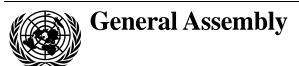
United Nations A/59/736/Add.5



Distr.: General 11 April 2005

Original: English

Fifty-ninth session

Agenda items 123 and 137

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

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

Financial performance report for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Appropriation 2003/04	\$41,529,500
Expenditure 2003/04	\$38,850,800
Appropriation 2004/05	\$41,860,000
Proposal submitted by the Secretary-General 2005/06	\$46,328,400
Recommendation of the Advisory Committee 2005/06	\$45,641,800

I. Introduction

- 1. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraph 16 below would entail a reduction of \$686,600 in the proposed budget for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 (see A/59/629). The Advisory Committee also makes a number of observations and recommendations with regard to the administration and management of the Mission and opportunities for further savings.
- 2. The Advisory Committee's general report on the administrative and budgetary aspects of peacekeeping operations (A/59/736) contains its views and recommendations on a number of cross-cutting issues. Consequently, in the paragraphs below, the Committee deals with resources and other items that relate specifically to MINURSO.
- 3. The documents used by the Advisory Committee in its consideration of the financing of MINURSO are listed at the end of the present report.

II. Financial performance report for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004

- 4. On the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the General Assembly, in its resolution 57/331 of 18 June 2003, appropriated to the special account for MINURSO \$43,401,000 for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004, inclusive of \$41,529,500 gross (\$38,488,500 net) for the maintenance of the Mission, \$1,433,100 for the support account for peacekeeping operations and \$438,400 for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy. The appropriation represented a reduction of \$933,800 from the proposed initial estimate of the Secretary-General of \$42,463,300 (see A/57/772/Add.2). Expenditure for the period totalled \$38,850,800 gross (\$36,408,000 net) (see A/59/619, sect. III.A). The resulting unencumbered balance of \$2,678,700 gross (\$2,080,500 net) reflects a budget implementation rate of 93.5 per cent.
- The unutilized balance of \$2,678,700 gross (\$2,080,500 net) was attributable primarily to lower requirements for international staff, owing to the completion of the work of the Identification Commission by 31 December 2003, earlier than planned, and the repatriation of all civilian police to their respective countries by 31 December 2003 following the transfer of the files and materials of the Identification Commission to a secure location at the United Nations Office at Geneva. Further savings were realized in a number of areas, including the placement of national staff at lower levels (G-3, step 1) than those of the posts approved (G-4, step 1), delays in the replacement of Government-provided observers from the African Union, less than planned official travel of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General owing to the stalled political situation, lower than planned costs for facilities and infrastructure negotiated in a new systems contract, reduced requirements for information technology equipment and rations because of the early completion of the work of the Identification Commission and, finally, lower than budgeted costs for the acquisition of vehicles and metal detectors provided by UNIKOM and the Logistics Base, respectively.

- 6. These savings were offset in part by additional requirements under air transportation for the replacement of three MI-8MT helicopters by three MI-8MTV helicopters at a higher rental cost, for operational and safety considerations, the MI-8MTV helicopter being considered more appropriate for desert conditions. Additional resources were also required for travel of military observers because of increased airfares, obligation of funds for troop costs for the 2001/02 period for which insufficient funds had been obligated during that period, payment of a consultant for training conducted during the prior period which had not been obligated during that period, an increase in the number of Earth stations for providing information and communication technology to remote team sites, and specialized medical consultations from private providers.
- 7. The Advisory Committee notes from section III.B of the performance report (A/59/619) that a total of \$1,194,000 is indicated for other income and adjustments for the period, comprising \$68,000 in interest income, \$204,000 for other/miscellaneous income, \$3,000 for prior-period adjustments and \$919,000 in savings on or cancellation of prior-period obligations. The Committee notes that, in accordance with the request made in its previous report (A/58/759/Add.2), a breakdown and explanations concerning the prior-period obligations were provided (see annex I to the present report).
- 8. The comments of the Advisory Committee on the information in the performance report on individual objects of expenditure can be found, where relevant, in the discussion of the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 (A/59/629) in the paragraphs below.

