Cross-cutting issues* (A/70/318 (Part II), A/70/729, A/70/742, A/70/742/Add.17, A/70/749 and A/70/754; AC.5/70/22)

36. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the overview report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: budget performance for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 and budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/70/749), said that the report had been streamlined in content and format to focus on new developments and policy changes and management challenges facing the different peacekeeping operations. It also responded to the decision of the Assembly to consider the report of the Secretary-General on the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations.

37. Concerning 2014/15 budget performance, \$8.3 billion had been invested in peacekeeping operations for the period, with an overall budget implementation rate of 96.7 per cent. The unencumbered balance of \$279 million reflected underexpenditure, inter alia, on operational costs in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), mainly due to lower aviation requirements and the lower-than-budgeted actual cost of fuel; in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), mainly attributable to the delayed deployment of military and formed police personnel; in the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), due to the downsizing of the Operation; and in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), mainly attributable to the closure of camps and offices.

38. Key developments in peacekeeping missions in 2014/15 included the deployment and strengthening of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA); the continued establishment of MINUSMA and its expansion in the north of Mali; the protection of civilians by and reconfiguration of MONUSCO; the focus on the protection of civilians in South Sudan by UNMISS; the streamlining of UNAMID; support for the promotion of intercommunity dialogue by the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA); support for presidential elections by UNOCI; support for elections by MINUSTAH; and the containment and avoidance of regionalization of the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic by the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

39. For 2016/17, \$8.25 billion was being proposed for peacekeeping, including the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, the Global Service Centre and the support account. That represented a decrease of \$22.3 million, or 0.3 per cent compared with 2015/16. It reflected significant reductions in operational and civilian personnel costs in line with the reconfiguration and streamlining of operations, as well as the downsizing and transition of missions. The decline in global fuel prices had also resulted in lower operational costs. Those reductions had been offset by additional resources for military and police personnel in a number of missions.

40. By its resolution 67/261, the General Assembly had introduced deductions from the reimbursement of troop costs for absent or non-functional major equipment. To date, \$163.7 million had been deducted for the four quarters of 2014/15 and the first three quarters of 2015/16. The deductions were designed to incentivize corrective measures in the serviceability of equipment provided by troop- and police-contributing countries. Given that a number of missions were expanding or downsizing, and others would reach full deployment during 2015/16, projection of future deductions was less certain, and therefore the current budget proposals did not include provisions for such deductions.

41. Introducing the budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 for the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, (A/70/754), she said that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/307, the Secretary-General had submitted the first stand-alone budget proposal for the Centre, to be charged against the missions that the Centre supported. The proposed budget for 2016/17 amounted to \$42.0 million, an increase of 18.1 per cent compared with 2015/16. The Centre would service 14 missions in 2016/17, including MINUSMA from 1 July 2016, and it was proposed to transfer 35 posts from MINUSMA that were currently co-located in UNOCI. As the Centre matured into its role, it was also proposed to establish a new Director role at the D-2 level, while retaining a Deputy Director at the D-1 level. Furthermore, the mandated nationalization programme, which had started in 2014/15, would be completed by the end of 2016/17, for a total of 68 Field Service posts nationalized over the two-year period ending on 30 June 2017.

42. **Ms. Wainaina** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (A/70/729), said that the Secretary-General remained deeply distressed at the allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, particularly of children, by United Nations personnel, as well as by foreign military forces in the Central African Republic not under the command of the United Nations.

43. The report provided detailed information on the allegations received in 2015 and the status of investigations. In 2015, the number of new allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse had increased, with a

total of 99 new allegations reported for the United Nations system: 69 against United Nations personnel in peace operations and 30 against personnel from other United Nations system organizations. In peacekeeping operations, the increase in allegations was primarily attributable to MINUSCA, although increases had also been seen in MONUSCO and, to a lesser extent, in UNOCI and MINUSMA.

44. The report also provided an update on the efforts made by the Secretariat to implement the more than forty measures set out in the previous special measures report, and put forward robust new initiatives to further strengthen measures for protection against sexual exploitation and abuse in the areas of prevention, transparency, accountability, risk management and remedial action.

45. To strengthen transparency, the report included country-specific information on allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse relating to uniformed peacekeepers. The Secretariat would also regularly make country-specific information available publicly on the website of the Conduct and Discipline Unit of the Department of Field Support, while the Secretary-General would include in future reports country-specific information on all outstanding allegations, including the status of referrals for criminal accountability and information on cases reported before 2015.

46. With regard to remedial action, including support for victims, the Secretary-General had established a trust fund to finance the specialized services required by victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. Notes verbales had been sent to all Member States requesting voluntary contributions. In addition, the Secretary-General was seeking the agreement of Member States to transfer payments withheld on account of substantiated sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel to the trust fund. The Secretary-General was also asking Member States to consider establishing claims mechanisms for victims.

47. Concerning prevention, improvements had been made in vetting uniformed personnel to avoid reengaging individuals with a history of misconduct while in service with the United Nations. Troop-contributing countries were also being requested to certify that predeployment training had been conducted, and that nominated personnel had not engaged in misconduct while in United Nations

service. In addition, a communications and public information strategy had been developed targeting host communities, Member States and troop- and police-contributing countries. The e-learning programme on sexual exploitation and abuse was being finalized and would be rolled out by the second quarter of 2016.

48. On accountability, the report described efforts to strengthen investigations, including developing uniform standards of investigation, enhancing the capacity of immediate response teams and adopting a six-month timeline, or shorter in urgent cases, for concluding investigations. Troop-contributing countries were being asked to expand the scope of investigative operations open to the United Nations pending the availability of a national investigation officer, and were being encouraged to enter into bilateral agreements with the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) authorizing the Office to carry out investigations on their behalf or in conjunction with them. In addition, Member States were being requested to agree that, where an investigation was not completed within one year, payment in respect of the unit with which an implicated individual was deployed, or a corresponding replacement unit, would be suspended until the troop-contributing country provided notification of the completion of the investigation, and to agree also that pending notification all further deployments should be suspended.

49. To ensure that such acts fell within the ambit of criminal accountability, Member States were being requested to assess their national legislation to determine its applicability to sex crimes committed by nationals while in service with the United Nations and determine whether new legislative action was required, including allowing nationality-based extraterritorial jurisdiction. In the case of military contingents, they were also being requested to conduct on-site court martials in respect of allegations constituting sex crimes under national legislation, and to obtain DNA samples from uniformed personnel alleged to have committed sexual abuse.

50. In the area of risk management, mandatory risk mitigation measures would be implemented for missions considered to entail greater risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. That might include non-fraternization policies and an absolute prohibition of sexual relationships between United Nations personnel and nationals of the host State. For uniformed

personnel, measures such as regular inspection of bases, strict enforcement of curfews and accessibility to the local population would be monitored and risks mitigated once identified.

51. The external independent review panel on sexual exploitation and abuse by international peacekeeping forces in the Central African Republic had found that the manner in which the United Nations had responded to allegations was seriously flawed and had made a number of recommendations to address the weaknesses identified. The report highlighted 12 of those recommendations, which were being comprehensively analysed with a view to implementation. The Secretary-General had appointed a special coordinator to improve the United Nations response to sexual exploitation and abuse and to help ensure the effective and timely implementation of measures to strengthen the response to allegations.

