



General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 January 2013

Original: English

Sixty-seventh session

Agenda item 161

Financing of the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic

Budget performance of the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic for the period from 14 April to 30 June 2012

Report of the Secretary-General

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Summary

The Security Council, by its resolution 2042 (2012), decided to authorize an advance team of up to 30 unarmed military observers to liaise with the parties and to begin to report on the implementation of a full cessation of violence in all its forms by all parties. Subsequently, by its resolution 2043 (2012), the Council decided to establish the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic (UNSMIS), comprising an initial deployment of up to 300 unarmed military observers and an appropriate civilian component as required by the Mission, and decided further that the Mission should be deployed expeditiously subject to assessment by the Secretary-General of relevant developments on the ground.

In response to the Controller's requests of 25 April and 8 June 2012, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions granted its concurrence to enter into commitments in a total amount not exceeding \$27,789,000 for the period from 14 April to 20 July 2012 to meet the most immediate start-up requirements of the Mission, comprising \$25,135,100 for the period from 14 April to 30 June and \$2,653,900 for the period from 1 to 20 July.

The total expenditure for UNSMIS for the period from 14 April to 30 June 2012 amounted to \$17,588,800. This related to requirements for the deployment of an average of 192 military observers, 5 international staff and 22 national staff. Under operational costs, the expenditure related mainly to the acquisition of vehicles, information and communications technology equipment and related freight charges for the shipment of equipment from the strategic deployment stocks in Brindisi, Italy, as well as mine-clearance services.

Performance of financial resources

(Thousands of United States dollars. Budget year is from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012.)

Category	Commitment authority 14 April to 30 June 2012	Expenditure	Variance	
			Amount	Percentage
Military and police personnel	4 152.1	3 280.0	872.1	21.0
Civilian personnel	1 567.3	721.5	845.8	54.0
Operational costs	19 415.7	13 587.3	5 828.4	30.0
Gross requirements	25 135.1	17 588.8	7 546.3	30.0
Staff assessment income	165.6	40.0	125.6	75.8
Net requirements	24 969.5	17 548.8	7 420.7	29.7
Voluntary contributions in kind (budgeted)	—	—	—	—
Total requirements	25 135.1	17 588.8	7 546.3	30.0

Human resources incumbency performance

<i>Category</i>	<i>Approved^a</i>	<i>Planned</i>	<i>Actual (average)</i>	<i>Vacancy rate (percentage)^b</i>
Military observers	300	290	192	33.8
Temporary positions				
International staff	109	29	5	82.8
National staff ^c	112	34	22	32.5

^a Represents the highest level of authorized strength.

^b Based on the planned strength for military observers in June 2012 and the planned average strength for civilian personnel for the period from April to June 2012.

^c Represents the weighted average for National Officers and national staff in the General Service category.

The actions to be taken by the General Assembly are set out in section V of the present report.

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 2042 (2012), the Security Council expressed its intention, subject to a sustained cessation of armed violence in all its forms by all parties, to establish immediately, after consultations between the Secretary-General and the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, a United Nations supervision mission in the Syrian Arab Republic to monitor a cessation of armed violence in all its forms by all parties and relevant aspects of the six-point proposal of the Joint Special Envoy (hereafter referred to as the six-point plan). By the same resolution, the Council decided to authorize an advance team of up to 30 unarmed military observers to liaise with the parties and to begin to report on the implementation of a full cessation of armed violence in all its forms by all parties, pending the deployment of the mission.

2. Subsequently, in its resolution 2043 (2012), the Security Council decided to establish for an initial period of 90 days the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic (UNSMIS) under the command of a Chief Military Observer, comprising an initial deployment of up to 300 unarmed military observers and an appropriate civilian component as required by the Mission to fulfil its mandate. The Council also decided that the mandate of the Mission should be to monitor a cessation of armed violence in all its forms by all parties and to monitor and support the full implementation of the six-point plan of the Joint Special Envoy. The Council further decided that the Mission should be deployed expeditiously subject to assessment by the Secretary-General of relevant developments on the ground, including the consolidation of the cessation of violence.

