



## Sixty-ninth session

Agenda item 132

### 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

### Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

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## **Special political missions**

### **Special political missions**

#### **Thematic cluster I**

Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Myanmar

Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus

Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide

Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara

Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)

United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions

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

Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan

Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen

Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel

Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region

#### **Thematic cluster II**

Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea

Panel of Experts on Liberia

Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire

Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Panel of Experts on the Sudan

Panel of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Panel of Experts on the Islamic Republic of Iran

Panel of Experts on Libya

Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic

Panel of Experts on Yemen

Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1526 (2004) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities

Support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction

Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate

**Thematic cluster III**

United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA)

United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA)

United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS)

United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL)

United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission

United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA)

United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB)

United Nations Electoral Observer Mission in Burundi (MENUB)

Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL)

United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA)

United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)

United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM)

Joint Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic (OPCW-United Nations Joint Mission)

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)

## I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the advance reports of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/69/363 and Corr. 1-3 and Add.1-5). During its consideration of the reports, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 12 December 2014.

2. The Secretary-General has presented estimated requirements of \$485,909,600 net for 2015 for 35 special political missions (see paras. 10-14 below). The resource requirements of the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Myanmar, whose mandate emanates from the General Assembly, will be presented in a statement of programme budget implications in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, subject to action taken in the Third Committee of the Assembly. (Those requirements are also included in documents A/69/363 and Add.1 so as to consolidate the overall resource requirements of all special political missions.)

3. The Advisory Committee notes that the budget proposals of the Secretary-General for the special political missions for 2015 are, as in the past, grouped into three thematic clusters (A/69/363/Add.1-3), while the resource requirements of the two largest missions (UNAMA and UNAMI) are presented separately (A/69/363/Add.4 and Add.5). In the present report, the Committee highlights the resource requirements of the 35 special political missions for 2015 requested in documents A/69/363 and Add.1-5 (sect. II below), makes general observations and recommendations regarding the administration and management of the resources and areas for improvement (sect. III) and makes recommendations related to the resources proposed for specific missions (sect. IV).

4. The Secretary-General provides information with respect to the status of the mandates of the 35 missions for which budgetary requirements are requested for 2015 in his report (A/69/363 and Add.1-5), as follows: (a) 12 missions have open-ended mandates; (b) 19 missions have mandates expiring in 2015 or later; (c) 3 missions have mandates expiring in 2014; and (d) 1 mission is under consideration by the General Assembly (A/69/363, paras. 6-8). He indicates that the 2015 budget proposals for the missions whose mandates expire during the course of 2014 are included in his report on the assumption that the General Assembly or the Security Council will extend their mandates into 2015 on the basis of reports and requests already submitted or to be submitted to them.

5. The two missions (under cluster II) that were created in late 2013 and 2014 are as follows (A/69/363, paras. 9-11):

(a) The Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic was established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2127 (2013) of 5 December 2013, and the General Assembly approved the budget for the Panel for 2014 at the first part of its resumed sixty-eight session (resolution 68/247 B);

(b) The Panel of Experts on Yemen was established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2140 (2014) of 26 February 2014, and the General Assembly

approved the budget for the Panel for 2014 at the second part of its resumed sixty-eighth session (resolution 68/280).

6. The four missions (under cluster III) that have completed or will complete their operations during 2014, and the one mission that will become operational from 1 January 2015, are as follows (A/69/363, paras. 12-16):

(a) On 31 March 2014, UNIPSIL successfully concluded its mandate in Sierra Leone, the last in a series of United Nations peacekeeping and political presences over the past 15 years, giving way to a regular United Nations country team presence (Security Council resolution 2097 (2013));

(b) The mandate of BINUCA was subsumed under that of the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, authorized by the Security Council in resolution 2149 (2014) on 10 April 2014 following the deterioration of the security situation in the country;

(c) The Security Council, in resolution 2137 (2014), extended the mandate of BNUB to 31 December 2014, requested the mission to complete the transfer of appropriate responsibilities to the United Nations country team by that date, and requested the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations electoral observer mission immediately following the end of the BNUB mandate;

(d) MENUB, established by the Security Council in resolution 2137 (2014), will be fully operational from 1 January 2015;

(e) The OPCW-United Nations Joint Mission ceased operations at the end of September 2014, followed by a one-month administrative liquidation process (for details on the activities and additional funding of \$1.7 million under a commitment authority, see A/69/363, para. 16, and footnote 1 below).

## II. Overview of resource requirements for 2014-2015

7. The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly approved a biennial provision of \$1,081,089,900 net under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for 2014-2015 for special political missions (resolution 68/248). A summary of the utilization of the provision for the biennium is provided in annex I to the report of the Secretary-General (see A/69/363/Corr.3), which shows the following:

(a) The General Assembly approved a total of \$645,995,900 for 2014 for 38 missions (representing charges to the biennial provision of \$1,081,089,900 approved under section 3 of the programme budget), while underexpenditure of \$11,966,000 (1.9 per cent) is projected for the year;

(b) Total resources of \$485,909,600 for 2015 for 35 missions are proposed for approval by the Assembly. Taking into account the projected underexpenditure of \$11,966,000 for 2014, the amount of \$435,094,000 is to be charged against the undistributed balance in the biennial provision for special political missions and the

amount of \$37,148,300<sup>1</sup> net represents the additional appropriation requested of the Assembly (see also para. 14 below).

8. The Advisory Committee requested information on the total number of missions, the levels of civilian personnel, approved budgets and expenditures for the bienniums 2008-2009 to 2012-2013, as compared with those for 2014 and the proposals for 2015. (see table 1 below).

Table 1  
**Overview of financial and human resources for special political missions, 2008-2015**

(Millions of United States dollars)

	<i>Actual</i>						<i>Proposed</i>	
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of ongoing missions <sup>a</sup>	30	27	27	32	33	38	38	35
Approved civilian personnel <sup>b</sup>	4 929	4 690	5 186	4 836	4 800	4 080 <sup>c</sup>	4 302	3 931
Approved budgets <sup>d</sup>	402.0	474.7	516.1	676.5	600.3	599.9	646.0 <sup>e</sup>	485.9 <sup>f</sup>
Expenditure <sup>g</sup>	405.4	447.9	549.0	627.2 <sup>h</sup>	613.9	565.3	634.0 <sup>i</sup>	TBD

<sup>a</sup> The numbers of ongoing missions reflect the total number of missions for which resources were reflected in the main report of the subsequent year, including missions funded through commitment authority during that year.

<sup>b</sup> The numbers of approved civilian personnel as reflected in the main reports of the following budget years.

<sup>c</sup> The number of approved civilian personnel would be 4,179, taking into account the approved staffing for 2013 for the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) (99 positions), as the staffing of UNPOS is not reflected in [A/68/327](#).

<sup>d</sup> For 2008-2013, the approved budgets as reflected in the final budget appropriations on a biennial basis.

<sup>e</sup> For 2014, the approved budget is based on the initial appropriation for 2014.

<sup>f</sup> Proposed resources for 2015 as reflected in the main report for 2015 ([A/69/363](#)). The amount reflects six-month interim funding for UNAMA and UNSMIL, pending the preparation of the 12-month budget for 2015.

<sup>g</sup> Expenditure as reflected in [A/68/6](#) (Sect. 3).

<sup>h</sup> Expenditure for 2011 excludes the subvention for the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

<sup>i</sup> Estimated expenditures for 2014 as reflected in the main report for 2015 ([A/69/363](#)).

### Performance for 2014

9. Table 3 in the report of the Secretary-General (see [A/69/363/Corr.2](#)) provides a summary of the estimated financial resource performance for 2014 by cluster. The projected unencumbered balance of \$12 million is mainly from the missions of cluster I (\$3.4 million) and cluster III (\$11.3 million), partly offset by projected

<sup>1</sup> An additional appropriation in the amount of \$1,701,300 for the Joint Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic has been requested in the context of the first performance report in document [A/69/612](#) (see [A/69/363/Corr.3](#), annex I, line h).

overexpenditure of \$4.4 million for UNAMI (see [A/69/363](#), para. 111). A summary of the variances by cluster is provided in paragraphs 112 to 116 of the report of the Secretary-General ([A/69/363](#)).

### Proposed resources for 2015

10. A summary of the estimated requirements for 2015 and the variances by cluster is provided in table 4 and explained in paragraphs 121 to 127 of the report of the Secretary-General. Tables 6 to 8 in the report of the Secretary-General provide information on the budget estimates by mission, expenditure component and the number and level of positions, respectively (see [A/69/363](#) and Corr.2).

11. The Secretary-General indicates that, pending further developments and clarity on the mandates and operations of UNAMA and UNSMIL (*ibid.*, para. 117), six-month interim resource requirements for the two missions for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2015 are included in the budget estimates (representing a technical rollover of 50 per cent of the level of projected expenditures for 2014, in the amount of approximately \$95 million and \$31.4 million, respectively), while detailed budget proposals for 2015 for the missions will be submitted for consideration during the second part of the resumed sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly (for comments of the Advisory Committee, see sects. IV.C and D below).

12. According to the Secretary-General, the current estimates for 2015 for the special political missions amount to \$485,909,600 net, representing a reduction of \$160,086,300, or 24.8 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2014 ([A/69/363](#), sect. II, para. 119, and [A/69/363/Corr.2](#), table 4). However, the Secretary-General acknowledges that if UNAMA and UNSMIL had presented full-year budgets, that decrease would not have been achieved. **The Advisory Committee points out that the resource requirements approved for 2014 for 38 missions (\$645,995,900) and the current estimates proposed for 2015 for 35 missions (\$485,909,600) are not comparable for the following reasons: (a) the appropriations for 2014 for 38 special political missions included the resources for the 4 missions that will not continue into 2015 (\$51,177,900); (b) the current estimates for 2015 cover a total of 35 missions, 34 continuing and 1 new mission (MENUB, \$12,256,700); and (c) the current estimates for 2015 include only six-month interim requirements for UNAMA and UNSMIL.**

13. As shown in table 6 of the report of the Secretary-General ([A/69/363/Corr.2](#)), the annual requirements proposed for the 33 missions for 2015 represent an increase of \$25,488,500 compared with 2014 (including an amount of \$12,256,700 for MENUB, but excluding the **six-month** requirements for UNAMA and UNSMIL). **The Advisory Committee notes that the requirements proposed for the 32 continuing missions represent an increase of \$13,231,800 (excluding the new mission MENUB).**

14. As stated in paragraph 7 (b) and footnote 1 above, of the current estimates for 2015 for special political missions, the amount of \$435,094,000 is to be charged against the undistributed balance in the biennial provision (\$1,081,089,900) and the amount of \$37,148,300 net represents an additional appropriation requested of the General Assembly. **The Advisory Committee points out that, further to the additional appropriation of \$37,148,300 being requested at this stage, any additional resource requirements to be requested by the Secretary-General in**

the 12-month budgets of UNAMA and UNSMIL for 2015 would require another additional appropriation for special political missions for the biennium 2014-2015. Furthermore, if the combined six-month interim requirements for UNAMA and UNSMIL for 2015 (\$126,398,300) were extrapolated to 12-month requirements (\$252,796,600), the additional appropriation for 2015 would amount to 163,546,600 (instead of the \$37,148,300 proposed by the Secretary-General), leading to a potential total appropriation of \$1,246,337,800<sup>2</sup> (compared with the \$1,081,089,900 approved) for the biennium 2014-2015 for the special political missions.