52. Acts of sexual exploitation and abuse undermined the values of the United Nations and the principle that no harm should be done to those who the Organization was entrusted with protecting. The Secretary-General was committed to taking robust measures to prevent such acts by United Nations personnel, ensure accountability and offer support to victims.

53. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations ([A/70/742](#)), welcomed the streamlining of the Secretary-General's overview report and encouraged further improvement in the presentation, format and quality of information.

54. The Advisory Committee noted that the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations were referenced throughout the overview report as a basis for potential changes in policies and structures and, in certain cases, resource requirements. The Advisory Committee considered each proposal for posts or resources on its own merits, and its recommendations on specific budget proposals should not be viewed as approval of the Panel's proposals or the Secretary-General's response.

55. Although the total proposed resource requirements for peacekeeping operations — estimated at \$8.25 billion for 2016/17 — represented a \$22.3 million decrease compared with approved resources for 2015/16, when two external factors, namely declining fuel prices and



favourable currency exchange rate fluctuations, were removed, overall requirements for 2016/17 had actually increased by \$47 million.

56. Regarding planning, budgeting and financial management practices in United Nations peacekeeping, the Advisory Committee shared the concern of the Board of Auditors at the level and frequency of redeployments within and between expenditure groups, and called for greater budgetary accuracy and fiscal discipline. The Advisory committee had begun receiving six-monthly updates regarding such budgetary redeployments and intended to make recommendations thereon.

57. With regard to support for peacekeeping missions, a detailed breakdown and explanation of the impact of efficiency measures would have been useful. In addition, with regard to the backstopping ratio, the Secretary-General needed to establish benchmarks for measuring efficiency and monitoring progress over time.

58. On the global field support strategy, the Advisory Committee was concerned that the Board of Auditors had found that none of the pillars had fully achieved their end-state vision and that it had been unable to obtain sufficient evidence to validate the reported savings. With regard to the benefits of implementing Umoja in peacekeeping operations, the Advisory Committee noted that, in addition to the \$18.5 million worth of benefits so far identified for 2017, an additional \$32.9 million in benefits was expected in the latter half of 2017, details of which should be reflected in the next overview report.

59. With regard to supply chain management, the lessons learned from the implementation of the global field support strategy should be fully incorporated into the project. The Advisory Committee also looked forward to strengthened environmental management in peacekeeping missions, with updated policy guidance, including on waste management. In addition, greater transparency was needed regarding technology projects in peacekeeping, including cost details.

60. On proposals to address the administrative processes and rules posing challenges to field missions, the obstacles to the provision of timely support for mission start-up and crisis response must be clearly described, along with a full justification of any proposed changes. In the absence of adequate justification, the Advisory Committee did not

recommend approval of the proposals to extend existing limits in respect of temporary duty assignments and the use of retirees.

61. Regarding the management of air operations, an important opportunity existed to improve overall efficiency and effectiveness on the basis of coordinated efforts by Headquarters offices and peacekeeping operations. An overall trend analysis should be conducted without delay. There appeared to be scope for optimizing the number and types of unmanned aerial systems deployed in peacekeeping missions. It was regrettable that no details had been provided of the assessment of the roles and activities of the offices overseeing air operations, as mandated by the Assembly. The Advisory Committee also expected implementation of the long-awaited aviation information management system to address persistent weaknesses in management and oversight.

62. With regard to the Secretary-General's report on the special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse ([A/70/729](#)), the Advisory Committee noted with great concern that the number of allegations had increased in 2015, with the overall numbers of allegations reported in peacekeeping missions at their highest levels since 2011. In addition, the Advisory Committee remained extremely concerned about the persistence of allegations related to the most egregious forms of sexual exploitation and abuse. Investigations must be speeded up. With regard to the recommendations of the external review panel on specific cases of sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by forces in the Central African Republic, the Advisory Committee looked forward to the submission of a comprehensive report by the end of the current session.

63. The Assembly was requested to take note of the progress made in advancing the Secretary-General's initiatives as set out in his previous report ([A/69/779](#)), and of the new proposals contained in his latest report. In addition, it was requested to approve a series of requests related to actions to be taken in that regard, including actions by Member States. The Assembly should also be provided with more detailed information on the modalities for the operation of the trust fund for support services for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.

64. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on the 2016/17 budget proposals for the Regional Service

Centre in Entebbe ([A/70/742/Add.17](#)), he said that the Secretary-General should be requested to present a more detailed results-based budgeting framework, by service line, in future budget submissions and performance reports. It was necessary to build on Umoja implementation and to focus on the standardization of business processes to achieve greater efficiencies. The Secretary-General should also be requested to include, in the presentation of his budget proposals and performance reports for the Regional Service Centre, a support component to reflect separately the results-based budgeting framework, staffing and resource requirements related to the operations and internal needs of the Centre.

65. The Advisory Committee recommended approval of the proposal to establish a post of Director of the Regional Service Centre at the D-2 level. In view of the managerial and operational independence conferred upon the Centre by the General Assembly, the management and decision-making role of the Centre Steering Committee would be assumed by the Director of the Centre, who would also be accountable to client missions for the delivery of services. Concerning the proposal to retain the current post of Chief at the D-1 level as Deputy Director of the Centre, the organizational chart showed that the Deputy Director would assume the same functions and responsibilities as those fulfilled by the current Deputy Chief of the Centre, a post classified at the P-5 level. In view of the lack of justification provided in support of the requirement for a post of Deputy Director, the Advisory Committee recommended the abolishment of the existing post of Chief at the D-1 level.

66. With respect to the governance and management framework of the Regional Service Centre, the Secretary-General should be requested to include, in his next budget submission, proposals for adapting the existing governance arrangements of the Centre to its new, independent, status. In that regard, it was essential that the existing and future functional and operational requirements of client missions were fully met, that high standards in the timeliness and quality of service delivery were maintained, and that cost-recovery arrangements were fair and equitable.

67. With regard to the proposed scalability model for the Centre, the Advisory Committee welcomed the efforts made, but considered the proposed model to be a first step only. It made suggestions for further development and refinement of the model, and stressed

the need to include the Transport and Movements Integrated Control Centre and Regional Information and Communications Technology Service in the model. The Secretary-General should provide details of the Control Centre's workload and justify its staffing, and, with regard to the Regional Technology Service, of the roles of all entities involved in Umoja implementation and the related resources.

68. Regarding the Regional Service Centre's share of common costs and infrastructure improvement costs, the Secretary-General should provide details of the cost-sharing arrangements at the Entebbe Support Base, and an explanation of the percentage share of the Service Centre.

69. Lastly, the Advisory Committee's recommendations on the proposals regarding posts and positions, vacancy rates, official travel and acquisition of vehicles would result in an overall reduction of \$2.8 million in the proposed budget for the Centre for 2016/17.

70. **Ms. Mendoza** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), introducing the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on its activities on peace operations for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2015 ([A/70/318](#) (Part II)), said that, in 2015, the Office had issued 162 oversight reports on peace operations. The reports included 524 recommendations, 63 of which had been classified as critical to the Organization.

