



General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 October 2013

Original: English

Sixty-eighth session

Agenda item 134

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council

**Thematic cluster I: Special and Personal Envoys, and Special
Advisers of the Secretary-General**

**Office of the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations
and the League of Arab States for Syria**

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains the proposed resource requirements for the Office of the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and League of Arab States for Syria for 2014, amounting to \$12,365,300 (net of staff assessment).



Office of the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria

(\$12,365,300)

Background, mandate and objective

1. The Security Council issued a presidential statement on 3 August 2011 (S/PRST/2011/16) expressing grave concern at the deteriorating situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and stressing that the only solution to the current crisis is through an inclusive and Syrian-led political process, with the aim of effectively addressing the legitimate aspirations and concerns of the population which will allow the full exercise of fundamental freedoms for its population. On 16 February 2012, the General Assembly, in its resolution 66/253 A, requested the Secretary-General and all relevant United Nations bodies to provide support to the efforts of the League of Arab States, both through good offices aimed at promoting a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis, including through the appointment of a Special Envoy, and through technical and material assistance, in consultation with the League.
2. On 23 February 2012, the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the League of Arab States appointed Kofi Annan as their Joint Special Envoy to work closely with all the stakeholders and the international community to end the violence and the humanitarian crisis, and facilitate a peaceful Syrian-led and inclusive political solution that meets the democratic aspirations of the Syrian people through a comprehensive political dialogue between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the whole spectrum of the Syrian opposition.
3. Joint Special Envoy Annan, along with his deputies, engaged with a variety of parties and international stakeholders with influence on the Syrian crisis. He identified the establishment of Security Council unity as key for creating the necessary pressure for a cessation of violence and the emergence of a peaceful political process. On 10 March 2012, the Joint Special Envoy travelled to Damascus and met with the President of the Syrian Arab Republic to present a six-point plan, which was subsequently endorsed in a presidential statement of the Security Council on 21 March 2012 (S/PRST/2012/6). This was followed by the Government's formal endorsement of the six-point plan on 25 March, which included the expectation that a suitable United Nations monitoring mission would be deployed to supervise a cessation of violence.
4. As envisaged in the six-point plan, a cessation of violence formally began in the Syrian Arab Republic on 12 April, which, in its earliest stages, was broadly adhered to by the Government and the armed opposition forces. Notably, the violence diminished dramatically and largely ceased across the country for a period of approximately five weeks. The cessation of violence of 12 April was followed by Security Council resolutions 2042 (2012) of 14 April and 2043 (2012) of 21 April. These established the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic (UNSMIS).
5. Against the background of escalating violence in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Joint Special Envoy consulted with the Security Council before launching a new initiative to promote a peaceful solution to the Syrian conflict, in the form of an international Action Group for Syria. Concerted preparations by the Office of the Joint Special Envoy for the creation of this group began in mid-June 2012, resulting

in a meeting of the Action Group on 30 June 2012, chaired by the Joint Special Envoy. The participants included the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five permanent members of the Security Council, Turkey, Qatar, Iraq and Kuwait (with the latter three represented in their capacity as chairs of relevant components of the Arab League), alongside representation from the United Nations, the League of Arab States and the European Union.

6. In their final communiqué of 30 June (S/2012/523), the members of the Action Group identified steps and measures by the parties to secure the full implementation of the six-point plan and Security Council resolutions 2042 (2012) and 2043 (2012), including an immediate cessation of violence in all its forms; agreed on principles and guidelines for a political transition that meets the aspirations of the Syrian people; and agreed on actions that they would take to implement these objectives in support of the Joint Special Envoy's efforts to facilitate a Syrian-led transition. Within this framework, the Action Group was expected to help to create international and regional conditions for a cessation of violence and the emergence of a peaceful political process inside the Syrian Arab Republic.

7. However, as the violence intensified and spread, on 20 July the Security Council extended the mandate of UNSMIS by a final period of 30 days, expressing, in resolution 2059 (2012), its willingness to renew the mandate of UNSMIS thereafter only in the event that the Secretary-General reported and the Security Council confirmed the cessation of the use of heavy weapons and a reduction in the level of violence by all sides sufficient to allow UNSMIS to implement its mandate. Owing to increased levels of violence, the Security Council did not renew the mandate of UNSMIS, leading to the liquidation of the mission on 19 August 2012.