#### Staffing requirements for 2015

15. Tables 5 and 8 in the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/363) contain information on the proposed civilian staff requirements for 2015 by cluster, category and level for each mission. Annex V to the report contains a summary of the changes proposed for the missions operating in 2015 and the main factors for variances. The Secretary-General indicates the following, inter alia, concerning the staffing requirements (ibid., paras. 129 and 131):

(a) There is an overall reduction of 371 positions for 2015 (from 4,302 for 38 missions in 2014 to 3,931 for 35 missions in 2015), mainly owing to the discontinuation of the 4 missions (439 positions) under cluster III and the reduction in the positions for UNAMI (51), partly offset by the proposed establishment of new positions for MENUB (88) and UNSOM (21);

(b) Excluding the 439 positions for the 4 missions under cluster III that will be discontinued in 2015, there would be a net increase of 68 positions in 2015 for the missions that will continue, including the new mission MENUB. The Advisory Committee notes that, excluding the 88 positions proposed for the new mission MENUB, there would be a net decrease of 20 positions for the continuing missions in 2015.

16. The Secretary-General also indicates that the staffing proposed for the first six months of 2015 for UNSMIL and UNAMA reflects the respective approved staffing levels for 2014, pending the preparation of the 12-month budget (A/69/363, para. 130). The Advisory Committee notes that, as the Secretary-General is to submit detailed budget proposals for 2015 for the two missions for consideration at the second part of the resumed sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly (see para. 11 above), the level of the total staffing requirements for the special political missions for 2015 is yet to be determined.

#### Vacancy rates and vacant positions

17. Annex VI to the report of the Secretary-General contains information on the budgeted vacancy rates for 2014, actual average vacancy rates for the period from 1 January to 31 August 2014 and proposed vacancy rates for 2015 for special political missions. The Secretary-General indicates that the proposed budgeted vacancy rates for 2015 take into account the actual vacancy rates experienced during 2014 and the planned deployments (ibid., para. 132). Upon request, the Advisory Committee received information related to the actual vacancy rates as at

<sup>2</sup> Including the additional appropriation of \$1,701,300 requested in the context of the first performance report (see footnote 1 above).

30 September 2014 and the projected average vacancy rates for 2014 for the missions (see para. 33 below). The comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on vacancy rates for individual missions are contained in section IV below. **The Advisory Committee reiterates that budgeted vacancy rates should be based, as much as possible, on actual vacancy rates. In cases where the proposed budgeted rates differ from the actual rates at the time of the budget preparation, clear justification should be provided in related budget documents for the rates proposed. The Committee also believes that the budgeted vacancy rate is a tool to achieve precision in budgetary calculations and that the management of post incumbency should not be used to achieve cost reductions in the process of budget implementation (A/68/782, para. 54).**

18. Upon request, the Advisory Committee received a list of 50 positions that had been vacant for over a year as at 30 September 2014, of which 6 positions had been vacant for almost two years or longer (2 in UNAMA and 4 in the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria), including 1 vacant for 4 years in UNAMA. **The Advisory Committee recommends the following: (a) review of the positions in UNAMA in connection with the preparation of the 12-month budget for the mission (see sect. IV.D below); and (b) abolishment of 1 of the 4 vacant positions in the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria (see sect. IV.A below). The Committee reiterates the view that, as a matter of overall policy, the continuing requirement for posts that have been vacant for two years or longer should be reviewed and justifications provided for their retention in the proposed programme budget. Otherwise, they should be proposed for abolishment (A/68/7, para. 107). The Committee continues to believe that this policy should also be applied to staffing requirements for special political missions. The Committee reiterates its view that, in his future budget proposals, the Secretary-General should provide information on vacancies, if any, that have existed in the special political missions for two years or longer (A/68/7/Add.10, para. 23). In addition, the Committee recalls that the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure that vacant posts are filled expeditiously (resolution 66/264, sect. II, para. 21).**

#### **Methodology for calculating staff costs**

19. The Advisory Committee requested clarification on the methodologies applied for the calculation of staff costs (see para. 20 below) and was informed of the following:

(a) For cluster I missions administered by the Department of Political Affairs and cluster II missions, the staffing costs were based on the actual entitlements of the incumbents of the positions at the time of preparation of the budget proposal;

(b) For cluster III missions and for cluster I missions administered by the Department of Field Support:

(i) The methodology used for estimating international staff costs for 2015 took into account the latest effective salary scales; the actual average step level for each grade at each mission as at 31 March 2014; the actual ratio of single staff to those with dependents at each mission as at 31 March 2014; and the post adjustment multiplier for each duty station for July 2014;

- (ii) For the determination of common staff costs, actual expenditure of common staff costs for the period from 1 January 2013 to 31 August 2014 and the percentage of actual net salary (including post adjustment) were taken into account;
- (iii) For national staff, the calculation of costs was based on actual grade and step for salaries and historical expenditures for common staff costs;
- (iv) For MENEUB, which is a new mission in 2015, the data of BNUB were used.

20. The Advisory Committee further requested justifications for the application of different methodologies to the missions administered by the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Field Support. The Committee was informed that the number of staff in missions administered by the Department of Political Affairs was small enough to allow for calculation of staff costs for each incumbent, while the number of staff in missions administered by the Department of Field Support was too large to allow for such calculations. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the methodologies currently applied for calculating staff costs of the special political missions are lacking in clarity and accuracy. The methodologies should, therefore, be improved. Furthermore, the methodologies should be applied consistently to all special political missions and peacekeeping operations, and any differences in the application of the methodologies by a specific mission should be clearly explained in the budget proposals with a view to improving budgetary transparency.**

#### **Ratios for vehicles and information technology equipment**

21. Information with respect to the ratios for vehicles and information technology equipment for nine missions is provided in paragraphs 95 to 98 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/363). It is stated therein that the Department of Field Support has reviewed the vehicle and information technology equipment holdings in special political missions and aligned such holdings, where possible, with the standard ratios it has established in the Standard Cost and Ratio Manual. In that context, the holdings of vehicles and information technology equipment have been proposed on the basis of the proposed personnel incumbency levels planned for 2015, rather than on the full authorized level of personnel.

22. The proposed allocation of vehicles for 2015 is contained in table 1 of the report of the Secretary-General. In total, the proposed vehicle holdings (379) for special political missions are 3 per cent lower than the standard allocation (389). However, according to the Secretary-General, the proposed holdings for a number of missions are above the standard allocation (UNOCA, UNAMI, UNRCCA, United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission and UNIOGBIS). The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the reason for the holding of 75 per cent above the standard allocation by the United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission was the provision of vehicles for the eight civilian observers, who were not included in the number of the proposed mission personnel (10) for 2015 in the table (see also para. 159 below). **The Advisory Committee is of the view that any factors affecting the application of the standard allocation of vehicles, such as the provision of vehicles to civilian observers by the United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, should be explained in future budget proposals.**

23. The proposed allocation of computing devices for 2015 is provided in table 2 of the report of the Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee notes from the table that, compared with the standard allocation of 1,454 computing devices, the combined number for the standard allocation plus spares is 1,788 and the total number of the proposed holdings for 2015 is 2,009 (12 per cent higher than the standard allocation). The missions with the higher-than-standard holdings are UNOCA, UNAMI and UNSOM. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, of the following:

(a) For UNSOM, the proposed number (364) would be higher than the standard allocation (244) by 120, owing to (i) allocation for consultants (40); (ii) training and other common space use (30); (iii) high frequency data transmission system and other technical use (10); and (iv) high number of spares owing to severe conditions, i.e. frequent power cuts and voltage fluctuation, heat and dust (40);

(b) Concerning the established percentage for spares, the Committee was informed that, in accordance with the general guidance to missions by the Information and Communications Technology Division of the Department of Field Support, the recommended stock ratio of holding of spare information and communications technology equipment varied by mission, depending on local markets, conditions and deployment stages of missions. The recommended ratio of holding of spare equipment for Somalia was 15 per cent of the total inventory and the actual ratio of approximately 12 per cent for spares was applied for UNSOM.

24. In its report on cross-cutting issues relating to the financing of peacekeeping operations, the Advisory Committee discussed the use of the Standard Cost and Ratio Manual ratios for vehicle and information technology equipment holdings by mission ([A/68/782](#), paras. 49-52 and 142-151). **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the established standard ratios should, in principle, be applied for all the missions and that variances from the standard ratios, if any, should be properly justified in budget proposals. In addition, the Committee points out that the information on the proposed ratios for vehicles and information technology equipment for 2015 is not comprehensive, as it includes only nine of the special political missions. The Committee recommends that the Secretary-General continue to monitor the application of the standard ratios on vehicles and information technology equipment for all of the special political missions and report in future budget proposals. Considering the number of spare items of information technology equipment held by missions, the Committee is of the view that purchases of equipment should take into account of spares already held by the missions concerned.**

#### **Air operations**

25. The proposed resources for air operations for 2015 amount to \$34,038,200, compared with the approved budget of \$27,107,600 for 2014 and the expenditure of \$24,618,400 for 2013. The proposed increase to \$34 million for 2015 represents an increase of \$6.9 million, or 25.6 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2014. Annex IV to the report of the Secretary-General ([A/69/363](#)) provides information on the requirements by mission for the period from 2013 to 2015. It is explained in the footnote to the annex that the requirements proposed for 2015 do not include information on UNAMA and UNSMIL, pending the preparation of the 12-month budget for the missions. **The Advisory Committee points out that, taking into**

**account the full requirements for 2015 for UNSMIL and UNAMA that are to be submitted by the Secretary-General, the overall requirements under air transportation for 2015 may further increase for the special political missions.**

26. A summary of the information on air operations is contained in paragraphs 99 to 102 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/363). Compared with the resources approved for air operations for 2014, seven missions reflect increases in resources for 2015, of which four missions have increases of 40 per cent or more (Offices of the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for the Sahel and for the Great Lakes region, UNIOGBIS and UNSOM). Information on resources for air operations by mission is contained in annex IV to the report of the Secretary-General, including the appropriations for 2013 and 2014 and the proposed budget for 2015. The Secretary-General provides the following reasons, among others, for the proposed increases for the four missions( *ibid.*, para. 102):

(a) For UNIOGBIS and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel, the increase in resources proposed for 2015 is attributable mainly to the new cost-sharing arrangements and the new contract for the rental of a fixed-wing aircraft (see para. 28 below);

(b) For the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, the increase in resources is attributable mainly to an increase in the number of planned special flights from four in 2014 to six in 2015;

(c) For UNSOM, the increase in resources is due mainly to an increase in the total number of air assets and the number of flight hours.