71. During the reporting period, the Internal Audit Division, one of three Divisions of the Office, had made use of thematic audits to identify systemic strengths and weaknesses across peacekeeping operations; assess whether adequate policies and instructions had been developed and implemented; and determine whether appropriate monitoring and oversight had taken place. In 2015, thematic audits had been completed on conduct and discipline; waste management; and Umoja implementation and deployment guidelines.

72. The Investigations Division had issued 64 reports in 2015, including 22 investigation reports, 19 contingent reports and 23 closure reports. The highest number of investigation reports related to personnel issues, which included falsification of documents, misuse of information and communications technology resources, recruitment irregularities, conflict of interest and abuse of authority.

73. During the reporting period, the Inspection and Evaluation Division had issued four reports, including three evaluations and one review. The Division's work plan was based on a risk-based assessment initiated the previous year, developed in consultation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. The three evaluations were on enforcement and remedial assistance efforts in respect of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations and related personnel in peacekeeping operations; the Standing Police Capacity of the Police Division, Department of Peacekeeping Operations; and the senior leadership training of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. The review was on the logical frameworks underlying selected aspects of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

74. The issue of sexual exploitation and abuse remained a significant area of concern. In response to the spike in allegations in the Central African Republic, the Office was arranging a deployment schedule to ensure the presence of investigation staff on the ground in that country at all times. The level of deployment would be scaled up or down as necessary in response to developments in the field.

75. The Office was fully engaged with the Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Peacekeeping Personnel and was working with the Department of Field Support to develop training for immediate response teams and national investigation officers. The nature of the activity in the Central African Republic had demonstrated that close working partnerships were needed with United Nations funds and programmes. The Office was working closely with the Department of Field Support and with the funds and programmes to develop protocols for sharing information, and also with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to develop training for child interviewing.

76. **The Chair** drew attention to the note by the Secretary-General on the proposed budgetary levels for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/C.5/70/22).

77. **Ms. Wairatpanij** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, paid tribute to the men and women serving in peacekeeping missions, in particular those who had lost their lives in the service of peace and humanity.

78. The Committee's consideration of cross-cutting issues as a necessary element in providing policy guidance for effective and efficient mandate delivery was all the more important in the light of current new initiatives, including those arising from the High-level Panel on Peacekeeping Operations.

79. The Group welcomed the new, streamlined format of the Secretary-General's overview report, with a focus on new developments, policy changes and management challenges, and encouraged continued efforts in that regard. However, a number of reform initiatives had been presented separately, some with no related course of action, making it difficult to provide policy guidance. Future reports should provide information on the links between reform initiatives and specific action to be taken, in particular on any structural and policy changes in connection with peacekeeping operations.

80. The Group noted the information on budget implementation, including excessive redeployment between expenditure groups and classes and between missions. The Group was concerned about continued weaknesses in that area, including significant variances between appropriation and actual expenditures, which implied poor budgetary formulation and implementation with a potentially negative impact on mandate delivery. Formulation of peacekeeping budgets should be based on the mandate and the specific circumstances on the ground in the case of each mission. Adherence to budgetary discipline and to the Financial Regulations and Rules was vital.

81. Regarding recruitment, timely recruitment of personnel was important in addressing challenges on the ground. The Group was concerned at the lack of substantive improvement in the representation of troop- and police-contributing countries in the Departments of Field Support and Peacekeeping Operations, including at senior levels. It was also concerned that some senior positions were held exclusively by a small group of Member States and urged the Secretariat to improve representation and to increase the recruitment of women.

82. With regard to the delivery of support to peacekeeping missions, clear benchmarks were needed to realize savings and efficiencies. Concerning the global field support strategy, the Group welcomed the substantive progress made with regard to the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe. However, it was concerned

that none of the four pillars of the strategy had fully achieved their desired end-state vision and that the necessary assurances had not been provided with respect to the reported cost savings attributed to the implementation of the strategy. Any future initiatives relating to support for peacekeeping operations should be accompanied by comprehensive information to ensure that the stated benefits were empirically verifiable. The Group noted the intent to establish a reconfigured resource efficiency group, and looked forward to receiving detailed information on its functioning.

83. On Umoja, the Group noted the progress made and encouraged continued efforts to address the challenges faced by peacekeeping missions. It also noted the estimated quantifiable benefit for 2016/17 of Umoja implementation in missions; the Secretary-General's future reports should provide reliable information thereon with full justification.

84. With regard to support priorities for 2016/17, the Group noted the information provided on improving supply chain management, strengthening environmental management, technological innovation, strengthening field mission administration and management and preventing misconduct. It wished to receive clarification of lessons learned from previous initiatives, strategies for implementing proposed initiatives and compatibilities with the mandates, rules and regulations of the Organization, as well as a cost-benefit analysis.

85. The Group supported improved management of air operations in field missions to provide service in the most efficient and effective manner. It would welcome information on the outcome of initiatives to improve efficiency, flexibility and aviation safety, on the functions of the different offices responsible for air operations, and on proposed measures to avoid duplication and reduce bureaucracy. The Secretary-General should increase the use of troop rotation flights through Entebbe with a view to maximizing efficiency and economy.

86. Measures to improve air operations should not undermine service, quality and safety, or affect the movement of personnel or supplies. The Group welcomed the implementation of the aviation information management system, which should address persistent weaknesses in management and oversight. The Group sought further information on the use of

unmanned aerial systems and related technology, particularly cost-effectiveness, purchasing and bidding procedures, data security and guidelines on reimbursement.

87. In terms of operational matters, the Group would focus on issues relating to fuel, rations, travel, vehicle holdings, demining, medical facilities, death and disability compensation, safety and security, and, with regard to facilities and infrastructure, would examine the accommodation project in Somalia.

88. The Group supported the Secretary-General's policy of zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse. The heroic achievements of thousands of peacekeepers must not be tarnished by the actions of a few. Cases should be addressed in a serious manner and the perpetrators brought to justice, regardless of whether they were United Nations or non-United Nations, civilian or uniformed personnel.

89. The Group was concerned at the factors contributing to the increase in allegations, including the lack of predeployment training on standards of conduct and the excessive length of deployments for certain contingents. Other factors included cost-saving decisions taken in recent years, such as the extension of rotation periods with the resulting negative effect on the morale of troops.

90. More could be done to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse. The report contained much information on allegations but was lacking in terms of prevention measures. The Assembly must take immediate, holistic, action, involving predeployment training, preventive measures, full accountability, remedial action and cooperation with other organizations and entities. The Group would seek further information on the mechanisms used by the Secretariat in handling cases of sexual exploitation and abuse involving civilians and United Nations personnel, including how guilty staff were dealt with, as the Secretary-General presented very limited information. The Organization should promote best practice in preventing sexual exploitation and abuse and in ensuring accountability in substantiated cases; future reports of the Secretary-General should name countries that had taken rapid exemplary action against perpetrators.

91. The Group was concerned that the Secretary-General's report on the work of the external independent panel on the United Nations response to

the allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by non-United Nations forces in the Central African Republic had not been issued in time for the current part of the session. The report highlighted major flaws in the way in which the Secretariat had handled cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, especially when dealing with parallel troops. The Group hoped to receive the report as soon as possible.