III. Information on performance for the current period

9. This year, for a number of reasons, it was not possible for the Secretariat to consistently provide the most up-to-date information on the following issues in time for inclusion in the reports of the individual peacekeeping operations: (a) expenditure for the current period; (b) current incumbency; (c) status of reimbursement for troop/formed police unit costs, contingent-owned equipment and death and disability; (d) cash position of the missions; and (e) status of contributions. This information is therefore being supplied in consolidated tables, which are annexed to the Advisory Committee's general report on peacekeeping operations (A/59/736).

IV. Proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006

A. Mandate and planned results

10. In its resolution 1570 (2004) of 28 October 2004, the Security Council extended the mandate of the Mission until 30 April 2005, according to the status quo option proposed by the Secretary-General, maintaining MINURSO at its previous strength. In view of the lack of agreement between the parties and deadlocked political situation reported by the Secretary-General, the Security Council requested him to submit an interim report on the evolution of the situation

and on the Mission's size and concept of operation, with further details on the possible reduction of MINURSO staff, including administrative and civilian personnel, within three months of the adoption of the resolution. In his report of 27 January 2005 (S/2005/49) the Secretary-General indicated that MINURSO had undertaken a comprehensive review of the structure of the administrative and civilian components of the Mission and that he would be in a position to report on the results, including on the possible downsizing of the Mission, in his next report, which would be submitted to the Security Council at the end of April 2005.

- 11. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1541 (2004), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in September 2004 conducted a review of the military strength necessary for MINURSO to carry out its mandated tasks (see S/2004/827). The Advisory Committee regrets that, owing to the protracted nature of the review process, the impact of the reduced mandate of the Mission on the administrative and civilian components was not established in time for the preparation of the 2005/06 budget. The Committee stands ready to take up any new budgetary proposals for the 2005/06 period resulting from the pending review of the Mission by the Security Council as soon as they become available.
- 12. The Advisory Committee acknowledges the progress made in the formulation of the budget using results-based techniques and in reporting on achievements. It is of the opinion however, that in a number of areas the results achieved are presented in vague and uninformative terms, such as "Regular consultations between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the International Committee of the Red Cross", even though the underlying activities could easily have been quantified. The Committee emphasizes once again the importance it attaches to the use of specific and quantitative indicators of achievement, wherever possible, to allow a more objective analysis of the progress and efforts made towards implementation of the expected accomplishments. The Committee encourages continued improvement and greater consistency in the presentation of the results-based budget framework.

B. Resource requirements

13. The Advisory Committee notes an overall increase of 10.7 per cent or \$4,468,400, with total cost estimates of \$46,328,400 for 2005/06, up from \$41,860,000 apportioned during the current period.

1. Military personnel

	Approved ^a 2004/05	Planned ^b 2005/06	Encumbered	Vacancy/delayed deployment rate
Military observers	203	203	195	3.9
Military contingent personnel	27	27	27	0
Civilian police	81	8	6	25.0
Total	311	238	228	4.2

^a Representing the highest authorized strength for the period.

^b As a result of the suspension of the activities of the Identification Commission, 73 civilian police remain authorized but unbudgeted for the period.

14. An increase of \$382,100, or 6.3 per cent, in comparison with the apportionment for the current period is proposed under military and police personnel for 2005/06. Contingent-owned equipment apportionment for the period ended 30 June 2005 totalled \$15,200 and estimated requirements for the 2005/06 period amount to \$68,200. The increases are attributable mainly to the increase in airfare for military observers, based on the latest market rates, and the new methodology for reimbursement of contingent-owned equipment.

2. Civilian personnel

	Approved ^a 2004/05	Planned ^b 2005/06	Encumbered	Vacancy/delayed deployment rate
International staff	302	145	123	15.2
National staff	128	128	110	14.1
Government-provided personnel	10	10	3	70.0
Total	440	283	236	16.6

^a Representing the highest authorized strength for the period.