**27. The Advisory Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General has not provided sufficient information on the significant increases in the resources proposed for air operations for 2015.** Furthermore, the Committee finds that the requests for increased resources for 2015 under air operations are not well justified and lack clarity, as illustrated by the two examples below:

(a) The lack of sufficient justification for the significant increase for 2015 for UNIOGBIS: compared with the budget of \$349,900 for 2014 (for 113 flight-hours/50 days) and the projected expenditure of \$245,500 (68 hours/30 days), the proposed resources amount to \$1,059,100 for 2015 (144 flight-hours/73 days) (see para. 29 below). **The Advisory Committee questions whether the estimate of flight hours for 2015 under the new cost-sharing arrangement is based on a realistic assessment of the Mission's operational needs;**

(b) The lack of comparability with respect to the information provided for 2014 and for 2015 for the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel: the provision of \$126,000 for 2014 was for the chartering of two flights for three days each, whereas the requirement of \$550,500 for 2015 is based on anticipated usage of 72 flight hours.

28. According to the information provided to the Advisory Committee, the new cost-sharing arrangements for the fixed-wing aircraft among UNOWA and the other three missions (UNIOGBIS, the United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel) represent part of a strategy of regional cooperation and shared resources effective January 2015. The Committee recalls that similar cost-sharing

arrangements have been in place for some years.<sup>3</sup> Under the new cost-sharing arrangements among the four missions for 2015,<sup>4</sup> the provisions proposed for the fixed-wing aircraft for 2015 would decrease only for the United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission (from \$341,500 for 2014 to \$192,300 for 2015), but would increase for the other three missions: UNIOGBIS (increase from \$93,000 for 2014 to \$764,200 for 2015), the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel (increase from \$126,000 for 2014 to \$382,100 for 2015) and UNOWA (increase from \$2,296,100 for 2014 to \$2,489,800 for 2015, while keeping the same share of 65 per cent as in 2014) (A/69/363, annex IV). Upon request, the Advisory Committee received the following information with respect to the cost parameters related to the new contract for the rental of a fixed-wing aircraft (see table 2 below).

Table 2  
**Cost parameters of the new contract for the rental of a fixed-wing aircraft**

(United States dollars)

	<i>Cost parameters used in preparation of 2014 budgets for UNOWA and CNMC</i>	<i>Cost parameters used in preparation of 2015 budgets for UNOWA, CNMC, UNIOGBIS and OSESG</i>
Annual operating costs (basic costs or guaranteed cost)	3 260 000	3 335 000
Cost per flight hour	800	675
Number of flight hours	320	720
<b>Total annual cost</b>	<b>3 516 000</b>	<b>3 821 000</b>

*Abbreviations:* CNMC, United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission; OSESG, Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel.

29. The Advisory Committee notes from table 2 above that, while the cost per flight hour has decreased from \$800 to \$675, the number of flight hours has increased from 320 to 720 under the new contract. **The Advisory Committee points out that the Secretary-General has not provided information on and justification for the significant increase in the flight hours under the new contract in his budget proposal. The Committee is of the view that budgetary provisions for air operations should be proposed, as closely as possible, on the basis of the operational needs of the missions, and that in reaching cost-sharing arrangements, optimal ways should be identified with a view to achieving efficiencies and cost-effectiveness. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to monitor the actual flight**

<sup>3</sup> The previous cost-sharing arrangements were (a) for 2014, 65:25:10 among UNOWA, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission; (b) for 2013, 75:25 between UNOWA and the United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission; and (c) for 2012 and 2011, 50:50 between UNOWA and the United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission.

<sup>4</sup> The new cost-sharing arrangements for 2015 are in the proportions of 65:20:10:5 for UNOWA, UNIOGBIS, the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel and United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, respectively.

hours and to keep the new cost-sharing arrangement under review and, if necessary, to realign it with the actual operational needs of the participating missions. The Committee further recommends that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to report his findings in the budget for 2016 for special political missions.

#### **Travel**

30. The proposed resource requirements under official travel for 2015 amount to \$14,006,800 (for the 32 continuing missions plus MENEUB, excluding UNAMA and UNSMIL), representing an increase of \$237,300 compared with the appropriation of \$13,769,500 for 2014 (A/69/363/Corr.2, table 7). The Advisory Committee notes that the projected expenditure for 2014 is estimated at \$12,845,400, a decrease of \$924,100 compared with the appropriation. The comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee with respect to individual missions are contained in section IV below.

31. The Advisory Committee requested a detailed breakdown of the travel requirements for each of the special political missions for 2015, but only received the information at a very late stage of its consideration of the budget for 2015, which does not allow an in-depth analysis of the information by the Committee. **The Advisory Committee, nonetheless, notes a number of issues related to the presentation and preparation of the proposed resources under travel, inter alia: (a) the lack of consistency in cost estimates for the same destinations (such as estimates for trips between Geneva and New York); (b) the lack of accuracy in the estimates in a few cases; (c) anomalies in the budget proposals that may reflect systemic gaps in the proper application of the decision of the General Assembly regarding standards of accommodation for travel for training; (d) the multiple trips budgeted to the same or nearby destinations by the same personnel for various purposes, some of which could potentially be combined; (e) the lack of consideration of more frequent use of video and teleconferencing, including for budget reviews with the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee reiterates its view that missions should, wherever feasible, balance increased requirements for travel in certain areas by seeking alternative means of communication or exchange of views in others. The Committee reiterates its concurrence with the Board of Auditors that an organizational policy should be developed to ensure that alternative options are properly considered before official travel is authorized (A/68/782, para. 202).**

32. **In its consideration of cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations, the Advisory Committee expressed its intent to request the Board of Auditors to conduct a comprehensive audit of official travel financed from peacekeeping budgets, including missions, the United Nations Logistics Base and the support account for peacekeeping operations (A/68/782, para. 203). In this connection, the Committee intends to request the Board of Auditors to expand the audit to include the travel undertaken by the special political missions.**

### III. General observations and recommendations

#### Format and presentation

33. The Advisory Committee notes the efforts to improve the format and presentation of the proposed budget estimates in respect of special political missions for 2015 in response to the comments and recommendations of the Committee, as well as the inclusion of information on a number of issues in the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/363, paras. 79-109 and annexes VII to IX), such as information on security-related resources, including contractual security services provided by private security firms (annex VII). **The Advisory Committee is, nonetheless, of the view that the presentation of the information, including that contained in the annexes to the report of the Secretary-General, should be further improved and standardized, for example by: (a) the provision of more comprehensive information on vacancy rates; (b) the inclusion of ratios on vehicles and information technology equipment for all the missions; (c) the inclusion of more comparable information under air operations for all the missions involved, including flight hours and costs under previous and current contracts; (d) the inclusion, in the organizational charts, of information on all staffing and changes, including those funded under extrabudgetary resources, with indications of duty stations and changes, reporting lines, as well as administrative support from other missions and offices; and (e) inclusion of information on security-related resources, including contractual security services provided by private security firms.**

34. The Secretary-General indicates that, in line with the comments and suggestions of the Committee, efforts continue to be made to adapt and follow, as closely as is practical, the format and presentation of budgets for peacekeeping operations (A/69/363, para. 18). **The Advisory Committee reiterates that the Secretary-General should further improve the presentation and content, as well as the consistency of information in his budget proposals for special political missions by presenting comprehensive information related to cross-cutting issues in a format similar to that of the overview report on the financing of peacekeeping operations, with more detailed supplementary information provided to the Committee, including for the budgets of UNAMA and UNAMI, in order to facilitate the consideration of the issues and decision-making by the General Assembly (A/68/7/Add.10, para. 26).**

35. With respect to the results-based-budgeting frameworks, the Advisory Committee continues to note that a number of expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement for a few missions lack clarity and accuracy regarding what could or should be achieved by the concerned missions in relation to the mandates and related activities. For instance, indicators of achievement or performance measures could be more precise and measurable for the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Myanmar, the Offices of the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for Syria, for the Sudan and South Sudan and for the Sahel. As an example, one of the indicators of achievement for the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria includes, inter alia, increased engagement of the representatives of the Government and the whole spectrum of Syrian opposition groups (A/69/363/Add.1, p. 50). Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the whole spectrum does not include groups listed by the Security Council as terrorist organizations. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its view that certain expected accomplishments and related indicators of achievement can be improved in order to better reflect what could realistically be achieved**

**by the respective missions and the activities for which the mission could be held accountable (A/68/7/Add.10, para. 27).**

### **Operational environment**

36. The Secretary-General indicates that special political missions continue to play a critical role in the overall efforts of the United Nations to prevent and resolve conflicts and to build a sustainable peace. He provides information on the operational environment of the special political missions, including some of the recent trends, in paragraphs 20 to 37 of his report (A/69/363).

37. The Secretary-General observes a trend in the increasing number and mandates of the special political missions, as follows, inter alia (ibid., paras. 23-27):

(a) The number of missions presented under clusters I and II has increased from 2 in 2000 to 24 in 2014, and the number of the missions in the field has increased from 3 in 1993 to 12 in 2000 and to 14 in 2014 (although over half of the country-specific missions deployed since 1993 have already been liquidated);

(b) Whereas a field-based mission in 1995 had an average of 2 mandate areas, that number had increased to 3.5 by 2000 and to roughly 6 by 2014. Different thematic mandates have become more prevalent over time. Over the past decade, field-based missions have become multidimensional operations with a broader set of mandates in areas such as human rights, rule of law and security institutions, sexual violence in conflict, child recruitment and the role of women in peace and security;

(c) The emergence of new threats to the maintenance of international peace and security and their regional implications have increased the importance of regional offices, such as UNOCA, UNOWA and UNRCCA, as well as those special political missions dealing with thematic and cross-cutting issues, such as the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for the Sahel and for the Great Lakes Region and the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide.