8. On 2 August 2012, the Joint Special Envoy informed the Secretary-General of his intention not to renew his mandate when it would expire on 31 August 2012. On 3 August, the General Assembly adopted resolution 66/253 B, in which the Assembly condemned the increasing use of heavy weapons, human rights violations, and all violence, irrespective of its source, including terrorist acts. The Assembly called upon the Syrian parties to cooperate with the Joint Special Envoy with the aim of implementing the Geneva communiqué of 30 June 2012. The Assembly also demanded that all parties immediately and visibly implement Security Council resolutions 2042 (2012) and 2043 (2012) in order to achieve a cessation of armed violence in all its forms by all parties, thereby creating an atmosphere conducive to a sustained cessation of violence and a Syrian-led political transition, and deplored the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Assembly also encouraged Member States to provide active support to ensure implementation of the transition plan set forth in the final communiqué of the Action Group for Syria.

9. In that context, on 17 August 2012, together with the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations appointed Lakhdar Brahimi as the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and League of Arab States for Syria. In his letter dated 17 August, the President of the Security Council reiterated the support of Council members for the Joint Special Representative. On 5 September, the League of Arab States adopted resolution 7523, welcoming the appointment of the Joint Special Representative and calling upon him to structure the new vision for the mission in the light of the changes.

10. On 15 May 2013, the General Assembly adopted resolution 67/262, in which the Assembly, among other things, reiterated a call for an inclusive Syrian-led

political transition to a democratic, pluralistic political system, in which citizens are equal, regardless of their affiliations, ethnicities or beliefs, including through the commencement of a serious political dialogue between credible, empowered and mutually acceptable interlocutors representing the Syrian authorities and the Syrian opposition. The Assembly reaffirmed its support for the mission of the Joint Special Representative, and demanded that all Syrian parties work with his office to implement rapidly the transition plan set forth in the Geneva communiqué.

11. The overall situation in the Syrian Arab Republic continued to deteriorate. The armed forces of the Government, along with pro-government militias, and the armed opposition continued to engage in violent confrontation. The threat of regional destabilization owing to the Syrian conflict continued to grow. The humanitarian situation deteriorated further within the country. Civilians continued to flee to neighbouring and regional countries. The Independent Commission of Inquiry continued to document violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law, on the basis of information collected outside the Syrian Arab Republic, as the Commission has not yet been granted access to the Syrian territory.

12. Against this background, the Joint Special Representative continued to engage Syrian, regional and international partners in an effort to help the Syrian sides reach a political solution. He undertook efforts to rally the region towards a political solution conducting visits to all of the neighbouring States and to other regional countries with an interest in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Joint Special Representative has visited refugee camps in Turkey and Jordan, further raising the profile of the humanitarian crisis affecting the Syrian Arab Republic and the region. He also explored ways to promote dialogue at the international level. In addition, he has briefed the Security Council and the General Assembly on his efforts throughout the period.

13. On 7 May 2013, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and the Secretary of State of the United States of America agreed to convene an international conference as a follow-up to the June 2012 meeting of the Action Group for Syria. The conference will aim to bring the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the opposition together to determine how to fully implement the Geneva communiqué. The Joint Special Representative has convened trilateral meetings of the Russian Federation, the United States and the United Nations aimed at further exploring ways to promote a political solution to the Syrian crisis.

14. On 27 September 2013, the Security Council adopted resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#), in which it endorsed the decision of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. The Council also fully endorsed the Geneva communiqué, contained in an annex to the resolution, and called for the convening, as soon as possible, of an international conference on the Syrian Arab Republic with the aim of implementing the Geneva communiqué. In his public statement to the Council, the Secretary-General announced that the conference was aimed for mid-November, and stated that in the meantime, the Joint Special Representative would launch all necessary preparations to ensure the success of the conference.