92. **Mr. Presutti** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; and the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina, said that the European Union attached great importance to United Nations peacekeeping operations — the Organization's flagship activity. Its member States were committed to ensuring that United Nations peacekeeping was as effective as possible in the interest of maintaining peace and security, and they actively engaged in peacekeeping operations through financial contributions and the provision of troops, civilian police and other personnel.

93. He paid tribute to those who had lost their lives in the cause of peace. Their sacrifice was testament to the practical significance of the Committee's deliberations.

94. The European Union welcomed the new, streamlined overview report and the changes made to its content. It encouraged the Committee to build on the positive momentum generated at the previous session and renew its efforts to engage in constructive discussion and focus on potential areas of agreement. Providing policy guidance to the Secretary-General in carrying out his peacekeeping mandates should be a shared priority.

95. With regard to the proposed budget for 2016/17, his delegation noted that the overall resource level of \$8.25 million was not an increase. However, that was partly due to external cost factors, and the goal must remain to deliver real efficiencies through new approaches and a twenty-first century business model, and to promote strict budgetary discipline and ensure that resources were truly needed and used effectively, efficiently and in a transparent manner. To that end, his delegation would scrutinize the budgets of all peacekeeping missions and their support functions.

96. Peacekeeping operations must evolve to reflect modern realities. All Member States had a

responsibility to question what could be done to make the Organization more flexible and enable it to better attain its objectives. Measures were needed to ensure more agile, flexible and efficient field support. The global field support strategy had modernized the support side of peacekeeping, but more work needed to be done, particularly in the field of human resources and supply chain management. The European Union would carefully assess the results of the implementation of the global field support strategy, focusing on its qualitative and quantitative benefits.

97. The European Union encouraged the United Nations to continue to use innovative and new technology, which had great potential to improve the security of troops and reduce the environmental footprint of missions. It was now more obvious than ever that shared elements would determine the future of effective information and communications technologies management in the field.

98. The Committee should assess the effects of the implementation of Umoja and other reform initiatives, as it was clear that they had changed the way in which individual missions and Headquarters functioned and interacted with each other. The Secretariat should establish guidelines on how individual missions should incorporate the quantitative effects of Umoja implementation, including its staffing component.

99. The horizontal component of the management and budgeting of peacekeeping operations was more important than ever. Peacekeeping missions no longer functioned in isolation, as support functions and individual categories of expenditure were increasingly shared and benchmarked against each other. It was time to adjust the approach to the financing and management of peacekeeping in the light of those shared services and recent reform initiatives. The United Nations needed to establish a fully integrated support framework that encompassed a complementary division of tasks between all entities and good linkages between global and regional support functions. In that regard, in view of the time-bound nature of the decision on the Regional Service Centre at the previous session, the matter must now be given full consideration.

100. Even one substantiated case of sexual exploitation and abuse was one too many. The European Union was dismayed to learn that in 2015 the number of new allegations had increased, as had the



proportion of allegations involving sexual activities with minors or non-consensual activities with an adult. Measures should be taken to ensure greater transparency and accountability. The European Union strongly supported a zero-tolerance and zero-impunity policy for all civilian, military and police personnel in United Nations and other international peace operations.

101. **Ms. Bodenmann** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein, said that the efficiency gains resulting from IPSAS, Umoja and the ICT strategy must be sustainable while not undermining the operational capacities of peacekeeping operations; the Secretary-General should establish benchmarks to measure efficiency and should set targets against which progress could be monitored. In particular, he should refine his scalability model for the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe.

102. The two delegations welcomed the recommendations in the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations ([A/70/95-S/2015/446](#)) and the Secretary-General's report on the future of United Nations peace operations ([A/70/357-S/2015/682](#)) on the need for renewed focus on politics, prevention and mediation. Electoral assistance and mediation should be funded commensurately. She also welcomed the recommendation for close cooperation among departments and throughout the United Nations system in the interest of successful management of peacekeeping operations; the Secretary-General should improve the planning of transitions between different forms of engagement in the field.

103. The two delegations were concerned about the high and growing number of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in field missions, particularly as the actual number might be much higher than reported. The Secretary-General's recommendations were essential to the zero-tolerance policy, but much remained to be done, by the Organization and by Member States, whose domestic laws and policy frameworks were often ill-equipped to address allegations of abuse committed by their nationals abroad. The two delegations welcomed the steps taken in that regard by the special coordinator on improving the United Nations response to sexual exploitation and abuse; Security Council resolution 2272 (2016), which requested the Secretary-General to replace units of troop-contributing countries that had not investigated alleged abuse by their personnel or held the

perpetrators accountable; and the report of an independent review on sexual exploitation and abuse by international peacekeeping forces in the Central African Republic, in particular the recommendation that such abuses should be addressed under United Nations human rights policies rather than as a disciplinary matter. The Secretary-General should take immediate action.

104. **Mr. Castro Cordoba** (Costa Rica) said that the allegations reported by the Secretary-General ([A/70/729](#)) involved the most egregious forms of sexual abuse, often against the most vulnerable, and were concentrated in two missions.

105. The widespread use of sexual violence in armed conflicts throughout history was deplorable. Religion had often been used to justify political and economic wars, but the proliferation of violations of the human rights of women and girls by extremist groups, and the fact that controlling those rights had become a fundamental aspect of conflicts and had resulted in terrorist acts specifically against women and girls, were particularly worrying. Despite the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy, sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel had increased. The eyes of the world were on the Organization, which had failed to respond decisively by sending a clear message that such crimes would not go unpunished.

106. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's communications and public information strategy, e-learning programme for staff, non-reengagement of offenders, complaint reception mechanism and trust fund for victims, but it was the responsibility of all stakeholders — the Organization and contributor States — to eradicate sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping and to punish perpetrators. Investigations must be expedited, missions must have more investigative resources, and the tools for obtaining evidence must be enhanced. The Organization and Member States must comply with General Assembly resolution 70/114, on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission. Such abominable acts violated the right to protection of local populations, who peacekeepers were there to serve.

107. The United Nations must respect individual human rights, relentlessly investigate perpetrators, including those in the chain of command, and end impunity. Peacekeeping operations must have the necessary resources to protect women and children.

The Organization must enhance prevention by taking disciplinary measures, speeding up investigations and assisting victims. In most cases, the United Nations was the last glimmer of hope for communities; it must not fail them. Allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse damaged the credibility of peacekeeping, impeded the fulfilment of mandates and undermined the perception of impartiality.

108. **Mr. Ko Jae Sin** (Republic of Korea) said that his Government was a strong supporter of United Nations peacekeeping operations, providing troops as well as funding. He paid tribute to peacekeepers, who often served in dangerous conditions. The proposed 2016/17 peacekeeping budget of \$8.25 billion was slightly lower than the approved 2015/16 budget, despite the increase in mandates, and he welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to improve efficiency by doing more with less.

109. His delegation would seek further information regarding the allocation of financial resources, the benefits of Umoja, the global field support strategy, the civilian staffing review and supply chain management. The Secretariat should put forward options for developing the global field support strategy, implementation of which had been completed in 2015 and which had improved efficiency and service delivery over the preceding five years. The recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, the ten-year review of the peacebuilding architecture and the global study on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) should be reflected in policy and supported with appropriate resources. The increase in the number of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, despite preventive efforts and strict disciplinary measures, was deplorable. His delegation supported the zero-tolerance policy and the Secretary-General's proposed measures.