38. With respect to the security environment, the Secretary-General indicates that in 2014, there was deterioration in the security situation in several countries in which special political missions operate, which created greater risks for United Nations personnel and assets and posed significant obstacles for the implementation of mandates (A/69/363, paras. 33-37). In Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, special political missions now operate in areas with fragile security environments. According to the Secretary-General, in order to cope with those environments that are less conducive to United Nations operational work, the Organization has developed a set of security options to minimize risks while enabling missions to implement their mandates, including, among others, the deployment of United Nations guard units. **The Advisory Committee emphasizes the importance of the Secretary-General ensuring the safety and security of the United Nations personnel and premises.**

### United Nations guard units

39. The Secretary-General indicates that one of the security options that have been explored in recent years is the deployment of United Nations guard units<sup>5</sup> (ibid., para. 37). For example, UNAMI has had a guard unit since 2004. During 2013, three new guard units were authorized through exchanges of letters between the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council for BINUCA (S/2013/636 and S/2013/637) on 29 October 2013, UNSMIL (S/2013/704 and S/2013/705) on 27 November 2013 and UNSOM (S/2013/764 and S/2013/765) on 24 December 2013. In the case of UNSMIL, the deployment of a United Nations guard unit proved to be unfeasible in the political and security circumstances in the country. The Secretary-General further indicates that an exercise in lessons learned will be undertaken by the Departments of Safety and Security, Political Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations, with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and relevant operational agencies, by mid-2015 to review the use of guard units, including the command and control structure. **The Advisory Committee awaits the findings of the lessons learned exercise with respect to the deployment of the United Nations guard units.**

### Lessons learned from the start-up of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya

40. The Secretary-General indicates that mission-specific activities relating to lessons learned and other analytical studies have been an important component of the ability of the Organization to capture successful experiences. One such activity is a joint evaluation of the start-up of UNSMIL by the Departments of Political Affairs, Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support produced in May 2013, in order to identify the challenges faced by the mission during its first months of operations and explore opportunities to better support the start-up of special political missions (A/69/363, para. 50).

41. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the evaluation found the start-up of UNSMIL successful and that the elements of its success were a clear political strategy, advance and inclusive planning, clarity of roles, a flexible field support strategy and strong leadership. Further, the evaluation also highlighted the success of UNSMIL in supporting the Libyan elections and ensuring national ownership. In addition, UNSMIL addressed gender issues in a comprehensive manner. On the flexible mission support strategy, the Committee was informed that valuable lessons were learned with regard to managing the mission support staff who were embedded in the Global Service Centre. It was necessary to anticipate critical bottlenecks which, for UNSMIL, were related to expediting the necessary designation and delegation of authority and dealing with the lack of information and communications technology capabilities. Furthermore, timely recruitment continued to be a limiting factor in the mission's start-up, and innovative measures such as a flexible approach to human resources management and embedding staff of the United Nations country team in the mission, were only partially successful. **The**

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<sup>5</sup> According to the Secretary-General, a guard unit is a force composed of police or military personnel, or other State security forces, provided as contingents by one or more Member States and deployed with the authorization of the Security Council or the General Assembly to protect United Nations personnel, premises and assets in field missions operating in non-conductive environments.

**Advisory Committee is of the view that the lessons learned should inform future planning of new special political missions.**

**Cooperation and coordination among the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support**

42. Annex II to the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/363) contains information on the lead departments/offices (Department of Political Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and Office of Disarmament Affairs) and administrative support arrangements (Department of Political Affairs, Department of Field Support, Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and Office of Disarmament Affairs) for the special political missions for 2015. It is indicated in the report that in December 2013, the Policy Committee of the Secretary-General adopted a decision to transfer the lead responsibility for UNAMA from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Department of Political Affairs in 2014 (an internal management matter with no impact on UNAMA operations) (ibid., para. 74). The two departments agreed on a transfer date of 1 October 2014. As part of the measures to ensure a smooth transfer, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has loaned three staff members (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 P-3) to the Department of Political Affairs from its now-disbanded Afghanistan integrated operational team for the period from 1 October 2014 through 30 June 2015. To ensure that the same level of support is provided to UNAMA as that provided by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs has recruited a Transition Team Leader at the D-1 level funded through extrabudgetary resources for the same period.

43. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the three staff on loan are on positions (1 P-5, 1 P-4 and 1 P-3) funded under the support account for peacekeeping operation for 2014/15 as part of the Asia integrated operational team in the Office of Operations of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Committee was further informed that when it was decided to transfer the lead of UNAMA, the exact time frame remained uncertain and that the continuation of the three positions would facilitate the transfer by ensuring continuity and institutional knowledge. The resources for the continued support to the mission would be included in the 12-month budget proposal for 2015 to be prepared following the review of the mission in early 2015 (see sect. IV.D below). Subject to the General Assembly's approval of the proposed positions required to backstop the mission at Headquarters, staff currently encumbering the loaned positions would be encouraged to apply for the positions. As to whether the D-1 position under extrabudgetary funding would be continued beyond 12 months, the Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the mission review, to be conducted in early 2015, would inform the budget submission for 2015, including the need to support UNAMA from Headquarters. Currently, the team to support UNAMA in the Department of Political Affairs comprises the following positions: 1 D-1, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 GS. **The Committee recommends that the staffing requirements for backstopping UNAMA and the funding for the requirements be reviewed both under the support account for peacekeeping operations for 2015/16 and under the 12-month budget for 2015 for UNAMA.**

44. Related to the cooperation and coordination among the three departments, the Advisory Committee recalls that the Secretary-General indicated in the report on the

budget estimates for 2014 that other steps on cooperation and coordination included encouraging staff exchanges between the three departments (A/68/327, para. 46). In this context, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the loan of the three staff from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to the Department of Political Affairs could be considered part of the pilot exercise on staff exchange, in addition to ensuring a smooth transition of the lead of UNAMA. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the information it has received upon request does not indicate clearly whether the loan of the three staff is part of the staff exchange originally envisaged by the Secretary-General, nor if there has been any staff exchange among the Departments of Political Affairs, Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support.**

### **Mediation support**

45. According to the Secretary-General, over the past few years, the United Nations has enhanced its operational readiness to implement and support mediation efforts. The Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs complements expertise available elsewhere in the United Nations system and serves as the central hub for mediation support within the United Nations system, capable of assisting the peace efforts of the United Nations, Member States, regional organizations and others. According to the Secretary-General, an important asset in the rapid response capability of the Organization is the standby team of mediation experts, who can be deployed within 72 hours and are specialists in mediation process design, constitution-making, gender and inclusion issues, the sharing of natural resources, power-sharing and security arrangements. The Department of Political Affairs has also maintained rosters of pre-vetted thematic, operational and senior mediation experts, with geographical and gender representation, who can be deployed for longer-term engagements to support mediation processes (A/69/363, paras. 39 and 40).

46. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed, inter alia, that the standby team of mediation experts consisted of eight technical experts who could be deployed at short notice and/or could provide support remotely to the United Nations, regional organizations, Member States and other partners. The Committee was informed that when not deployed, the experts carried out research and reviewed best practices in their areas of expertise. The Committee was further informed, upon request, that the eight senior experts provided very specialized mediation expertise that was not readily available in-house. Further, most of the experts were academics or practitioners who had many years of experience and took a leave of absence from their respective universities or institutions to support United Nations peacemaking efforts for short-term assignments ranging from a few days to several weeks at a time.

47. The Advisory Committee was also informed that the mediation roster complemented the capacity of the Mediation Support Unit at Headquarters and the standby team, and enabled the rapid identification and deployment of qualified mediators and mediation experts. The roster currently consisted of over 300 experts from close to 80 nationalities. The management of the mediation roster is funded by extrabudgetary contributions.

48. In terms of the funding for the standby team of mediation experts, the Advisory Committee was informed that half of the experts were gratis personnel and

the other half were funded by extrabudgetary contributions earmarked for the team. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that when the mechanism was established in 2008 through 100 per cent funding from the Government of Norway, gratis personnel appeared to be the most efficient model for starting a pilot project, with the plan being to fund those positions at a later stage through the regular budget (the experts had always come from other Member States). Over the years, the demand for mediation experts had grown, while the availability of funding from the Government of Norway for the gratis personnel had decreased to the level of 50 per cent and the Department of Political Affairs had subsequently raised extrabudgetary resources to cover the remaining costs for 50 per cent of the experts. The mediation experts were issued nominal United Nations consultancy contracts for \$1 a year to ensure their “experts on mission” status while working for the Organization, falling into the category of type II gratis personnel, as stipulated by [ST/AI/1999/6](#). **The Advisory Committee recalls that the Secretary-General may accept gratis personnel only on an exceptional basis and for a limited and specified period of time after the approval of a budget, and that gratis personnel are to provide temporary and urgent assistance in the case of new and/or expanded mandates of the Organization (ST/AI/1999/6, para. 2.1). The Committee is, therefore, of the view that if the expertise of the standby mediation team as described by the Secretary-General is not available in-house, but required by the Organization on a longer term, the Secretary-General should consider submitting budget proposals to the General Assembly in this regard.**

#### **Partnerships and cooperation**

49. Information on the partnerships and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is provided in paragraphs 51 to 67 of the report of the Secretary-General ([A/69/363](#)). It is indicated therein that cooperation with regional actors is a crucial part of the mandates of special political missions and that partnerships have taken different forms and covered various areas of endeavour of the missions, whether they are country-specific missions, regionally mandated envoys or regional offices. For example, UNOWA is mandated to enhance subregional capacities for conflict prevention, conflict management, mediation and good offices, including providing support to existing subregional mechanisms, in particular the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) conflict prevention framework and mechanism (*ibid.*, para. 55). **The Advisory Committee notes and welcomes the efforts made to work in close partnership with the regional organizations. In so doing, it trusts that the Secretary-General will ensure that the roles and responsibilities of the United Nations are fully consistent with the mandates, and that redundancies with those of the regional organizations are avoided.**

#### **Global field support strategy**

50. The Secretary-General indicates that the peacekeeping financial year 2014/15 is the final year of implementation for the five-year time frame of the global field support strategy and that the fifth annual progress report on the implementation of the strategy will be submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration during its sixty-ninth session ([A/69/363](#), paras. 87 and 88). He states that the fifth progress report will present proposals for the broadening of the “shared services” pillar of the

strategy, which will be presented within an overall integrated model for United Nations field support. In addition, a framework will be proposed that, if endorsed, would provide mechanisms for the provision of non-location-dependent functions to be rolled out progressively to all field missions, including all special political missions and peacekeeping operations (ibid., para. 91). The Advisory Committee has discussed the matter in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/68/782, paras. 250-253).