- 15. For the 2005/06 financial period, a decrease of \$388,600, or 2.1 per cent, in comparison with the apportionment for 2004/05 is proposed for civilian personnel and related costs. The decrease, as indicated in paragraph 14 of the proposed budget (A/59/629), is due primarily to the fact that budgetary provisions have been made based on Mission-specific salary rates derived from the actual average expenditure by grade over the previous financial period, as recommended in the previous report of the Advisory Committee (A/58/759/Add.2).
- 16. The cost estimates for international staff for the 2005/06 period are based on a vacancy rate of 6 per cent, whereas a vacancy/delayed deployment rate of 10 per cent had been used for the preparation of the previous budget. The actual vacancy rate as at 31 December 2004 being 14 per cent, the Advisory Committee is of the opinion that a change in the cost parameters for computing cost estimates is not warranted at this time. It therefore recommends that the vacancy/delayed deployment rate be maintained at 10 per cent.
- 17. Although no new posts have been requested, the Advisory Committee considers the overall presentation of the staffing situation confusing and lacking in transparency, in particular with respect to posts frozen because of the interruption in the work of the Identification Commission, security posts authorized by the General Assembly in its resolution 58/295 of 18 June 2004 that were not budgeted, posts filled at lower levels than those authorized and vacant posts in the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (see annexes II and III). Moreover there is a need to clarify the relationship between the level of resources authorized, actual resources allocated, and the mandate and work to be accomplished. Upon request the Advisory Committee was provided with a modified organization chart of the Mission showing encumbered posts (see annex IV).

^b As a result of the suspension of the activities of the Identification Commission, 157 international staff posts remain authorized but unbudgeted for the period.

- 18. From additional information provided, the Advisory Committee notes that during the 2003/04 period a total of 16 international and 22 national posts were converted from 300 series to 100 series contracts. An additional 8 international and 6 national posts are planned for conversion in 2004/05 and a further 3 international and 9 national posts will become eligible for conversion in 2005/06.
- 19. The Committee was informed that five Professional posts continue to be encumbered by staff at lower levels than budgeted, including an Assistant Secretary-General Chief of Staff post occupied at D-1, a P-5 Legal Officer post at P-4, a P-4 Information Officer post at P-3, a P-3 post of assistant in the Facilities Management Service at G-7 and a P-2 Information Technology Assistant post at FS-5. The Advisory Committee is of the opinion that, when posts are consistently filled at lower levels, the requirement for the higher-graded post should be re-examined.
- 20. Concerning vacant posts, the Committee was informed that, of the 143 authorized and budgeted international posts, 2 Professional and 6 Field Service posts are currently in different stages of the recruitment process, and that 12 posts are on hold, pending the outcome of the ongoing management review. The Advisory Committee requests that MINURSO not take any action that would prejudice the outcome of the ongoing management review. It trusts that the proposals resulting from the review will be based on the actual levels of the positions filled and that a new justification of the vacant posts will be provided, or that the posts will be abolished.
- 21. In its resolution 58/295, the General Assembly authorized the establishment of 2 international (Field Service staff) and 15 national posts for MINURSO, with the provision that staff costs for those posts be accommodated within the budget of the Mission for the current financial period. These security posts are included in the proposed budget for 2005/06.

3. Operational costs

Apportioned 2004/05	Proposed 2005/06
\$17 108 300	\$21 583 200

22. The estimated operational requirements for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 represent an increase of \$4,474,900, or 26.2 per cent, as compared with the apportionment for the current period. The main factors contributing to the variance are increased requirements under training, air transportation, facilities and infrastructure, and medical equipment.

Training

23. The Advisory Committee notes that the performance report for the 2003/04 period does not provide a transparent breakdown of training-related costs and activities, including consultants, travel and utilization of the in-mission training centre. The Mission indicates that an unforeseen amount of \$10,500 was required for the payment of training-related consulting fees incurred during 2002/03 which had not been obligated during that period. Upon request, additional information was received concerning in-mission training for the 2003/04 period, which provided details on the types of training courses offered as well as the number and type of

participants for each course, indicating that a total of 374 civilian staff and 28 military observers had been trained in-mission.