110. **Mr. Imada** (Japan) said that his Government attached great importance to peacekeeping. Although the proposed 2016/17 peacekeeping budget was 0.3 per cent lower than the 2015/16 budget, it nevertheless exceeded \$8 billion, a figure once described by the Secretary-General as unprecedented. The minute reduction, attributable to the downsizing of some operations, was offset by the deployment of more uniformed personnel in others. While peacekeeping operations must be provided with sufficient resources by Member States, they must also be efficiently and accountably managed, particularly given the difficult

financial situation of many countries. Although technological advances would help such management, Member States and the Secretariat were responsible for conducting cost-benefit analyses and planning, coordinating management, and maintaining integrity without compromising the fulfilment of mandates.

111. While budgetary transitions and adaptations were necessary in support services, the movement of classes and groups within and between mission budgets made it difficult to form an overall picture of requirements. Performance reports did not fully reflect the reallocation of resources between expenditure classes and groups — their presentation should be improved to enhance transparency. His delegation would seek further information regarding the benefits of Umoja, supply chain management, ICT requirements and the persistent allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, particularly in the Central African Republic. It supported the Organization's zero-tolerance policy and welcomed Security Council resolution 2272 (2016).

112. **Ms. Norman Chalet** (United States of America) said that structural, bureaucratic, operational and political challenges that must be addressed to maximize the effectiveness of peacekeeping had been identified in the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations ([A/70/95-S/2015/446](#)) and the Secretary-General's report on the future of United Nations peace operations ([A/70/357-S/2015/682](#)), which the Committee was now considering for the first time.

113. Support for peacekeeping must entail constructive critical review to ensure that it remained fit for purpose. In that regard, her delegation attached great importance to the observations and recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, which had identified concerns regarding conduct and discipline, waste management, Umoja implementation, fuel management and air operations, observations that were not new.

114. Notwithstanding the Secretariat's efforts to match resources with mandates through strategic assessments and civilian staffing reviews, the formulation of peacekeeping budgets must be improved. Her delegation would request further information regarding variances between appropriation and expenditure and redeployments between classes of expenditure. To ensure robust predictive analysis, the vacancy rates used in formulating budgets should better reflect actual

vacancies. Air operations, with a proposed budget of nearly \$840 million, must be safer and more efficient and responsive, with economies of scale through greater use of regional assets. Programmatic funds must be transparently reflected in mission budgets, and results-based budgeting frameworks should be revised to give the Committee strategic oversight of the alignment between resources and mandates and the effectiveness with which mandates were delivered.

115. Regarding operational effectiveness, field support must improve so that personnel and materiel were available when needed. The initiatives taken under the global field support strategy, which had enhanced service delivery, accountability, and safety and quality of life, should be mainstreamed, but the strategy had not succeeded in all areas, and the quality, responsiveness, accountability, transparency and cost-effectiveness of services must improve. The field-focused approach recommended by the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and the Secretary-General could not be achieved without institutional reforms; the Secretariat should complete its current administrative review, including by streamlining processes so as to increase efficiency. Financial regulations and delegations of authority should be revised in view of the unprecedented transparency afforded by Umoja.

116. The Regional Service Centre in Entebbe could serve as a model for Organization-wide shared service provision if its processes were redesigned and accountability between it and its client missions clarified; it must become more client-oriented. Despite efforts to increase transparency and accountability in the United Nations Logistics Base and support account budgets, workforce planning and baselines did not justify support functions. The roles and responsibilities of and results achieved by the Centre, the Base and the support account must be clarified.

117. The efforts made to reduce the environmental impact of peacekeeping, particularly in waste management and power generation, would improve cost-efficiency, support the Sustainable Development Goals and enhance mission security. Environmental management should be given a high priority.

118. Peacekeeping was behind the curve in integrating modern technology, which should be deployed to enhance the safety and security of personnel by improving situational awareness, ICT infrastructure and

connectivity in the field, and the countering of improvised explosive devices. The United Nations must be able to deploy highly performing, fit-for-purpose, civilian, police and military capabilities that prioritized strategic force generation, measurable performance standards and strengthened predeployment training.

119. The Committee must find ways of expanding the peacekeeping role of women, who comprised only 3 per cent of military personnel and 10 per cent of police, notwithstanding the commitments made by Member States in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

120. Despite the Secretary-General's efforts to enforce zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse, the number of allegations had increased alarmingly. Her delegation strongly supported measure to support victims and to enhance transparency and accountability.

121. **Mr. Sætre** (Norway) said that his delegation was appalled by the never-ending stream of new cases of sexual exploitation and abuse involving United Nations personnel, possibly only the tip of the iceberg. Such abuse ruined victims' lives, undermined the credibility of the United Nations, and diverted attention from the benefits peacekeeping brought to millions. He requested further information regarding the timing of the Secretary-General's response to the report of an independent review on sexual exploitation and abuse by international peacekeeping forces in the Central African Republic, which had revealed serious deficiencies in the handling of such cases by the United Nations.

122. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse ([A/70/729](#)), the request in Security Council resolution 2272 (2016) for the replacement of troops from countries that had not investigated alleged abuse by their personnel or held the perpetrators accountable, and the commitment of the special coordinator on improving the United Nations response to sexual exploitation and abuse to prevention. His Government would allocate \$125,000 to the trust fund for victims.

123. **Mr. Mostafa** (Egypt) said that a robust response to sexual exploitation and abuse was needed from the wider membership of the United Nations. His Government supported the zero-tolerance policy towards such abuse, whose perpetrators should be

expeditiously brought to justice, and the work of the special coordinator in engaging troop- and police-contributing countries. The Secretariat and Member States should be united behind the victims; such abuse should not be an opportunity for scoring political points. A General Assembly resolution on combating sexual exploitation through prevention, full accountability, remedial action and cooperation with other entities was needed.

124. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations should hold a special session on the response to sexual exploitation and abuse, taking into consideration country-specific situations and such peacekeeping management questions as the rehatting of troops, the lack of predeployment training, living conditions for contingents, the length of deployments, the length of time between rotations, and proximity to local populations. The small number of cases should not be used to shame all peacekeepers or disparage their sacrifices in bringing peace and security to the world's most troubled areas; collective punishment should not be meted out for what were individual crimes. The United Nations should promote best practice in prevention and accountability, including naming countries whose responses had been exemplary and making known their deterrent measures. He welcomed the steps to establish a trust fund for victims, for which General Assembly resolution 62/214 could provide the basis.

125. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Field Support) said that the format of the Secretary-General's overview report on the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations ([A/70/749](#)), streamlined in accordance with General Assembly guidance, would be continuously improved. The lessons of the global field support strategy were that the Department should focus on the global portfolio rather than individual missions so as to improve speed, effectiveness and compliance, and that changing the Department's internal culture mattered as much as changing its systems. Operational demands sometimes delayed investment in change; the complex challenge of shared services needed to be handled with care; strong implementation management and performance control were essential.