15. The activities of the Joint Special Representative are expected to be as follows:

(a) To use good offices aimed at bringing an end to all violence and human rights violations, and at facilitating a Syrian-led peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis. To that end, the Joint Special Representative will consult broadly and engage with domestic and international stakeholders, including neighbouring States and other relevant countries, the Syrian authorities, opposition groups and other key civil society organizations. In consultation with the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the Joint Special Representative will advise the Secretary-General on the political process to help resolve the conflict in Syria. The Joint Special Representative will also advise the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States through appropriate channels;

(b) To work with all relevant entities of the United Nations and the League of Arab States to provide support for efforts to end the violence and promote a political solution. As appropriate, the Joint Special Representative will maintain close contacts and consultations with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other relevant United Nations agencies, including the Emergency Relief Coordinator, and facilitate and support their efforts. He will also maintain close contacts and consultations with the International Committee of the Red Cross;

(c) As appropriate, the Joint Special Representative will brief the Security Council, the General Assembly and other relevant United Nations bodies, as well as the Ministerial Council and the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of the League of Arab States.

Cooperation with other entities

16. Substantive and administrative support for the Office of the Joint Special Representative is provided by the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Field Support. In the implementation of the good offices mandate, the Joint Special Representative and his Office will continue to consult and coordinate closely with the Department of Political Affairs and, when appropriate, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Cooperation will also be extended to the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system operating in the region and in the Syrian Arab Republic (the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Department of Safety and Security, UNDP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNHCR, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations Mine Action Service, the Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Resident Coordinator, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in the Near East, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization). The Office of the Joint Special Representative in Damascus consults and cooperates with the United Nations country team in the Syrian Arab Republic. In addition, all of the agencies working in the country are represented within the headquarters Inter-Agency Task Force for the Syrian Crisis, which ensures coordination and coherence of United Nations political, humanitarian, human rights and other efforts in the Syrian Arab Republic.

17. During 2013, the Office leveraged on the administrative and logistics capacity of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization and UNDP Cairo. The relatively small component of support staff of the Office was augmented by these field operations in finance, human resources, procurement, transport, movement control, customs clearance and certain communication services. The Department of Field Support has a support mechanism similar to those of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus, UNSMIL and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan, where the experience has generally been positive in terms of both the quality of service provided and the mitigation effects on cost increases. Back-office support for transactional services, especially in the areas of financial and human resource management, is no longer a unique experience with the Department of Field Support in the case of the Office. The flexibility of having back-office support also has allowed the Office to react quickly in establishing support without the need to tie it closely to a particular location. In the case of the Office, a decision to relocate its headquarters in Cairo to Geneva could be promptly carried out since the local support in UNDP Cairo was utilized and quickly terminated when no longer needed, and a new support mechanism established with the United Nations Office at Geneva. Throughout the reporting period, back-office support for finance from Damascus was provided through UNDOF with the use of a single bank account for local payments through reimbursable arrangements, minimizing financial risks to the Organization.

Performance information

18. Activities of the Office for the period from January to August 2013 included steps towards ending the violence and reaching a peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. This included efforts to launch a political process for a peaceful Syrian-led transition as well as rallying enhanced international support and cooperation to that end. During the remainder of 2013, conditions are expected to emerge to allow for a sustainable and concerted political process, including greater international and regional unity and support, and greater cooperation and engagement by representatives of the Syrian society (from within the Government, opposition groups, civil society and other stakeholders).

Planning assumptions for 2014

19. The priorities of the Office will be to assist the Syrian parties in bringing an end to all violence and human rights violations and in facilitating a Syrian-led inclusive and comprehensive peaceful solution to the crisis and a Syrian-led political transition. To that end, the Joint Special Representative will continue his consultations with all Syrian, regional and international stakeholders with a view to holding an international conference on the Syrian Arab Republic that would launch negotiations between Syrian sides to implement the Geneva communiqué.

20. The Office of the Joint Special Representative was relocated to the United Nations Office at Geneva, effective 1 September 2013. This will facilitate the preparation for the second international conference on the Syrian Arab Republic, to be held in Geneva. All 25 positions that were initially based in Cairo have been

redeployed to Geneva. An office continues to be maintained in Damascus, comprising 50 positions. Three positions are based in New York at the Department of Political Affairs to provide substantive back-stopping support to the Office of the Joint Special Representative.

21. Mission support staffing requirements incorporate the principles of the global field support strategy. The Office will continue to leverage the existing capacities, including those of the regional Middle East missions, and the United Nations Office at Geneva for the provision of administrative support and logistics coordination to complement the mission support component of five positions deployed in Geneva and eight positions in Damascus. In Geneva, the Office is located in the Palais des Nations. The mission will enter into a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Office at Geneva for support on a cost-reimbursable basis. In Damascus, the Office has leased a commercial hotel to be used as the Office premises.