24. The Advisory Committee notes that, in accordance with the request in its previous report (A/58/759/Add.2), resources proposed for training, including travel, consultants and other supplies, are presented separately in section II.C of the 2005/06 budget document. For the 2005/06 period, the Mission requests a substantial increase in training-related resources as compared to the cost estimates for the current period, including a provision for \$32,000 for consultants and \$51,000 for supplies and services, an increase of 21 per cent over the \$40,000 requested for the current period. Resources requested for training-related travel are practically unchanged at \$161,000, a slight increase from the \$160,000 requested in the current period. The Committee recalls that, during discussions on the budget for the current period, it had been informed that the establishment of a training centre at the Mission would lead to reduced costs for training-related travel; this goal does not seem to have been attained. The Committee restates its view that, as more staff become trained in mission-related skills, the requirement for such training should decrease, and with it the requirement for mission-specific trainingrelated travel, particularly in missions that are no longer growing or are in the process of downsizing. It requests that a clear justification for the training programmes envisaged be provided in future budget submissions, including the particular skills required for the mission and the number of staff required to undergo training.

Air transportation

- 25. Total expenditure for air operations during the 2003/04 period amounted to \$6,432,100, a cost overrun of \$920,300, or 16.7 per cent above the \$5,511,800 apportioned. The additional requirements, as explained in paragraph 17 of the performance report (A/59/619), were mainly due to the higher rental costs of three MI-8MTV helicopters which replaced three MI-8MT helicopters for operational and safety reasons, the MI-8MTV helicopters being considered better suited to desert conditions. In line with the new approach of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the contracts for the aircraft were based on a cost structure calculated on actual hours rather than block hours. In the view of the Advisory Committee, the presentation of this transition in the performance report and supplementary information was confusing and misleading both in terms of the number of aircraft at the disposal of MINURSO and the actual hours flown. It requests that special attention be devoted to clarifying this type of situation in future budget documents.
- 26. The Advisory Committee draws attention to the observations and recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning air operations. It requests the Mission to closely monitor the use of aircraft and to carry out a management review on the underutilization of air assets, aimed at establishing a realistic assessment of the Mission's requirements and narrowing the gap between actual and budgeted flight hours.
- 27. Concerning the 2005/06 period, the estimate for air transportation amounts to \$12,432,400, an increase of \$5,178,900, or 71.4 per cent, relative to the apportionment for the current period. The variance, as explained in paragraph 20 of the proposed budget (A/59/629), is due mainly to the increase in costs associated

with the new commercial contract for two cargo and one passenger fixed-wing aircraft and three rotary-wing aircraft.

Communications and information technology

28. The Advisory Committee notes from the performance report for the 2003/04 period that the actual expenditure under communications amounted to \$827,800, representing an increase of 22.4 per cent over the apportionment of \$676,000. The difference is due to an increase in the number of satellite Earth stations from 4 to 11 for the extension of full information and communication technology services to all of the 10 remote team sites. During an exchange of views with the representatives of the Secretary-General, the Committee was informed that the Mission considered the provision of information and communication technology services to all sites long overdue and essential for efficient operations in a mission with major logistical difficulties in reaching remote areas. While not objecting to this expenditure, the Committee emphasizes that unbudgeted expenditure should be kept to a minimum and should be directly related to operational needs. Supporting justification in this regard should have been contained in the performance report.

Petrol, oil and lubricants

29. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was informed that MINURSO had changed its procedures for budgeting and reporting expenditures for generator petrol, oil and lubricants in 2003/04, moving from a combined entry under utilities to a separate entry under petrol, oil and lubricants. The Committee points out that the presentation of this transition in the budget document and supplementary information was lacking in transparency, and that no information was provided on the discrepancies between the apportionment and expenditure amounts resulting from the changed account codes, nor was there any indication of the corresponding offsetting item. It requests that special care be taken to present this type of extraordinary circumstance as clearly as possible in the future.

Medical equipment

30. The additional estimate of \$80,200 under medical equipment is mainly for the replacement of an X-ray machine dating from 1994. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was informed that the average lifespan of an X-ray machine is five years in field conditions.

Voluntary contributions

31. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with details on budgeted and non-budgeted voluntary contributions for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 (see annex V).

V. Conclusion

32. The action to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of MINURSO for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 is indicated in paragraph 23 of the performance report (A/59/619). The Advisory Committee recommends that the unencumbered balance of \$2,678,700, as well as

other income and adjustments in the amount of \$1,194,000, be credited to Member States in a manner to be determined by the Assembly.