3. In a letter dated 30 April 2012, the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions informed the Secretary-General that the Advisory Committee had granted its concurrence to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding \$16,796,300 gross (\$16,555,500 net), comprising \$14,142,400 gross (\$13,976,800 net) for the period from 14 April to 30 June 2012 and \$2,653,900 gross (\$2,578,700 net) for the period from 1 to 20 July 2012 to meet the initial and most immediate start-up requirements of the Mission.

4. Subsequently, in a letter dated 14 June 2012, the Chair of the Advisory Committee informed the Secretary-General that the Committee had granted its concurrence to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding \$10,992,700 for critical equipment and supplies available from the strategic deployment stocks during the initial deployment of UNSMIS.

5. Subsequently, in a letter dated 12 September 2012, the Controller informed the Advisory Committee that based on the recorded expenditures for the 2011/12 period, expenditures incurred by UNSMIS against the commitment authority were provisionally projected at \$17,119,100, leaving a balance of \$8,016,000 from the original commitment authority of \$25,135,100. Consequently, the Controller sought the concurrence of the Committee to revise the commitment authority for the 2011/12 period from \$25,135,100 to \$22,844,900 and to utilize the amount of \$2,290,200 during the 2012/13 period. In a letter dated 16 October 2012, the Chair informed the Secretary-General that the Committee had concurred with the Controller's request.

II. Mandate performance

A. Resource utilization

6. The Mission was deployed rapidly to the Syrian Arab Republic and grew steadily in scale, with military observers deployed to nine locations comprising Mission headquarters in Damascus and eight team sites, in Rif Damascus, Homs, Hama, Latakia, Tartus, Dara'a, Deir ez-Zor and Aleppo.

7. During the reporting period, the Mission carried out extensive patrolling of the area of operations and direct monitoring of the status of the preliminary understanding between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Nations (see S/2012/250), including the reporting of violations of the cessation of armed violence to both the Government and representatives of the opposition. In addition, the Mission reported on the implementation of the six-point plan of the Joint Special Envoy outlined in Security Council resolution 2042 (2012).

8. The rapid deployment of military observers and supporting civilian staff enabled the secure movement of the Mission's uniformed personnel and civilian staff across the country. With the establishment of coordination and consultation processes with a wide range of Government, opposition and other interlocutors, the Mission reached its full operating capacity on 28 May 2012. A wide range of patrolling, monitoring and reporting activities commenced, with a focus on formally identifying violations of the preliminary understanding and the six-point plan and, where possible, advocating a halt to such violations, and ensuring situational awareness for the Mission leadership. This awareness was accomplished with the involvement of uniformed and civilian personnel, largely through proactive patrolling from team sites to areas of interest and engagement with Government officials, armed and unarmed representatives of the opposition and local communities in areas of conflict. These patrols and engagements with the local population made it possible to have a direct dialogue with key interlocutors, to observe incidents and activities by parties to the conflict, including the release of detainees, and to enhance Mission situational awareness. The Mission also undertook a range of patrols, comprising uniformed personnel and civilian staff from the civil affairs and human rights sections, to examine and report on significant incidents of violence, including those that took place in Al-Houla on 25 May 2012 and Al-Qubair on 6 and 7 June 2012, as well as visits to other sites of interest in Deir ez-Zor on 29 May 2012 and Al-Haffa on 14 June 2012. The Mission carried out extensive liaison and coordination functions with representatives of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic at the central, governorate and local levels in an effort to address the implementation of the six-point plan and the preliminary understanding. Direct and indirect outreach and consultation efforts were made and maintained with representatives of the Syrian armed and unarmed opposition throughout the country in order to engage with them with regard to the opposition's violations of the cessation of armed violence and other aspects of the six-point plan. Despite the efforts of the Mission, incidences of armed conflict increased throughout the areas of operation during the reporting period, while incidents in which UNSMIS vehicles, premises and personnel were directly or indirectly targeted by parties to the conflict also continued to occur. As conditions deteriorated, United Nations monitoring of the cessation of armed violence was steadily reduced.