51. The Advisory Committee was informed by the Secretariat that as the global field support strategy would end, and as the Secretariat moved towards a global service delivery model following the further implementation of Umoja, it was committed to extending the shared service concept to all field missions. The Advisory Committee requested clarification as to how the conclusion of the global field support strategy would connect to the global service delivery model and what the post- global field support strategy approach to shared services would be. The Committee was informed that, as the global field support strategy exclusively focused on support to the field, some areas specific to field operations (in particular logistics) that were less relevant for Headquarters and offices away from Headquarters, would be a major focus of the global service delivery model. For those relevant functions, specifically the administrative transactional functions (human resources and finance), the shared services model being proposed under the global field support strategy would be fully aligned with the global service delivery model. The Committee was further informed that the Department of Management and the Department of Field Support were collaborating on the finalization of the proposals in the forthcoming fifth progress report on the strategy to ensure that the shared services framework to be outlined for field missions would align effectively with the global service delivery model, which would cover the global Secretariat. Detailed proposals on the global service delivery model would be submitted to the General Assembly at its seventieth session for its consideration and approval.

52. In this context, the Advisory Committee recalls that it has recommended that the Secretary-General be requested to submit his proposals relating to the global service delivery model for the consideration of the General Assembly on different occasions. The recommendations made in relation to such proposals have been endorsed by the Assembly, including in its resolutions 67/246, 67/254 and 68/284. **The Advisory Committee therefore reiterates its earlier observation that any new service delivery model for the United Nations must be approved by the General Assembly and its recommendation that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to submit a report containing proposals for the global service delivery model as soon as possible (A/69/386, para. 64).**

53. **The Advisory Committee reiterates that any proposal for global shared services architecture for support to all field missions led by the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Political Affairs should be fully integrated with the pending global service delivery model and presented to the General Assembly for its consideration (A/68/782, para. 251). In addition, the Committee is of the view that lessons learned from the global field support strategy, including the management of the Global Service Centre and the Regional Service Centre, should be fully taken into account in developing the global service delivery model.**

**Kuwait Joint Support Office**

54. The Secretary-General indicates that, since the official launch of the Kuwait Joint Support Office in December 2012, the progressive integration of the administrative support personnel and processes of UNAMA and UNAMI into a consolidated support office serving both missions has continued. The Joint Support Office has also assumed responsibility for the delivery of support services in finance and human resources, provided within its existing resources, to UNRCCA and to the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen (A/69/363, para. 93).

55. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the management of the Kuwait Joint Support Office closely monitored the impact on its existing resource as a result of providing the services to UNRCCA and the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen. The Committee was also provided with the following information:

(a) Office of the Special Adviser on Yemen: in August 2013, the Joint Support Office initially assumed responsibility for providing human resource transactional services for the international staff based in Yemen. In July 2014, the Joint Support Office assumed additional responsibility for providing human resources and financial transaction support services;

(b) UNRCCA: in November 2012, UNAMI assumed responsibility for the provision of financial management support services to UNRCCA, and the Joint Support Office had assumed the responsibility since its inception. The services were limited to entering financial transactions into Umoja and preparing financial statements for UNRCCA. In July 2014, the Joint Support Office received delegation to provide human resources transaction services, which were currently limited to providing lump sum calculations for travel related entitlements and maintenance of the staffing table for international staff. Since assuming the delegation, no resources of the Joint Support Office had yet been utilized to provide the services.

56. The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly, in its resolution 68/247 A, endorsed its recommendation for the Secretary-General to provide the full costs and benefits analysis of the Kuwait Joint Support Office in the budget for 2015 for the special political missions (A/68/7/Add.10, para. 38). According to the Secretary-General, the lack of full and considered resource requirements for UNAMA has meant that the cost-benefit analysis of shared services in the Kuwait Joint Support Office would not be comprehensive at this point (A/69/363, para. 94). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that as a result of lower costs of international staff in Kuwait compared to those in Afghanistan and Iraq, savings from personnel-related costs amounted to an annual \$1.4 million and the benefits of the remote service provision were first realized in 2013 and remained a recurring benefit for the Organization. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that a cost-benefit analysis of shared services in the Kuwait Joint Support Office could have been undertaken for the period since its inception. The Committee regrets that the Secretary-General has not fulfilled the request of the General Assembly and recommends that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to do so in his report on the next budget for special political missions.**

### Support services

57. The Advisory Committee has discussed the provision of support services to special political missions on the basis of reimbursements or free of charge in its consideration of the budget estimates for special political missions for 2014 ([A/68/7/Add.10](#), paras. 40-42). In this connection, the Committee notes cases of support to the missions that continue to be reported as free of charge, such as the provision of a flight to the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region by MONUSCO (see paras. 98-99 below). **The Advisory Committee reiterates that for budgetary transparency and accuracy, all measurable support services provided to the special political missions should be captured and reported in the performance reports ([A/68/7/Add.10](#), para. 42).**

### Senior-level positions

58. In its consideration of the budget estimates for special political missions for 2014, the Advisory Committee noted an increase in the number of positions at senior level since 2008 and expressed the view that the Secretary-General should monitor the staffing trends of the special political missions ([A/68/7/Add.10](#), para. 30).

59. The Advisory Committee notes that it has received requests for senior-level positions on several occasions, with the justification that such positions would enable access to the highest levels of decision makers in a country. In the budget estimates for the special political missions for 2015, it is proposed that the position of Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Asia be reclassified from the Assistant Secretary-General level to the Under-Secretary-General level in 2015 (see sect. IV.C. below). Among the justifications provided, it is stated, inter alia, that: (a) such a reclassification would elevate the Centre's access to the highest levels of Central Asian decision makers, thereby augmenting the influence of the United Nations in the region and strengthening the Centre's ability to deliver on its mandate; and (b) the reclassification would bring the structure of the Centre into line with that of the United Nations offices for West Africa and for Central Africa (UNOWA and UNOCA), both of which are headed by Under-Secretaries-General, taking into account that the Centre plays a similar role in peacemaking efforts ([A/69/363/Add.3](#), paras. 154 and 160; see also paras. 155 and 161). The Advisory Committee sought clarification with respect to the position of the Secretary-General on how his special representatives and envoys should be received in general. The Committee was informed that a special representative or envoy of the Secretary-General acts as the highest representative of the Secretary-General for a given country or region, and the representative should thus have access to the most relevant decision maker for the issue at hand. Further, it is the expectation of the Secretary-General that his representative is received at the highest level, when the issue for discussion so deserves.

60. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General continues to request many high-level positions in a different context, such as a total of 2 Under-Secretary-General, 3 Assistant Secretary-General, 8 D-2 and 13 D-1 posts in the Office of the Special Envoy on Ebola and in the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (see [A/69/590](#), annex I). The Committee recalls that when UNSMIL was established, the Secretary-General's staffing proposal included

positions for 1 Under-Secretary-General, 1 Assistant Secretary-General, 3 D-2 and 8 D-1 positions for the Mission ([A/66/354/Add.6](#), para. 17 (a) and (c)).

**61. The Advisory Committee is of the view that justifications for staffing requirements, grade levels and upward reclassifications should be based on operational requirements on the ground, responsibilities and functions of the posts and positions in the relevant countries and regions and job classification standards. Access to the different levels of decision makers should continue to be one of the factors used in the job classification, and should not be presented as additional justification for the establishment of high-level posts or positions for their upgrades.**

62. Moreover, the Advisory Committee recalls that, in its review of the composition of the Secretariat, it has noted that both for the past year and the period since 2009, the number of positions at the levels of Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General at the Secretariat has grown while the total number of staff has declined. Further, the Secretariat is one of few entities of the United Nations common system where there has been significant growth in the number of high-level positions, while the trend is in the opposite direction in most other entities ([A/69/572](#), paras. 132 and 133). **The Advisory Committee has previously expressed its concern over the apparent upward shift in the grade structure of the Secretariat in its review of the budget proposals of the Secretary-General for the biennium 2014-2015. The Committee has stressed with renewed concern that the growth trend in senior-level positions is continuing and trusts that efforts will be undertaken to address the proliferation of high-level positions** ([A/69/572](#), para. 134).

#### **Relocations of heads of mission**

63. The Advisory Committee notes that three new special envoys or special advisers appointed by the Secretary-General in 2014 will be based at locations different from their predecessors, without any justifications provided for such changes by the Secretary-General in the budget proposals for 2015. From the information received by the Committee upon request, it appears that all the three changes of duty station derived from personal preferences, which, in some cases, have financial implications for the Organization. In addition, while the three former representatives were on when-actually-employed contracts, two of the new representatives now work full-time. The comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee with respect to the three changes of duty station are contained in section IV.A below. The changes in locations include the following:

(a) The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria (full-time) will be located in Brussels (away from Geneva where the Office is located);

(b) The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region (full-time) will be located in Geneva (away from Nairobi where the Office is located; the former Special Envoy, on a when-actually-employed contract, was home-based in Dublin);

(c) The Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus will be home-based in Geneva (the former Special Adviser, on a when-actually-employed contract, was home-based in Adelaide, Australia).

64. The Advisory Committee also requested information on the additional costs required, both for the heads of mission and for the support staff, when the heads of mission were away from the locations of the missions. **The Advisory Committee discusses the financial implications for the Organization in section IV.A below.**

65. **The Advisory Committee has recognized that, as the special political missions vary significantly in their mandate, size, operational conditions and situation on the ground, criteria for determining where a mission is located should take into account all variables in order to facilitate the maximum effectiveness and efficiency in the performance of each mission's mandate. The Committee is therefore of the view that, in general, missions should be located in or as close as possible to the countries to which their mandates are related (A/67/604, para. 23).**

66. **Furthermore, the Advisory Committee is of the view that while the special envoys and advisers on "when-actually-employed" contracts may have other obligations and are therefore unable to be with the missions full-time, those senior representatives who work full-time for the Organization should, in general, be with the missions they lead. As a matter of principle, the locations for the heads of offices should be selected on the basis of the implementation of the mandates in the most effective and efficient manner, and in the best interest of the Organization.**

#### **Housing entitlements for mission leadership**

67. With respect to the provision of premises for mission headquarters facilities or the accommodation for the senior leadership by a Member State, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the provision varied and depended on agreements reached between the Government and the Organization (unless specified in the status-of-mission agreement, there was no obligation for this provision). The Committee was further informed that the post adjustment index of a duty station established by the International Civil Service Commission contains a housing element which is based on the average rents paid by internationally recruited staff members at the duty station. If staff members, including heads of mission, receive housing assistance, including housing provided by the Organization, a Government or a related institution, either free of charge or at rents substantially lower than the average rent used in calculating the post adjustment index for the duty station, a rental deduction is made from the staff member's salary.<sup>6</sup> This ensures equity among staff at the duty station in the application of the post adjustment system. The Committee enquired but did not receive information as to whether there were cases where the host countries provided accommodation to the senior leadership of special political missions either at no cost or at subsidized rates. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General should ensure the application of the established regulations in terms of housing entitlements, including rental deductions where applicable, to ensure the credibility of the Organization. Furthermore, the Staff Rules and Staff Regulations of the United Nations and the standards of conduct of the United Nations should be observed by all staff, including the standards related to gifts, honours and remuneration from outside sources (see ST/SGB/2002/13, sect. IV, staff regulation 1.2, and sect. V, para. 47).**

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<sup>6</sup> The procedure for rental deductions is stipulated in paragraphs 13 to 15 of [ST/IC/2013/25](#).

