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Agenda item 128

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009

Request for a subvention to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research resulting from the recommendations of the Board of Trustees of the Institute on the work programme of the Institute for 2008-2009

Sixth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/62/3) on the request for a subvention of \$485,500 (before recosting) to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) resulting from the recommendations of the Board of Trustees of the Institute on the work programme of the Institute for 2008-2009. During its consideration of the request, the Committee met with the Director and other representatives of the Institute, who provided additional information and clarifications.

2. The General Assembly, in part IV, paragraph 2, of its resolution 60/248, endorsed the proposal that the request for a subvention to UNIDIR be submitted for review and approval by the Assembly on a biennial basis in the context of its consideration of the proposed programme budget for the related biennium. The note by the Secretary-General presents requests for the full biennium 2008-2009 in accordance with resolution 60/248 and is consistent with what is contained in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, which includes, under section 4, Disarmament, a provision for \$485,500 representing the United Nations subvention to UNIDIR for 2008-2009 (see A/62/6 (Sect.4), para. 4.27). The Committee notes that in the proposed programme budget, extrabudgetary resources for the Trust Fund for UNIDIR for 2008-2009 are estimated at \$4,388,900 (see A/62/6 (Sect.4), para. 4.11).

3. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with the following summary table of the Institute's estimated income from voluntary sources and from the subvention from the United Nations regular budget between 2002 and 2008:



Income from voluntary sources and subvention from the United Nations regular budget

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007 ^a	2008 ^a
Voluntary contributions	1 426.6	751.6	2 063.4	3 327.4	2 558.7	2 013.8	1 135.4
Subvention from United Nations regular budget	229.5	219.2	228.5	247.1	223.5	262.0	231.5
Total	1 656.1	970.8	2 291.9	3 574.5	2 782.2	2 275.8	1 366.9

^a Estimate as at 19 October 2007.

4. The subvention is used to cover the costs of the Director, the Deputy Director and two General Service staff. During its consideration of the request, the Advisory Committee held an exchange of views with the representatives of the Institute concerning the continuing need for a subvention from the regular budget, given the fairly positive financial position of the Institute as regards voluntary contributions. The Committee was informed that the subvention was requested in order to ensure the independence of the Director of the Institute, and that this was vital given the highly political nature of disarmament and international security issues. Furthermore, it was asserted that the visible independence of the Director was important in raising voluntary funds. Moreover, the granting of a subvention encouraged donors to consider funding UNIDIR research projects, as it was seen as a commitment to the long-term survival of the Institute and its independent character.

5. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly approve the request of \$485,500 (before recosting) for UNIDIR for 2008-2009; no additional provision would be required under section 4 of the proposed programme budget for 2008-2009.**