126. The Department had developed a strategic framework comprising priorities, objectives, indicators, targets and benchmarks to support missions, with an emphasis on supply chain management, and

had also focused on technology and innovation, environmental management, follow-up to the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, and sexual exploitation and abuse. In that regard he urged delegations to support the Secretary-General's special measures for protection from such abuse ([A/70/729](#)). The abhorrent actions of a few must not tarnish the sacrifices made by the many; the Department must adopt a victim-centred approach and improve accountability, prevention, predeployment training and the vetting and screening of troops.

127. The Department had achieved sustainable efficiencies in consumption and operating costs, including fuel, spare parts, travel, acquisition and construction, and had adjusted resources for missions that had downsized or were in a transitional phase. To improve the management of air assets, it had introduced a request-for-proposal procedure and put in place regional arrangements. The establishment of a separate budget for the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe ([A/70/754](#)) would give the Centre operational and managerial independence, thereby improving performance and transparency. The new governance framework, which would be in place by the time the budget took effect, would include a client board on which the missions serviced by the Centre would be represented. The Centre would report to Headquarters, which would provide strategic guidance and oversight and help determine priorities.

128. He welcomed the unqualified opinion of the Board of Auditors on the peacekeeping operations' 2014/15 financial statements ([A/70/5 \(Vol. II\)](#)). The Department would now focus its attention on property management; procurement and contracting; budget formulation, monitoring and control; the advance flight ticket purchase policy; risk management; and the utilization of air assets.

*Support account for peacekeeping operations*  
([A/70/612](#), [A/70/612/Add.1](#), [A/70/751](#) and [A/70/837](#))

129. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 ([A/70/612](#) and [A/70/612/Add.1](#)), said that funding from the support account was available to 14 offices and departments throughout the Secretariat that provided backstopping support for approximately

160,000 military, police and civilian personnel in 15 missions worldwide. In 2014/15, the United Nations had drawn on the support account to strengthen new missions, including the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic; to effect strategic shifts within and to reconfigure and reprioritize tasks under the mandates of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur; to streamline and consolidate the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL); and to provide ongoing backstopping support for established field missions in increasingly challenging environments. The Organization had also utilized resources from the support account to prepare the second set of IPSAS-compliant financial statements for all active and closed peacekeeping missions; to stabilize Umoja Extension I, centralize payments in Umoja and deploy the relevant Umoja Extension I functionality across peacekeeping operations; and to continue enhancing efficiency and improving management of resources through conducting audits, investigations and evaluations. Total expenditure had amounted to \$324.2 million, representing a budget implementation rate of 99.4 per cent.

130. Introducing the proposed budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/70/751), she said that, pursuant to the General Assembly's request that the level of the support account should be reviewed on a regular basis, the Chef de Cabinet had met with heads of departments and offices at the start of the budget preparation process to address key issues, including the strategic needs of the field, organizational priorities and the level of resources for each office drawing on the support account required to backstop missions. Consequently, the proposed budget for 2016/17 had been designed with the aim of providing more effective and efficient support for peacekeeping, primarily by strengthening the accountability of the United Nations, ensuring more agile field support, and planning and improving care for personnel in the field.

131. In that connection, the establishment of 24 posts and general temporary assistance positions was

proposed to support implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations in such priority areas as force generation, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, human rights, medical performance and security, while the transfer of nine posts from the Global Service Centre to the support account was proposed in the context of realigning resources. Lastly, to contain the increase in the budget and accommodate those priorities within existing resources to the extent possible, the Secretary-General proposed that 13 posts and positions should be abolished as part of the effort to reprioritize and restructure peacekeeping activities, particularly with a view to realizing the benefits of Umoja. The proposed support account requirements had been contained at 4.0 per cent of the total of \$8.25 billion proposed for peacekeeping operations, excluding enterprise resource planning costs, while the proposed requirements for enterprise resource planning and information and system security had decreased from \$32.1 million to \$17.6 million. Consequently, the total support account budget, amounting to \$332.1 million, represented a reduction of 1.3 per cent compared with 2015/16. The support account enabled the Secretariat to provide robust backstopping for peacekeeping operations at a time of evolving challenges and realities on the ground with the aim of ensuring effective mandate delivery and efficient use of Member States' resources.

132. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/837), said that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a reduction of \$4,761,300 in the proposed budget for the support account. The proposed increases in the number of posts and positions at a time of ongoing reductions in the levels of uniformed and civilian personnel in peacekeeping operations was seemingly at odds with the General Assembly's consistent emphasis on the need to ensure the scalability of support functions to the size and scope of peacekeeping operations.

133. In particular, the Advisory Committee noted with concern the proposed increase from 37 for 2015/16 to 43 for 2016/17 in the number of posts and positions classified at the D-1 and D-2 levels. The increasing demands on the Organization should not translate into an upward trend in senior positions — greater efforts



should be made to review existing functions and structures before such proposals were presented. It was likewise a matter of concern that, since the most recent review of the support account had been undertaken, the efficiencies and economies expected from organizational transformation initiatives such as the global field support strategy and the roll-out of Umoja had not had a discernible impact on the level of the support account budget, which had continued to increase. To ascertain the underlying factors contributing to that trend, a follow-up review should be undertaken, with a view to determining the optimal level of the support account. With regard to non-post resources, the Advisory Committee encouraged the Secretary-General to reduce the dependence on consultants and to build in-house capacity, and noted the inadequate attention given to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/254 A regarding standards of accommodation for air travel, particularly the 16-day advance ticket purchase policy and other cost-saving measures.

134. **Ms. Wairatpanij** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, as a key financial contributor and the largest collective contributor of troops and police personnel to peacekeeping operations, the majority of which were currently hosted by its members, the Group believed that adequate backstopping support must be provided to enable the effective and efficient implementation of increasingly complex peacekeeping mandates.

135. Notwithstanding the new demands placed on field and Headquarters personnel and the peacekeeping support structure as a result of the changing nature of peacekeeping operations, the level of the support account should broadly correspond to the size and complexity of operations. The Group was thus concerned at the general upward trend in the resources requested for the support account, particularly the consistent increase in the number of posts at the D-1 level and above at a time of ongoing reductions in the authorized levels of uniformed and civilian personnel in peacekeeping operations and in the overall peacekeeping budget. It likewise concurred with the Advisory Committee that the various organizational reform initiatives undertaken had not led to the efficiencies and economies predicted by the Secretary-General.

136. The Group would carefully analyse the new posts proposed for 2016/17, particularly those at a senior

level, to ensure their relevance to the support needs of staff and of troops and police contingents on the ground. It would also request detailed information on the status and results of organizational reform initiatives in the context of the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Secretary-General should undertake a follow-up review of the support account. Such a review would be particularly relevant to the Fifth Committee's consideration of the budgetary proposals arising from the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations and the subsequent report of the Secretary-General on the future of United Nations peace operations.

137. The Group remained concerned at the inadequate representation of troop- and police-contributing countries in the peacekeeping support structure in the field and at Headquarters, especially at senior levels, despite the Assembly's repeated requests to the Secretary-General to improve their representation, particularly in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. It would seek updates on measures taken to that end.