9. As a result, on 15 June 2012, the Head of Mission and Chief Military Observer issued a temporary freeze on operational activities that remained in place until the end of the reporting period on 30 June. Consequently, military observers and supporting civilian staff remained inside team site locations and adjusted their activities to reflect direct observation from team site locations only and the use of indirect means of communication with all parties.

10. Of the authorized strength of 300 military observers, 277 military observers had been deployed by 30 June 2012. The civilian component consisted of 221 temporary positions (109 international and 112 national) to ensure sufficient flexibility in recruiting critically required functions as expeditiously as possible. However, the Mission encountered delays in implementing a rapid civilian recruitment plan owing to the inherent timelines in recruitment procedures, the impact of the short mandate period on the recruitment of potential staff and some lags in the issuance of visas that were addressed directly by the Mission with the host Government. As a result, the Mission relied primarily on temporary duty assignment arrangements to ensure that the Mission could be deployed rapidly and critical functions could be staffed adequately. By 30 June 2012, 8 international temporary positions and 45 national temporary positions were encumbered, with an additional 76 staff deployed on temporary duty assignment. The fact that 45 national staff had been recruited by 30 June 2012, as compared to the approved strength of 112, was based on the assumption of a phased deployment and that full incumbency would not be feasible in the short time frame of the reporting period.

B. Mission support initiatives

11. UNSMIS was deployed immediately upon the authorization of the deployment of the advance team under the terms of Security Council resolution 2042 (2012) and the establishment of a peacekeeping mission in resolution 2043 (2012). While the deployment of military observers proceeded rapidly and in line with force generation plans that were based on the significant support of contributing countries, the recruitment of international staff was delayed owing to visa issuance issues, which resulted in increased reliance on the deployment of staff on temporary duty assignment. Other operational requirements were adversely affected by the challenges related to the security conditions in the area of operations and delays in the issuance of clearance for some communications equipment, which presented an impediment to the implementation of the mandate and the Mission's security.

12. During the reporting period, nine team sites (Rif Damascus, Homs, Hama, Latakia, Tartus, Dara'a, Deir ez-Zor, Aleppo and Damascus) were established for military observers and civilian staff. The establishment of those sites was facilitated largely by the use of appropriate, commercially available premises rather than through investment in infrastructure. Because there were several team sites, the establishment of secure and reliable capabilities in information and communications technology were required. At the same time, security conditions led to the need for urgent measures to expedite the delivery of requisite vehicles from the strategic deployment stocks and other missions in the region, as well as transfers from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

13. Mission requirements for support staff were met in accordance with the principles of the global field support strategy and the use of existing capacities in

other missions. In order to achieve efficiencies and lighten the deployment footprint in the Syrian Arab Republic, the logistical support capabilities of the Global Service Centre in Brindisi, Italy, were fully leveraged. Cooperation with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) was also achieved in areas of administrative and logistics coordination.

C. Regional mission cooperation

14. UNIFIL and UNDOF provided the Mission with administrative and logistical support in areas such as procurement, banking and cashier functions, processing of staff entitlements and freight-forwarding activities.

15. As part of a proactive strategy of coordination and cooperation on operational issues, the Mission participated in meetings with the United Nations country team and the Department of Safety and Security of the Secretariat. UNSMIS also provided full support to the United Nations country team, with which it coordinated its activities in critical areas such as staff security. In addition, direct dialogue with relevant partners was undertaken by the Mission to ensure the visibility of United Nations country team activities with respect to the area of operations and in order to enhance the Mission's situational awareness of the security, political and humanitarian situation on the ground.