22. The objective, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of the Office are set out in table 1 below.

Table 1

Objective: To achieve through peaceful means a Syrian-led political solution to the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, which will meet the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people to dignity, freedom and justice, based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination

Expected accomplishments	Indicators of achievement
(a) The parties agree to end violence and reach a comprehensive political solution to the conflict	<p>(a) (i) Number of meetings held by the Joint Special Representative with the parties to the conflict, as well as with regional and international stakeholders, conducive to an agreement between the relevant parties</p> <p><i>Performance measures</i></p> <p>2012: not applicable</p> <p>Estimate 2013: 300</p> <p>Target 2014: 300</p> <p>(ii) Reduction in the number of casualties resulting from the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic</p> <p>(Percentage of reduction compared with the previous semester)</p> <p><i>Performance measures</i></p> <p>2012: not applicable</p> <p>Estimate 2013: 40 per cent</p> <p>Target 2014: 100 per cent</p>

(b) An inclusive Syrian-led political process is conducted in a safe environment that provides for a political transition and aims at effectively addressing the legitimate aspirations and concerns of the Syrian people

(b) (i) Representatives of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the whole spectrum of Syrian opposition groups engage in a credible and comprehensive political process

Performance measures

2012: not applicable

Estimate 2013: yes

Target 2014: yes

(ii) Road map or agreement is reached on a solution that meets the legitimate will and aspirations of the Syrian people, ensures full respect for their fundamental rights and is being implemented

Performance measures

2012: not applicable

Estimate 2013: yes

Target 2014: yes

(c) Support efforts to end human rights violations

(c) Release of detainees and prisoners related to the protests that have taken place in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011

Performance measures

2012: not applicable

Estimate 2013: not applicable

Target 2014: yes

(d) Humanitarian access to affected areas is facilitated

(d) Humanitarian access is granted by all parties concerned

(Percentage of people in need with access to humanitarian assistance)

Performance measures

2012: not applicable

Estimate 2013: 100 per cent

Target 2014: 100 per cent

Outputs

- Provision of good offices and organization of consultations and negotiations with all internal, regional and international parties concerned, aimed at finding a political solution to the Syrian crisis
- Regular visits to the Syrian Arab Republic and other countries aimed at promoting a political solution to the Syrian crisis

- Advice to all Syrian stakeholders on best practices for reaching a negotiated solution, including on practical arrangements for the cessation of hostilities and other matters
- As appropriate, training workshops on negotiating processes for relevant stakeholders
- As appropriate, facilitation of negotiations between relevant parties to reach an agreement to end the conflict and put forward a political solution acceptable to all concerned
- Updates to the Security Council, the General Assembly and other relevant United Nations and League of Arab States bodies, as appropriate, on the progress of the mission of the Joint Special Representative
- Public awareness-raising initiatives of the Joint Special Representative, including public statements stressing the importance of political dialogue, an end to violence and human rights violations and safeguarding humanitarian access
- Regular briefings to the diplomatic community, including members of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, on the political and security situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and the efforts of the Joint Special Representative

External factors

23. The objective of the Office of the Joint Special Representative would be achieved on the assumption that all domestic, regional and international stakeholders will fully cooperate with the Joint Special Representative.

Resource requirements (regular budget)

Table 2
Financial resources

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Category	2012-2013			Requirements for 2014		Total requirements for 2013	Variance, 2013-2014
	Appropriation	Estimated expenditure	Variance	Total	Non-recurrent		
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)=(4)-(6)
Civilian personnel costs	10 185.9	8 594.2	1 591.7	8 085.8	–	6 278.3	1 807.5
Operational costs	9 548.3	6 354.0	3 194.3	4 279.5	–	5 967.9	(1 688.4)
Total	19 734.2	14 948.2	4 786.0	12 365.3	–	12 246.2	119.1