## IV. Specific recommendations on resource requirements

### A. Thematic cluster I: special and personal envoys, and special advisers of the Secretary-General

68. The resources proposed for the 11 special political missions under thematic cluster I for 2015 amount to \$37,312,300 (net). Taking into account the projected unencumbered balance of \$3,395,800 at the end of 2014, the additional amount being sought by the Secretary-General for the 11 missions amounts to \$33,916,500 (A/69/363/Add.1; see table 3 below).

Table 3  
Thematic cluster I: summary of resource requirements

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	1 January-31 December 2014			Requirements for 2015			Variance (2014-2015)
	Appropriation	Estimated expenditure	Variance	Total	Net <sup>a</sup> Non-recurrent		
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)=(4)-(3)	(6)	
Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Myanmar	1 338.6	1 155.3	183.3	1 161.0	977.7	–	(177.6)
Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus	3 388.4	2 976.1	412.3	3 183.3	2 771.0	12.0	(205.1)
Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide	2 435.6	2 173.8	261.8	2 171.0	1 909.2	–	(264.6)
Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara	657.6	572.5	85.1	586.8	501.7	–	(70.8)
Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)	723.6	580.0	143.6	654.3	510.7	–	(69.3)
United Nation Representative to the Geneva International Discussions	2 193.1	2 107.7	85.4	2 042.6	1 957.2	–	(150.5)
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria	12 644.5	11 151.0	1 493.5	11 871.1	10 377.6	54.5	(773.4)
Office of the Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan	1 672.7	1 345.3	327.4	1 319.5	992.1	19.5	(353.2)
Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen	5 362.0	5 192.1	169.9	5 352.3	5 182.4	2.0	(9.7)
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel	3 323.4	2 855.6	467.8	3 987.7	3 519.9	23.5	664.3
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region	4 376.8	4 611.1	(234.3)	4 982.7	5 217.0	11.5	605.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>38 116.3</b>	<b>34 720.5</b>	<b>3 395.8</b>	<b>37 312.3</b>	<b>33 916.5</b>	<b>123.0</b>	<b>(804.0)</b>

<sup>a</sup> Net requirements after taking into account the estimated underexpenditure or overexpenditure for 2014.

69. The unencumbered balance of \$3.4 million for 2014 for cluster I missions relates primarily to civilian personnel (the Offices of the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for Syria, for the Sahel and for the Sudan and South Sudan, and the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus). The underexpenditure is partly offset by overexpenditure in the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region (\$0.2 million) (see para. 70 below). A summary of explanations for significant variances is provided in paragraphs 112 and 113 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/363) and under the respective missions (A/69/363/Add.1).

70. The overexpenditure for 2014 in the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region (\$0.2 million) relates to both civilian personnel and official travel as follows (A/69/363, para. 113): (a) civilian personnel, as a result of a combination of (i) the approval by the General Assembly of a greater number of positions than the funding level for general temporary assistance; (ii) a lower-than-budgeted projected average vacancy rate for staff; (iii) the engagement of a full-time Under-Secretary-General starting from 1 September 2014, compared with the provision for an Under-Secretary-General on a when-actually-employed basis; and (iv) higher expenditures for post adjustment as a result of the transfer of three positions from Dublin to Geneva as at 1 September 2014 (see paras. 89 and 90 below); and (b) official travel, owing mainly to the increase in travel within the Great Lakes region to support mandated activities and the increased activities of a full-time Under-Secretary-General as at 1 September 2014.

71. Concerning the approval by the General Assembly of a greater number of positions than the funding level for general temporary assistance (see para. 70 (a) (i) above), the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that while the Secretary-General proposed a total of 3,845 positions for 2014 for 34 special political missions reflected in table 6 of the report (A/68/327), the Advisory Committee recommended to the General Assembly that 11 positions not be approved. Accordingly, the proposed resources for the concerned missions were reduced by the Secretariat to take into account the recommendation of the Committee. The General Assembly subsequently approved five of those 11 positions, while maintaining the resource at the level recommended by the Advisory Committee.

72. As shown in table 3 above, the proposed resources for 2015 for the special political missions under cluster I reflect an overall decrease of \$0.8 million, compared with 2014, with 9 of the 11 missions reflecting decreases in 2015, while 2 missions reflect increases as follows (A/69/363, para. 121):

(a) The Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel (an increase of \$664,300): the proposed establishment of three new positions and increased provisions for air transportation, given the increased activity level of the mission;

(b) The Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region (an increase of \$605,900): (i) the provision being made for the full staffing complement in 2015 (see para. 71 above); (ii) the projected full deployment of staff and reduced vacancy rates in 2015, compared with phased deployment and higher vacancy rates in 2014; (iii) the provisions for one additional P-4 position proposed for 2015; (iv) the provision for a full-time USG position in 2015; (v) the relocation of three positions from Dublin to Geneva, with consequent higher costs for post adjustment; and (vi) increased requirements for official travel.

### Comments and recommendations on staffing requirements

73. Table 4 below presents positions approved for 2014, the vacancy situation as at 30 September 2014 and the proposed staffing requirements for 2015 for the 11 missions under cluster I.

Table 4  
Thematic cluster I: staffing requirements

	<i>Approved for 2014</i>	<i>Vacant positions as at 30 September</i>	<i>Proposed for 2015</i>	<i>New positions</i>	<i>Abolitions</i>	<i>Reclassifications</i>
Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Myanmar	5 (1 USG, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	—	5 (1 USG, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	—	—	—
Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus	19 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 5 P-4, 3 FS, 1 GS (OL), 5 LL)	2 (1 P-5, 1 P-4)	19 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 5 P-4, 3 FS, 1 GS (OL), 5 LL)	—	—	—
Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide	10 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 P-5, 3 P-4, 2 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	—	10 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 P-5, 3 P-4, 2 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	—	—	—
Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara	2 (1 USG, 1 P-3)	—	2 (1 USG, 1 P-3)	—	—	—
Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)	3 (1 USG, 1 P-4, 1 GS (OL))	—	3 (1 USG, 1 P-4, 1 GS (OL))	—	—	—
United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions	7 (1 ASG, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	—	7 (1 ASG, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	—	—	—
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria	80 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 D-2, 2 D-1, 6 P-5, 9 P-4, 9 P-3, 13 FS, 14 GS (OL), 24 LL)	23 (1 D-2, 1 D-1, 2 P-5, 5 P-4, 5 P-3, 3 FS, 2 GS (OL), 4 LL)	80 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 D-2, 2 D-1, 6 P-5, 9 P-4, 9 P-3, 13 FS, 9 GS (OL), 29 LL)	—	—	5 (5 GS (OL) to 5 LL) <sup>a</sup>
Office of the Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan	8 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 2 NPO, 1 LL)	3 (2 P-4, 1 P-3)	8 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 2 NPO, 1 LL)	—	—	—
Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen	33 (1 ASG, 1 D-1, 2 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-3, 12 FS, 1 GS (OL), 1 NPO, 10 LL)	18 (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 11 FS, 4 LL)	34 (1 ASG, 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-3, 12 FS, 1 GS (OL), 1 NPO, 10 LL)	1 (1 P-5)	—	—
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel	15 (1 USG, <sup>b</sup> 1 ASG, 3 P-5, 4 P-4, 3 P-3, 1 NPO, 2 LL)	8 (2 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 NPO, 1 LL)	17 (1 ASG, 3 P-5, 5 P-4, 3 P-3, 1 FS, 1 NPO, 3 LL)	3 (1 P-4, 1 FS, 1 LL)	1 (1 USG <sup>b</sup> )	—

	<i>Approved for 2014</i>	<i>Vacant positions as at 30 September</i>	<i>Proposed for 2015</i>	<i>New positions</i>	<i>Abolitions</i>	<i>Reclassifications</i>
Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region	26 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 D-1, 4 P-5, 5 P-4, 3 P-3, 1 FS, 2 GS (OL), 1 NPO, 7 LL)	3 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL), 1 LL)	27 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 D-1, 4 P-5, 6 P-4, 3 P-3, 1 FS, 2 GS (OL), 1 NPO, 7 LL)	2 (1 P-4, 1 P-3)	1 (1 P-3)	–

*Abbreviations:* ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; FS, Field Service; GS (OL), General Service (Other level); LL, Local level; NPO, National Professional Officer; USG, Under-Secretary-General; UNV, United Nations Volunteer.

<sup>a</sup> The Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria proposes the redeployment of 5 positions from Geneva to Damascus and concurrent reclassification of these positions from General Service (Other level) to Local level.

<sup>b</sup> The Under-Secretary-General position for the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel was approved up to 31 January 2014.

74. The staffing changes proposed for 2015 under cluster I include the following (A/69/363, annex V; A/69/363/Add.1, paras. 163, 221-222, 253-255, 285-287):

(a) Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria (5 redeployment with reclassification): redeployment of 5 Field Service level positions from Geneva to Damascus, with reclassification to Local level positions (see para. 79 below);

(b) Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen (1 new position): establishment of 1 Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5) position in Sana'a;

(c) Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel (3 new positions): establishment of 1 Political Affairs Officer position (P-4), 1 Senior Staff Assistant/Personal Assistant position (Field Service), and 1 Driver (Local level) position;

(d) Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region (2 new positions and 1 abolishment): establishment of 1 Political Affairs Officer position (P-4) and 1 Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Officer position (P-3), as well as abolishment of 1 Security Coordination Officer position (P-3).

75. **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the staffing changes proposed by the Secretary-General for the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, and the Offices of the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for the Sahel and for the Great Lakes Region.** The comments and recommendations of the Committee on staffing requirements related to the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria are contained in paragraphs 77 to 80 below.

76. In addition, the Advisory Committee notes that annex V to the report of the Secretary-General on variances in staffing requirements does not include the changes in duty stations for the three Heads of Mission (see paras. 63-66 above and see paras. 77 and 78, 85 and 88 and 100-102 below), nor the redeployment of two P-4 positions in the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan (see paras. 81 and 82 below).

*Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria*

77. The Advisory Committee notes from the budget that the proposed 32 positions for the substantive component of the Office will be in four distinct locations in 2015 (Brussels (1 USG), Geneva (14, including 1 ASG), Damascus (14) and New York (3)) (ibid., para. 164). Upon inquiry as to why this change of duty station to Brussels was not included in the staffing changes in annex V to the report of the Secretary-General, the Committee was informed that the Secretary-General announced his appointment of the Special Envoy for Syria with the understanding that his duty station would be Brussels.

78. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with a comparative summary of relevant annual costs that are specific to Geneva and to Brussels. According to the Secretary-General, the annual total costs for a USG position in Brussels are lower than that of Geneva, reflecting, inter alia, reductions under staff costs (owing to lower post adjustment rate in Brussels compared to that of Geneva), which will be partly offset by higher costs under travel costs (two trips per month from Brussels to Geneva for a maximum of 10 days plus daily subsistence allowance). The Committee was informed that each round trip by economy class would cost \$600 and that the daily subsistence allowance rate was \$397 person/day (a total of 24 trips per year at the cost of \$14,400 and \$47,640 for daily subsistence allowance). However, the Committee notes from the information it received upon request that the Office of the Special Envoy has budgeted a total of 50 trips for 2015 for the Special Envoy to travel from Brussels to Geneva (an average of 4.2 trips per month), for 3 days each trip, at the cost of \$1,314 per trip (a total of \$65,700). **While the Advisory Committee has no objection to the position of the Special Envoy for Syria to be based in Brussels for 2015, in the light of the comments and recommendations of the Committee in paragraph 66 above, the Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General should keep the arrangement for the location of the Special Envoy for Syria under review.**

79. It is proposed that five General Service (Other level) positions be redeployed from Geneva to Damascus as Local level positions in 2015 to strengthen the existing security-related staffing. The functions of the five security-related positions are no longer required in Geneva as a result of the memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Office at Geneva for the provision of the related services (ibid., para. 163). The Advisory Committee recalls that in the proposed budget for 2014, 35 positions were requested under the security component of the Office (comprising 5 in Geneva and 30 in Damascus). The Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General consider whether the functions of the proposed five security personnel could be included in the memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Office at Geneva for provision of the related services on a cost reimbursement basis, and reflect this in the next budget submission, if necessary (A/68/7/Add.10, para. 86). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that an agreement had been reached with the United Nations Office in Geneva to provide full security services to the Office in Geneva. The 5 FS positions (2 Security Officers, 1 Security Assistant and 2 Drivers) had thus become operationally redundant in Geneva and the proposed redeployment reflected an internal realignment of resources so as to better align the structure of security services in view of heightened security environment in Damascus. The Committee was also informed that the Security Section in Damascus had a total of 30 positions (1 P-4, 2 P-3, 8 FS and 19 LL). **Taking into account that the functions of the five**

**security-related positions are no longer required in Geneva and the need for additional security capacity in Damascus, the Advisory Committee recommends that the five positions at the General Service (Other level) be abolished in Geneva and five new positions at the local level be established in Damascus in the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria.**

80. With respect to positions vacant for almost two years or longer as discussed in paragraph 17 above, four such positions are listed in the Office of the Special Envoy for Syria (1 P-4 Special Assistant for the Deputy Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, 1 P-4 Human Rights Office and 2 P-3 Security Officers). **The Advisory Committee recommends abolishment of the position for the Special Assistant at the P-4 level, which has been vacant since 1 November 2012. The Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will fill the other three vacant positions expeditiously.**

*Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan*

81. It is stated in the budget that the two P-4 positions previously based in Juba and Khartoum will be located in Addis Ababa in 2015 (A/69/363/Add.1, para. 194). The Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General does not request redeployment of the two positions in the budget proposal and that no justifications are provided. The Committee notes from the information it received on ground transportation for the Office that the two Political Affairs Officer positions (2 P-4) are to be redeployed to Addis Ababa to ensure appropriate support to the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel and to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development during the negotiations in Addis Ababa (see also para. 95 below).

82. The Advisory Committee recalls that when the Office was established in 2012, the Special Envoy was based in New York and the Office had presences in both Khartoum and Juba. The Committee was informed at the time that the roles of the two P-4 positions of Political Affairs Officers based in Khartoum and Juba were specific to the Sudan and South Sudan and that interacting with the working-level representatives of the two negotiating teams were full-time functions (A/66/7/Add.24, para. 18). The Committee further recalls that two new positions for National Professional Officers were proposed for 2013 to be located in Khartoum and Juba, respectively, to support the Political Affairs Officers (A/67/604, para. 66). The Committee also recalls that the Special Envoy, who has relocated from New York to Addis Ababa, has also been appointed as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union (A/68/7/Add.10, para. 47 (b)). **The Advisory Committee does not see any changes in the functions of the two P-4 positions of Political Affairs Officers who have been based in Khartoum and Juba, respectively, since the inception of the Office. Further, the redeployment of the two P-4 positions to Addis Ababa would leave the field presence with only one staff each (National Professional Officer) in Khartoum and Juba, which, in the view of the Committee, would not be a desirable field presence structure for the work of the Office of the Special Envoy. The Committee is, therefore, of the view that the two P-4 positions should remain in Khartoum and Juba in 2015.**

*Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region*

83. The Advisory Committee notes from the proposed budget and information provided to it that under the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, three positions (1 Under-Secretary-General, 1 P-4, 1 General Service (Other level)) were transferred from Dublin to Geneva from 1 September 2014 (*ibid.*, para. 283). Of the 19 positions for international staff of the Office, 3 will be based in Geneva, 14 in Nairobi (including 1 Assistant Secretary-General) and 2 in New York for 2015.

84. The Advisory Committee recalls that at the time of its consideration of the estimates in respect of special political missions for 2014, both the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for the Sahel and for the Great Lakes Region were engaged on a “when-actually-employed” basis and worked from Rome and Dublin, respectively. It was planned then that the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel would be relocated from Rome to Dakar by 1 January 2014 and would be co-located with UNOWA. The Advisory Committee welcomed the decision to relocate the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel to the Sahel region, which had been recommended earlier by the Committee (A/68/7/Add.10, paras. 49, 50 and 57; see also para. 103 below on cost-benefits of co-location with UNOWA).

85. The Secretary-General appointed his new Special Envoys for the Sahel and for the Great Lakes Region in May and July 2014, respectively, and both Special Envoys now work full-time (*ibid.*, paras. 231, 255 and 283). The Advisory Committee notes that while the new Special Envoy for the Sahel is now based in Dakar, the new Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region moved to Geneva (instead of Nairobi) from 1 September 2014. **The Advisory Committee fails to understand why the Secretary-General relocated the three positions (1 Under-Secretary-General, 1 P-4, 1 General Service (Other level)) from Dublin (home of the former Special Envoy) to Geneva, given the fact that the Office of the Special Envoy is located in Nairobi.**

86. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the primary reasons for the choice of Geneva included but were not limited to the following: (a) being based in Geneva provided an opportunity to deploy credible, proactive and sustained good offices from an enhanced position of neutrality and impartiality; (b) the new Special Envoy was being called upon to provide vigorous, close and frequent good offices and such sensitive political actions were best undertaken from a location that was seen to be neutral, where no stakeholder could be perceived to enjoy preferential treatment or in a position to exercise undue influence. A Special Envoy stationed in one particular signatory country may be perceived to be associated with the views/positions advocated by that country; and (c) while located outside of the region, the new Special Envoy would be working and available full time in the region, thus mitigating any concerns that physical location in Nairobi was absolutely necessary to effectively discharge his mandate. The Committee was further informed that owing to the nature of his functions, the Special Envoy was expected to spend a significant portion of his time traveling to the capitals of the signatories to the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Addis Ababa (headquarter of the African Union, one of the guarantors), Harare (Chair of the Southern African Development Community), and capitals of countries involved in the Great Lakes dossier. **The Advisory Committee points out that as Geneva, Nairobi is also a headquarters duty station of the**

**Organization and that the suggestion that a presence at the United Nations Office at Nairobi could be seen as not being neutral is unacceptable. Further, the Committee questions the concept that while located outside of the region, the new Special Envoy would be working and available full time in the region.**

87. A related issue of concern for the Advisory Committee is the need for both positions at the levels of Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General in the Office, in the light of the fact that the Special Envoy now works full time. The Advisory Committee recalls that since the former Special Envoy for the Sahel phased out at the end of January 2014, the Head of Office at the Assistant Secretary-General level has taken over the responsibilities of the Special Envoy (A/68/7/Add.10, paras. 53 and 54). As regards the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, the Committee requested justification for the continued need for a full-time position of Assistant Secretary-General and was informed, inter alia, that the effective implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework requires the support and intervention of the Office at multiple levels. A full-time Assistant Secretary-General would remain necessary in order to continue to lead related deliberations and activities at the appropriate and effective level, in addition to providing strategic and political advice to the Special Envoy and to complement the Special Envoy's political work with the expertise on development and economic matters. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that it was its understanding that the need for the position of an Assistant Secretary-General in the region was attributable to the fact that the former Special Envoy was home-based in Dublin on a when-actually-employed contract.

**88. Taking into account the comments and observations in paragraphs 85 and 86 above, the Advisory Committee is of the view that the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region should be based in Nairobi, in the region, to lead the Office and perform his functions. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to review the location of the Head of Mission and the structure of the Office, including the necessity for having both the positions of Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General, and to report thereon in the proposed budget for 2016.**

89. Concerning the financial implications of the location of the Head of the Office in Geneva, the Advisory Committee requested a cost analysis for Geneva and Nairobi, including one-time relocation and recurrent costs, and was informed that the one-time relocation costs incurred in 2014 in Geneva amounted to \$22,950, mainly for the renovation of the office space (\$11,345) and for the information and communications technology equipment (\$7,505) and that the overall higher costs in Geneva were due to higher costs under rental, staff costs and travel, as follows:

(a) The higher provision for the rental of premises in Geneva for 2015 as compared to that of Dublin in 2014 (comparison with that of Nairobi was requested but was not provided by the Secretariat before the finalization of the present report): the allocation for 2014 provided for office space of 100 square meters in Dublin at a monthly rate of \$23 per square metre (an annual cost of \$27,600), while the 2015 proposal would provide for rental of 120 square metres in Geneva at a monthly rate of \$53.90 per square metre (an annual cost of \$77,616). The office space of 120 square metres in Geneva includes: (i) 57.6 m<sup>2</sup> of the standard space allocation for the Under-Secretary-General, P-4 and General Service-Other level; and (ii) an extra 62.4 m<sup>2</sup> for the arrival, meeting and resources areas. **The Committee notes**

**that the annual rental costs in Geneva would amount to \$77,616, an increase of \$50,016, compared with \$27,600 in Dublin. In addition, the size of the office space in Geneva is over the standard allocation;**

(b) The higher salary costs, including post adjustment for the three positions in Geneva: the total costs amount to \$542,400 annually, an increase of \$156,000, compared with the costs in Nairobi. The Committee was informed that if the Administrative Assistant position (General Service (Other level) in Geneva) was based in Nairobi, the position would be classified at the Field Service category (reflected in the cost comparison). **The Advisory Committee questions the notion that the (General Service (Other level) position in Geneva could not be classified at the Local level category in Nairobi, which would consequently lead to lower staff costs in Nairobi;**