III. Resource performance

Expenditures for the period from 14 April to 30 June 2012

(Thousands of United States dollars)

<i>Category</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
Military and police personnel	
Military observers	3 280.0
Military contingents	—
United Nations police	—
Formed police units	—
Subtotal	3 280.0
Civilian personnel	
International staff	—
National staff	—
United Nations Volunteers	—
General temporary assistance	721.5
Subtotal	721.5
Operational costs	
Government-provided personnel	—
Civilian electoral observers	—
Consultants	—
Official travel	1 222.9
Facilities and infrastructure	394.6
Ground transportation	6 772.6
Air transportation	—
Naval transportation	—
Communications	1 462.6
Information technology	914.8
Medical	28.9
Special equipment	13.4
Other supplies, services and equipment	2 777.5
Quick-impact projects	—
Subtotal	13 587.3
Gross requirements	17 588.8
Staff assessment income	40.0
Net requirements	17 548.8
Voluntary contributions in kind (budgeted)	—
Total requirements	17 588.8

IV. Analysis of expenditures¹

	<i>Expenditure</i>
Military observers	\$3 280.0

16. Expenditure in the amount of \$3,280,000 related to duty station allowances and associated travel costs for an average of 192 military observers for the period from April to June 2012.

	<i>Expenditure</i>
General temporary assistance	\$721.5

17. Expenditure in the amount of \$721,500 was incurred for salaries and related costs for an average of 5 temporary international staff and an average of 22 national staff for the period from April to June 2012.

	<i>Expenditure</i>
Official travel	\$1 222.9

18. Expenditure in the amount of \$1,222,900 related to travel costs and daily subsistence allowances for an average of 49 international civilian staff who were deployed on temporary duty assignment during the period from April to June 2012.

	<i>Expenditure</i>
Facilities and infrastructure	\$394.6

19. Expenditure in the amount of \$394,600 related primarily to the acquisition of office furniture and rental costs for office facilities in Damascus and other team sites.

	<i>Expenditure</i>
Ground transportation	\$6 772.6

20. Expenditure in the amount of \$6,772,600 related to the acquisition of vehicles, including armoured and light passenger vehicles and minibuses, deployed from the strategic deployment stocks and through external procurement and to related equipment, spare parts and other associated operational costs.

	<i>Expenditure</i>
Communications	\$1 462.6

21. Expenditure in the amount of \$1,462,600 related primarily to the acquisition of critical communications equipment such as satellite and cellular phones, telephone servers and applicable support costs through the deployment of strategic deployment stocks and external procurement.

¹ Expenditure amounts are expressed in thousands of United States dollars.

	<i>Expenditure</i>
Information technology	\$914.8

22. Expenditure in the amount of \$914,800 related mainly to the acquisition of equipment such as desktop and laptop computers, servers, storage disk drives, network switches and printers, as well as associated spare parts through the deployment of strategic deployment stocks and external procurement.

	<i>Expenditure</i>
Medical	\$28.9

23. Expenditure in the amount of \$28,900 was incurred for the acquisition of trauma bags and medical services obtained by staff from external medical facilities.

	<i>Expenditure</i>
Special equipment	\$13.4

24. Expenditure in the amount of \$13,400 was incurred for the acquisition of binoculars and night vision devices.

	<i>Expenditure</i>
Other supplies, services and equipment	\$2 777.5

25. Expenditure in the amount of \$2,777,500 was attributable primarily to freight costs for the shipment of assets from other missions and mine action services provided by the United Nations Office for Project Services, including training sessions, the identification of munitions and weaponry, site visits, in situ technical advice and post-blast assessments.

V. Actions to be taken by the General Assembly

26. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNSMIS are:

(a) Establishment of a special account for UNSMIS for the purpose of accounting for income received and expenditure incurred in respect of the Mission;

(b) Appropriation in the amount of \$17,588,800 previously authorized by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for UNSMIS for the period from 14 April to 30 June 2012;

(c) Assessment of the full amount set out in subparagraph (b) above.