138. The Group took note of the budget performance of the support account for 2014/15, including the unencumbered balance of \$1.8 million, as well as the updated information for the current period and the proposed post and non-post requirements for 2016/17, an increase of 3.3 per cent compared with 2015/16. It would scrutinize the Secretary-General's proposals for establishing, abolishing, reclassifying and redeploying posts aimed at realigning the capacity of the support account in accordance with the priority areas identified by the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations. The Group would also seek additional details of the Secretary-General's proposals on the restructuring of the United Nations Office to the African Union to inform its decision concerning the relevant recommendation of the Advisory Committee. Lastly, the Group would seek further information regarding the proposed efficiency gains from the implementation of Umoja at United Nations Headquarters, particularly given the Secretary-General's difficulty, in his proposal for the regular budget for the biennium 2016-2017, in demonstrating linkages between purported efficiencies and resulting budgetary proposals.

**Agenda item 149: Financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei** ([A/70/574](#), [A/70/701](#) and [A/70/742/Add.16](#))

**Agenda item 152: Financing of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire** ([A/70/586](#), [A/70/742/Add.13](#) and [A/70/753](#))

**Agenda item 154: Financing of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo** ([A/70/613](#), [A/70/742/Add.5](#) and [A/70/766](#))

**Agenda item 158: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo** ([A/70/566](#), [A/70/707](#) and [A/70/742/Add.10](#))

**Agenda item 164: Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara** ([A/70/570](#), [A/70/696](#) and [A/70/742/Add.3](#))

**Agenda item 166: Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 1863 (2009)** ([A/70/587](#), [A/70/742/Add.14](#) and [A/70/773](#))

139. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 ([A/70/574](#)) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 ([A/70/701](#)) for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei, said that the proposed budget for 2016/17 amounted to \$268.8 million, an increase of 0.2 per cent compared with 2015/16. UNISFA would continue its high-level engagement with all parties on the need to implement the terms of the Agreement of 20 June 2011 between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area and, in particular, to resume meetings of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee and the Joint Political and Security Mechanism and encourage the establishment of joint institutions.

140. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 ([A/70/586](#)) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 ([A/70/753](#)) for the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, she underscored that the Security Council, by its resolution 2284 (2016), had endorsed the Secretary-General's withdrawal plan, including phased force reductions, as

recommended in his special report ([S/2016/297](#)), and had decided to extend the mandate of UNOCI for a final period until 30 June 2017. The Secretariat was reviewing the impact of Security Council resolution 2284 (2016) on the budget for 2016/17; the Secretary-General would present a revised budget for the General Assembly's consideration at the main part of its seventy-first session.

141. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 ([A/70/613](#)) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 ([A/70/766](#)) for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, she said that the proposed budget for 2016/17 amounted to \$1,275.3 million, reflecting a decrease of 4.2 per cent from 2015/16, primarily attributable to a net reduction of 392 posts and lower costs of fuel. In 2016/17, MONUSCO would continue to focus on the priority areas of civilian protection, stabilization of conflict-affected areas and support for democratic governance and institutional reforms. In addition, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2277 (2016), it would be responsible for providing technical assistance and logistical support for the revision of the electoral register, and, when specified conditions were met, for providing logistical support to facilitate the electoral cycle.

142. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 ([A/70/566](#)) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 ([A/70/707](#)) for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), she said that the proposed budget of \$36.5 million for 2016/17 represented a decrease of 8.9 per cent compared with 2015/16. It reflected a proposed net reduction of 20 posts and positions and the conversion of seven international staff posts to national posts, as well as the proposed financial requirements for the adoption of solar energy sources, in line with the request contained in paragraph 28 of General Assembly resolution 69/307 to reduce the Mission's environmental footprint.

143. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 ([A/70/570](#)) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 ([A/70/696](#)) for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), she said that the proposed budget for

2016/17 amounted to \$54.3 million, exclusive of budgeted voluntary contributions in kind, representing an increase of 6.2 per cent compared with 2015/16. The increase was primarily attributable to increased requirements with respect to civilian personnel and to estimated higher contract costs for the Mission's aircraft fleet. In its resolution 2285 (2016), the Security Council had emphasized the need for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara to implement its mandate and to return to full functionality.

144. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 ([A/70/587](#)) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 ([A/70/773](#)) for the United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOS), she said that the proposed budget for 2016/17 amounted to \$583 million, an increase of 13.6 per cent compared with the approved budget for 2015/16. The increase was primarily attributable to additional resource requirements for enabling capacity and equipment, as well as additional staffing resources to strengthen and regularize support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) and the Somali National Army on joint operations with AMISOM, as a result of the expansion of the mandate of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia pursuant to Security Council resolution 2245 (2015).

145. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei ([A/70/742/Add.16](#)), said that the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of \$207,900 in the proposed budget as well as a 5-per-cent reduction in the requirements proposed for travel with a view to encouraging more efficient use of travel resources. Welcoming the start of the construction projects planned for 2016/17, which had been delayed since 2013/14, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to monitor progress, and to ensure that the projects were completed on schedule and that living conditions in the military camps were improved without further delay.

146. Introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Operation in Côte

d'Ivoire ([A/70/742/Add.13](#)), he said that, on the basis of the information provided by the Controller indicating the forthcoming submission of a revised budget proposal at the main part of the seventy-first session, the Advisory Committee did not consider it appropriate to make any recommendations on the present budget proposal for the full financial period 2016/17; it instead recommended that the General Assembly should authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in the amount of \$160,354,500, representing half of the proposed budget for 2016/17, for the maintenance of UNOCI for the six-month period from 1 July 2016 to 31 December 2016.

147. Introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo ([A/70/742/Add.5](#)), he said that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a reduction of \$3,325,500 in the proposed budget. The Advisory Committee welcomed the Mission's initiatives to enhance the delivery of support services, including through strengthening the supply chain management structure, reconfiguring its air operations and introducing new information and communications technology services such as O3b satellite communications technology. The Advisory Committee's report also contained observations and recommendations on the Secretary-General's staffing proposals for MONUSCO, long-vacant posts, and the relationship between the Entebbe Support Base and the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe.

148. Introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo ([A/70/742/Add.10](#)), he said that, while the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the proposed staffing changes, it reiterated its support for the trend towards nationalizing posts and positions, in line with the emphasis placed by the General Assembly on the need for missions to build national capacity. The Advisory Committee expected the Secretary-General to provide clarification of his characterization of the proposed reductions in the number of substantive posts and positions as "efficiency gains". Overall, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the proposed budget for UNMIK and commended the Mission for its efforts to introduce renewable energy alternatives and for its comprehensive approach to waste management.

149. Introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (A/70/742/Add.3), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended reductions in the resources requested for official travel, air transportation, other supplies, services and equipment and post resources totalling \$1,739,100. It was concerned at the MINURSO cash deficit, and reiterated that the Secretary-General should continue exploring options to address the issue of late payment of assessed contributions, including by engaging more actively with Member States.

150. Introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (A/70/742/Add.14), he said that the Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a reduction of \$5,175,300 in the proposed budget. The Advisory Committee had analysed the proposed increases in requirements related to the amendment of the rations contract and requested that further information should be provided to the General Assembly regarding increases in respect of self-sustainment reimbursements. It also recommended against the establishment of 25 of the 144 new posts and positions proposed for 2016/17, including one Assistant Secretary-General post. While there was a clear need to strengthen leadership functions within UNSOS, efforts to that end would require the continued presence of the current senior leadership in Somalia. Lastly, the Secretary-General should have provided greater clarity with respect to the proposed resource increases for civilian personnel and outsourced services, in particular concerning the respective functions and locations of staff and consultants.