33. The action to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of MINURSO for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 is indicated in paragraph 26 of the proposed budget (A/59/629). The Advisory Committee recommends acceptance of the Secretary-General's request subject to the observations and comments made above. Taking into account its recommendations in paragraph 16 above, the Committee recommends that the estimated budget requirements of \$46,328,400 for the maintenance of the Mission be reduced by \$686,600. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate an amount of \$45,641,800 gross (\$43,105,900 net) for the maintenance of MINURSO for the 12-month period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006.

Documentation

- Performance report on the budget of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara for the period from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 (A/59/619)
- Proposed budget for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 (A/59/629)
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the financial performance report for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (A/58/759/Add.2)
- General Assembly resolution 58/309 on the financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
- General Assembly resolution 58/295 on Strengthening the security and safety of United Nations operations, staff and premises
- Reports of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara (S/2004/827 and S/2005/49)
- Security Council resolution 1570 (2004)

E Annex I

Savings on prior-period obligations

1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 (Thousands of United States dollars)

Category	Amount	Narrative
I. Military and police personnel		
Military observers	197.0	The unspent balance under this class is due to reduced requirements for excess baggage allowance and shipping allowance.
Military contingents	62.3	Savings are due to actual lower amounts owed for contingent-owned equipment due to deficiencies in equipment.
Civilian police	16.2	The unspent balance under this class is due to reduced requirements for excess baggage allowance and shipping allowance.
Subtotal, military and police personnel	275.5	
II. Civilian personnel		
International staff	25.5	The unspent balance is due to lower actual cost for home leave travel as staff opted for the lump-sum option.
Subtotal, civilian personnel	25.5	
III. Operational costs		
Government-provided personnel	0.2	The unspent balance is due to lower actual travel cost.
Consultants	23.4	Savings are due to lower number of actual days of service than anticipated by the consultant acting as Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General.
Travel	3.8	The unspent balance is made up of various small savings realized on the settlement of travel claims.
Facilities and infrastructure	205.3	Savings are mostly because of gradual downsizing of the Identification Commission resulting in cancellation of obligations.
Ground transportation	64.7	Savings are mostly due to lower freight charges than estimated as well as due to deductions made from vendors for delayed delivery.
Air transportation	198.8	Savings are due to lower flight hours utilized.
Communications	2.6	Savings are due to the credit given by the service provider.
Information technology	24.1	Savings are mostly because of gradual downsizing of the Identification Commission resulting in cancellation of obligations.
Medical	50.0	Funds were reserved for an intended letter of assist for provision of medical services. However, the letter of assist could not be finalized resulting in savings.

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Category	Amount	Narrative
Other supplies, services and equipment	44.7	Savings are mostly due to lower-than-expected charges for training undertaken in Brindisi.
Subtotal, operational costs	617.4	
Total	918.3	

Annex II

Posts encumbered at lower levels than authorized as at 23 February 2005

Post level	Functional title	Grade
ASG	Chief of Staff	D-1
P-5	Legal Officer	P-4
P-4	Information Officer	P-3
P-3 ^a	Facilities Management Service Assistant	G-7
P-2	Information Technology Assistant	FS-5

^a P-3 Facilities Management Service supervisor post authorized in the budget. The staff member has a special post allowance to the P-2 level.

Annex III

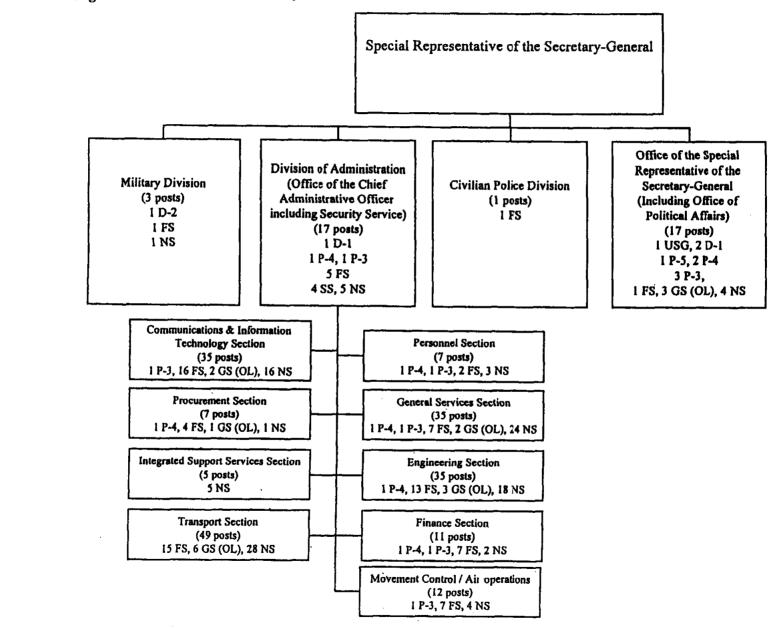
Posts in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Office of Political Affairs