Table 3
Positions

	<i>Professional and higher categories</i>								<i>General Service and related categories</i>		<i>National staff</i>				<i>United Nations Volunteers</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>USG</i>	<i>ASG</i>	<i>D-2</i>	<i>D-1</i>	<i>P-5</i>	<i>P-4</i>	<i>P-3</i>	<i>P-2</i>	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>Field/ Security Service</i>	<i>General Service</i>	<i>Total inter-national</i>	<i>National Professional Officer</i>	<i>Local level</i>		
Approved 2013	1	1	1	2	6	9	7	–	27	18	1	46	–	32	–	78
Proposed 2014	1	1	1	2	6	9	7	–	27	13	14	54	–	24	–	78
Change	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(5)	13	8	–	(8)	–	–

24. The projected underexpenditure for the biennium 2012-2013 is attributable primarily to the actual vacancy rate being higher than budgeted and requirements for facilities and infrastructure being lower than budgeted, since the facilities in Cairo were provided free of charge.

25. The estimated requirements for the Office of the Joint Special Representative for 2014 amount to \$12,365,300 (net of staff assessment) and provide for civilian personnel costs (\$8,085,800) for 78 positions (1 Under-Secretary-General, 1 Assistant Secretary-General, 1 D-2, 2 D-1, 6 P-5, 9 P-4, 7 P-3, 13 Field Service, 14 General Service (Other level) and 24 Local level), applying a vacancy rate of 30 per cent in estimating civilian personnel costs for positions in Damascus and New York, and of 27 per cent for positions in Geneva; as well as operational costs (\$4,279,500), comprising consultants (\$200,000), official travel (\$1,586,300), facilities and infrastructure (\$690,800), ground transportation (\$204,800), communications (\$774,500), information technology (\$33,100) and other supplies, services and equipment (\$790,000).

26. The proposed number of positions for the substantive component of the mission is 30, 15 of which will be based in Geneva (1 Under-Secretary-General, 1 Assistant Secretary-General, 2 D-1, 2 P-5, 3 P-4, 2 P-3 and 4 General Service (Other level)), 12 in Damascus (1 D-2, 2 P-5, 3 P-4, 3 P-3, 1 Field Service and 2 Local level), and three in New York (1 P-5, 1 P-4, and 1 General Service (Other level)).

27. Thirteen positions are included for the support component of the mission, five of which will be based in Geneva (1 P-5, 4 General Service (Other level)) and eight in Damascus (1 P-4, 4 Field Service and 3 Local level).

28. Thirty-five positions are included for the security component of the mission, five of which will be based in Geneva (5 General Service (Other level)) and 30 in Damascus (1 P-4, 2 P-3, 8 Field Service and 19 Local level).

29. The variance between the proposed resources for 2014 and the approved budget for 2013 is attributable mainly to the relocation of the Office to Geneva, offset mostly by decreases under operational costs, mainly under facilities and infrastructure as well as other supplies, services and equipment related to mediation activities.

Extrabudgetary resources

30. The work of the Office of the Joint Special Representative will also be supported through the Trust Fund in Support of the Department of Political Affairs, which will provide funds to cover expanded activities during the course of the year. In particular, the Trust Fund will support additional budgetary demands for staff, travel, meetings between international and regional stakeholders, meetings of domestic Syrian representatives, the work of consultants and additional equipment costs.

31. Extrabudgetary resources amounting to \$3,475,000 are expected to be available during 2013 from the Trust Fund in Support of the Department of Political Affairs. These resources cover the requirements for a total of 10 positions, comprising one Director (D-2), to lead the post-conflict inter-agency planning efforts, two Political Affairs Officers (P-4) and one Administrative Assistant (General Service (Other level)), all based in New York; four Political Affairs Officers (2 P-4 and 2 P-3), based in New York, to provide substantive support to the Joint Representative and his staff, and located in the Middle East and West Asia Division of the Department of Political Affairs; and two positions (P-3) in support of the Office of the Joint Special Representative based in Damascus.

32. Extrabudgetary resources in 2013 for activities implemented by members of the United Nations country team in the Syrian Arab Republic, which complement, but are separate from, the mandate of the Office of the Joint Special Representative, comprise a humanitarian appeal by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for \$1.4 billion to provide humanitarian assistance for Syrians in the country, and an appeal by UNHCR for \$2.9 billion for a regional response plan to assist the Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries.

33. For 2014, extrabudgetary resources are being sought from donors for similar needs as in 2013.