151. **Mr. Woldegerima** (Ethiopia) said that, despite the ongoing political and security challenges in Abyei, UNISFA had maintained a stable security environment by facilitating peaceful and orderly migration of nomads and return of internally displaced persons and reducing the occurrence of major incidents of intercommunal violence. In that context, it had implemented a multifaceted conflict prevention and mitigation strategy, notably by conducting robust deterrent day and night patrols and aerial monitoring, and by promoting engagement with local communities through joint security committees. Complacency should nevertheless be avoided, as the relative stability in Abyei could easily deteriorate without adequate

resources to enable UNISFA to carry out its mandate and ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers.

152. Given the situation on the ground and the threat analysis, his delegation was perplexed by the decision to deploy two motorized reserve infantry companies to replace artillery and tank units without taking into account the effect on implementation of the mission's mandate in line with the memorandum of understanding between the Government and the United Nations. The decision to deploy artillery and tank units had been made taking into consideration the difficulty of the terrain and poor accessibility of the Abyei Area, which made repatriation of troops difficult and rendered the mission vulnerable to threats. The loose command and control structure of the forces between which UNISFA was deployed and the presence of armed groups also increased the mission's exposure to attack. Given those risks and the lack of significant improvement in the situation in Abyei owing to the failure to resolve the dispute between the parties, the retention of a deterrent capability should be examined seriously.

153. With regard to UNSOS, he reiterated the need to ensure enhanced support, and particularly to expedite the deployment of helicopters, for AMISOM, as underscored in the declaration adopted at the Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Troop- and Police- Contributing Countries of AMISOM held in February 2016. He likewise emphasized the urgent need to bridge the financial gap resulting from the European Union's decision to reduce financial support for AMISOM troop allowances by 20 per cent. His delegation looked forward to the timely conclusion of the ongoing discussions on the matter between the African Union and the United Nations to enable the Mission to operate effectively.

154. **Ms. Seka-Fouah** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that, five years after the post-electoral crisis of 2011, order was well on the way to being restored in Côte d'Ivoire as a result of the efforts of her Government and its partners, including UNOCI. The success of the October 2015 presidential election, the efforts undertaken by all parties to promote national reconciliation and social cohesion, the collective commitment to completing the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and reform of the security sector attested to the significant progress made. The efforts to strengthen national reconciliation had been welcomed by the Security Council in its resolution 2283 (2016), which

had lifted all sanctions against Côte d'Ivoire, and resolution 2284 (2016), which had extended the mission's mandate for a final period.

155. As the proposed budget for UNOCI for 2016/17 in the amount of \$320,709,000 had been established on the basis of the Security Council's 2015 mandate, her delegation took note of the Secretary-General's intention to present a revised budget reflecting the impact of resolution 2284 (2016) for the Assembly's consideration at the main part of its seventy-first session. Her delegation likewise took note of the commitment authority recommended by the Advisory Committee for the maintenance of UNOCI for the six-month period from 1 July to 31 December 2016.

156. Her Government would focus particular attention on addressing remaining issues related to security; ensuring implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, particularly reintegration of remaining ex-combatants; promoting national reconciliation and social cohesion; ensuring the successful reinsertion of the mission's 713 local staff; and managing the waste caused by the withdrawal of UNOCI. It expected that responsibility for addressing the challenges remaining after the mission's drawdown would be transferred to the United Nations country team in Côte d'Ivoire only when appropriate conditions obtained. Her delegation would seek further information on those issues. UNOCI had been broadly recognized as a success story; she trusted that the drawdown of the mission's activities would consolidate the achievements made during its 12 years of deployment in Côte d'Ivoire.

157. **Ms. Nikodijevic** (Serbia) said that the status-neutral approach of UNMIK, based on Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), provided the only framework within which the lives of the people of Kosovo and Metohija could be improved. UNMIK played a key role in strengthening peace and security, respect for human rights and trust among the various communities in the province. In view of the Mission's critical importance in promoting stability and a sustainable solution to the question of Kosovo and Metohija, its presence and mandate should be fully maintained.

158. In his report on the budget for UNMIK for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 ([A/70/707](#)), the Secretary-General emphasized that the Mission's strategic objective was to strengthen and consolidate

peace, security and stability in Kosovo and the region. Her Government appreciated the Secretary-General's commitment to ensuring that UNMIK continued to facilitate implementation of the political and technical agreements reached between Belgrade and Pristina in the framework of the European Union-facilitated dialogue, in particular the First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations of 19 April 2013, and to ensuring that the Mission played an active role in establishing a community of Serb-majority municipalities, promoting the safety of returnees, determining the fate of missing persons, protecting and preserving cultural and religious heritage sites and monitoring the situation in the Special Protective Zones.

159. Efforts must be undertaken to enhance the Mission's work in the areas of human rights and the rule of law and to strengthen the Mitrovica Regional Office. In that regard, in his most recent report on UNMIK to the Security Council, the Secretary-General had emphasized the need to address the numerous challenges faced by Kosovo in the rule of law sector, particularly with respect to the independence and impartiality of the justice sector, and to harness support to that end from international partners, including UNMIK and other United Nations entities, within the context of the ongoing European agenda in the region. He had also emphasized the significant work that remained to be done in Kosovo to promote greater tolerance and reconciliation among its communities, ensure the protection of minority rights, facilitate the return of the displaced, uphold property rights and safeguard religious traditions.

160. To that end, UNMIK must be adequately staffed and financed. Her Government was concerned about the reductions in the number of international personnel in both the substantive and support components. With fewer staff, the Mission could not fulfil its mandate, the implementation of which was essential to all concerned, in particular the non-Albanian population of Kosovo and Metohija, whose rights were violated and whose freedom of movement and security were threatened. The continued occurrence of ethnically motivated problems facing Serbs and other non-Albanians, particularly returnees, indicated that such reductions were not warranted by the situation on the ground. Moreover, as indicated in the reports of the Secretary-General on UNMIK, return rates were steadily declining, with only 5 per cent of the



non-Albanian population having returned to their homes and only 1.9 per cent having returned permanently since June 1999.

161. In that context, her Government was concerned at the 8.9-per-cent reduction in the UNMIK budget for 2016/17 compared with 2015/16. The proposed budget reflected the latest in a series of reductions over the previous five years and, if approved, would be 22.3 per cent lower than the approved budget for 2012/13. Her delegation did not see any justification for the reductions, and would request a breakdown of the UNMIK budget proposals showing monetary allocations and numbers of personnel over the previous ten years. She was likewise concerned at the proposed net reduction in the number of posts and positions, including two substantive posts, and the conversion of international staff posts to national posts. In particular, her delegation took issue with the Secretary-General's portrayal of the proposed changes as a means of streamlining the Mission's substantive and support functions in order to achieve efficiency gains. In that connection, her delegation noted the Advisory Committee's request that the Secretary-General should explain why, given that such gains were not usually attributed to staffing reductions in the substantive components of peacekeeping missions, the proposed reductions were considered efficiency gains in the case of UNMIK. It was hard to imagine how reductions in staffing improved the efficiency and functioning of the Mission.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*