Post title	Post level	Vacant/encumbered	Actual grade	Remarks
Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General				
Special Representative of the Secretary- General	USG	Encumbered	USG	
Assistant Secretary-General	ASG	Encumbered	D-1	
Executive Officer	D-1	Encumbered	D-1	
Legal Officer	P-5	Vacant		
Senior Information Officer	P-5	Vacant		
Political Affairs Officer	P-4	Encumbered	P-4	
Information Officer	P-4	Encumbered	P-3	
Personal Assistant	FS-6	Encumbered	G-7	
Administrative Assistant	G-6	Encumbered	G-6	
Administrative Assistant	G-6	Encumbered	G-3	
Administrative Assistant	G-6	Vacant		Under recruitment
Information Systems Assistant	G-6	Encumbered		On loan to Communication and Information Technology Service
Computer Systems Assistant	FS-6	Encumbered		
Worker	Grade level 1B ^a	Encumbered	Grade level 1B	
Office of Political Affairs				
Senior Political Affairs Officer	P-5	Encumbered	P-5	
Political Affairs Officer	P-4	Encumbered	P-4	
Political Affairs Officer	P-3	Encumbered	P-3	
Political Affairs Officer	P-3	Encumbered	P-3	
Information Officer	P-2	Vacant		
Political Affairs Officer	P-2	Vacant		
Political Affairs Officer	P-2	Vacant		
Information Officer	P-2	Vacant: on loan to Procurement		Under recruitment

^a National staff.

7

Organization chart: encumbered posts



Annex V

Details of budgeted and non-budgeted contributions

A. 2003/04

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Voi	untary contributions in kind (budgeted) were received from:	Amount
1.	Government of Morocco, meals	<u>2 554.3</u>
		<u>2 554.3</u>
2.	Government of Algeria	
	Food product	280.2
	Utilities (electricity, water and gas)	21.4
	Fuel for vehicles	12.4
	Airport facilities (landing fee)	2.7
	Personnel, cooks and cleaners	13.0
		<u>329.7</u>
3.	Frente Polisario	200.0
	Total	3 084.0
_		
Voi	untary contributions in kind (non-budgeted):	Amount
St	atus of forces/Mission agreement is inclusive of:	
1.	Accommodation provided by the Government of Morocco	3 103.0
2.	Accommodation provided by the Government of Algeria	81.6
	Total	3 184.6
Sı	ımmary	
Са	tegory	Actual value
Vo	luntary contributions in kind (budgeted)	3 084.0
Vo	luntary contributions in kind (non-budgeted)	3 184.6
	Total	6 268.6

B. 2005/06

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Voluntary contributions in kind (budgeted):	Amount
Government of Morocco, meals	<u>2 588.4</u>
	<u>2 588.4</u>
2. Government of Algeria	
Food product	280.2
Utilities (electricity, water and gas)	21.4
Fuel for vehicles	12.4
Airport facilities (landing fee)	2.7
Personnel, cooks and cleaners	13.0
	<u>329.7</u>
3. Frente Polisario	200
Total	3 118.1
Voluntary contributions in kind (non-budgeted):	Amount
Status of forces/Mission agreement is inclusive of:	
1. Accommodation provided by the Government of Morocco	3 103.0
2. Accommodation provided by the Government of Algeria	81.6
Total	3 184.6
Summary	
Category	Actual value
Voluntary contributions in kind (budgeted)	3 118.1
Voluntary contributions in kind (non-budgeted)	3 184.6
Total	6 302.7

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