(c) The higher travel costs/daily subsistence allowance: the Special Envoy always makes his regional tours to the signatory countries transiting through Nairobi and does not fly directly from Geneva to the respective regional countries. Since Nairobi is a major transit city for most airlines in the region, it is convenient for the Special Envoy to travel through Nairobi, which also enables him to oversee operations in the Nairobi office as Head of Mission. **The Advisory Committee, nevertheless, points out that the expenses related to the round trips between Geneva and Nairobi taken by the Special Envoy and his support staff are extra expenditures borne by the Organization. The Committee requests that the Secretary-General report all such expenditures from the time of the relocation to Geneva, in the budget for 2016.**

90. **The Advisory Committee points out that in addition to its comments and recommendations in paragraph 88 above, the location of Geneva as the duty station for the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region and his support staff has considerable financial implications for the Organization. The Committee recommends that a proper cost analysis for maintaining the presence in Geneva as compared with Nairobi be provided in the proposed budget for 2016.**

#### *Vacancy rates*

91. The comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on vacancy rates are contained in paragraph 17 above. With respect to the vacancy factors applied for the missions under cluster I, the Advisory Committee recommends the following:

(a) **For the Office of the Special Envoy for Syria, the Committee recommends the application of a 50 per cent vacancy factor to the estimates for international staff for 2015 (compared with 30 per cent proposed by the Secretary-General), taking into account the actual average vacancy rate of (54 per cent) for the period from January to August 2014, the actual vacancy rate of 53.6 per cent as at 30 September 2014, and the number of vacant posts of two years and longer in the Office (see para. 80 above);**

(b) **For the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes, the Committee recommends the application of a 20 per cent vacancy factor to the estimates for both international and Local level staff (compared with 10 per cent and 5 per cent proposed by the Secretary-General), taking into account the**

actual average vacancy rates of 22 per cent and 28 per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and the actual vacancy rates of 11 per cent and 14 as at 30 September 2014, respectively. The recommendation of the Committee on the vacancy factor for international staff also takes into account the proposed establishment of 2 international positions for 2015 (see para. 74 (d) above).

#### Comments and recommendations on operational costs

92. The Advisory Committee was provided with information on the operational costs for cluster I, which is shown in table 5 below, including the appropriation and estimated expenditure for 2014 and the projected requirements for 2015.

Table 5  
Thematic cluster I: operational costs

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	1 January to 31 December 2014			Requirements for 2015			
	Appropriation	Estimated expenditure	Variance under-(over-) expenditure	Total	Net <sup>a</sup> Non-recurrent		Variance (2014-2015)
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)=(4)-(3)	(6)	(7)=(4)-(1)
<b>Operational costs</b>							
Consultants	1 498.5	1 151.5	347.0	1 100.3	753.3	–	(398.2)
Official travel	5 541.9	5 166.9	375.0	4 587.3	4 212.3	–	(954.6)
Facilities and infrastructure	2 418.2	3 168.6	(750.4)	2 297.8	3 048.2	24.1	(120.4)
Ground transportation	470.9	748.2	(277.3)	509.6	786.9	–	38.7
Air transportation	278.0	202.0	76.0	770.5	694.5	–	492.5
Communications	1 805.9	1 257.4	548.5	1 329.3	780.8	6.1	(476.6)
Information technology	597.1	515.4	81.7	497.1	415.4	92.8	(100.0)
Medical	–	2.0	(2.0)	5.2	7.2	–	5.2
Other supplies, services and equipment	1 665.6	1 652.8	12.8	1 748.6	1 735.8	–	83.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14 276.1</b>	<b>13 864.8</b>	<b>411.3</b>	<b>12 845.7</b>	<b>12 434.4</b>	<b>123.0</b>	<b>(1 430.4)</b>

<sup>a</sup> Net requirements after taking into account the estimated underexpenditure or overexpenditure for 2014.

#### Consultants

93. Under the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel, a provision of \$246,800 is proposed for 2015 to provide for six consultants for the assessment of different strategies and initiatives for the region, such as the participation of youth and women, security, humanitarian affairs and development. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the consultants would be engaged in areas including (a) development of regional early warning and threat analysis mechanisms in the Sahel (\$63,500); (b) development of a framework for the application of the resilience concept in the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (\$30,100); and (c) development of a resource mobilization strategy for the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (\$36,500). The cost estimates for the above-mentioned consultancy work amount to a total of \$130,100. **The Advisory**

**Committee is of the view that the expertise required in these consultancies should be available in the Organization and recommends, therefore, a reduction of \$130,100 to the proposed resources for 2015 under consultants for the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel.**

94. Under the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, a provision of \$125,900 is requested to provide for consultancy services in various thematic areas, including human rights, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, gender and programme management. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that an amount of \$25,300 is included under disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to facilitate towards clear action plans on the process (implementation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo national plan for disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement). **Taking into account the proposed new P-3 position for a Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Officer for the Office (see para. 74 (d) above), as well as the existing capacity of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in the area, the Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of \$25,300 to the proposed resources for 2015 under consultants for the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region.**

*Ground transportation*

95. Under the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan, resources amounting to \$10,800 are proposed to provide for repairs and maintenance (\$4,200) and petrol, oil and lubricants (\$6,600) for the two vehicles from the African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operations in Darfur (UNAMID) being utilized by the Office of the Special Envoy. The Advisory Committee requested clarification as to why there was no budgetary provision for 2014 and was informed that the costs for ground transportation for the Office in Addis Ababa were covered in previous years through an administrative arrangement with UNAMID, whereby UNAMID provided ground transport support to the Office free of charge. At that time, only 1 D-1 and 1 Local level positions were based in Addis Ababa. In 2014, the Special Envoy (USG) and the Special Assistant positions (P-3) were transferred to Addis Ababa, and in 2015, two Political Affairs Officer positions (2 P-4) are proposed to be redeployed to Addis Ababa (see paras. 81-82 above). With the increased number of staff based in Addis Ababa, and the commensurate increased level of activity there, the Committee was informed that UNAMID could no longer provide ground transport support to the Office free of charge. Accordingly, the 2015 budget includes costs for ground transport support for two vehicles to be provided by UNAMID to the Office. **For budgetary transparency and accuracy, the Advisory Committee is of the view that resources required for mandated activities of the special political missions should be budgeted and support services provided to the missions should be reimbursed (see para. 57 above). The Committee has no objection to the inclusion of resources under ground transportation required by the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan. Given the total number of 4 staff in the Office at Addis Ababa (1 USG, 1 D-1, 1 P-3 and 1 LL), the Committee recommends approval of 50 per cent of the proposed resources under ground transportation (for one vehicle), also taking into account the recommendation of the Committee against the redeployment of the two P-4 positions to Addis Ababa.**

96. Under the Office of the Special Adviser on Cyprus, a provision of \$46,500 is proposed for the rental of four vehicles (including repairs, insurance and petrol), compared with the budget of \$55,300 for 2014 (owing to the reduction in the number of rented vehicles from five to four). The Advisory Committee recalls that in its consideration of the proposed budget for UNFYCIP for 2014/2015, it was informed that under the memorandum of understanding signed between the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFYCIP) and the Office, UNFYCIP provided seven rented vehicles to the Office. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that while the memorandum of understanding signed in December 2013 notes in its annex titled "List of Services provided by UNFICYP to the OSASG Cyprus" under the Surface Transport Section "Provision of seven (7) Saloon cars on long-term loan", UNFICYP does not provide the Office with vehicles as such, but rather with administrative assistance in relation to the rental of the vehicles from local companies (the Office pays for the vehicles from its own budget). Furthermore, the memorandum of understanding is out of date and does not reflect the reductions made to the number of vehicles in the fleet of the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General from 5 in 2014 to 4 in 2015, as reflected in the proposed budget for the 2015. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that further clarification is required with respect to the provision of vehicles by UNFYCIP to the Office of the Special Adviser on Cyprus under the terms of the memorandum of understanding. Furthermore, the budgetary resources under ground transportation for UNFYCIP should be reviewed and adjusted, if necessary, to take into account the reimbursement for the four rented vehicles by the Office of the Special Adviser on Cyprus.**

*Air transportation*

97. For the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel, a provision of \$550,500 is proposed for 2015, based on anticipated usage of 72 flight hours, compared with the appropriation of \$126,000 for 2014 for the chartering of 2 flights for 3 days each. It is indicated that the variance between the resources proposed for 2015 and the 2014 approved budget is mainly attributable to the new cost-sharing arrangements for the rental of a fixed-wing aircraft among UNOWA, UNIOGBIS, the Cameroon/Nigeria Mixed Commission and the Office of the Special Envoy. The Advisory Committee notes that the combined travel requirements for 2015 for the Office amount to \$999,800, taking into account the resource of \$449,300 requested under official travel. The comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee are contained in paragraphs 27 to 29 above.

98. For the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, a provision of \$220,000 for 2015 is proposed, compared with \$152,000 for 2014, representing an increase of \$68,000. The increased provision would provide for six special flights for regional travel, compared with the four special flights budgeted in 2014. The Advisory Committee notes from the information provided to it that the projected under expenditure of \$76,000 in 2014 reflects expenditure for two special flights taken, compared with the approved budget for four special flights. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that as at July 2014, the total projected requirements for 2014 were estimated to be two Special Flights; however, the Special Envoy had earlier utilized a MONUSCO flight on a one-off courtesy by MONUSCO (the cost was absorbed by MONUSCO). Between 16 and 23 October 2014, the new Special Envoy undertook a regional visit that covered an eight leg-travel and a total of six

destinations (Dares Salaam, Bujumbura, Kigali, Kinshasa, Luanda and Goma). In addition, the Special Envoy is engaged on a full-time basis, while the previous Special Envoy was engaged on a when-actually-employed basis.

99. **The Advisory Committee notes that by using a MONUSCO flight on courtesy by the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, resources funded under peacekeeping operations absorbed costs incurred by a special political mission, which does not represent sound financial management of different sources of funding. The Committee is of the view that the cost of the MONUSCO flight should have been reimbursed by the Office of the Special Envoy. The Committee has made comments and recommendations on the provision of support services to special political missions free of charge (see para. 57 above). The Advisory Committee trusts that the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region will keep the usage of the special flights to the minimum, resorting to it only when regular commercial flights operating in accordance with the standards of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) are unavailable. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the provision for the special flights for 2015 be kept at the same level for 2014 (four special flights), with a reduction of \$68,000 to the proposed resources for 2015.**

#### **Other matters**

##### *Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus*

100. It is stated that the proposed resource requirements for 2015 for the Office of the Special Adviser would provide for, among others, 1 Under-Secretary-General for a period of 224 days on a when-actually-employed contract. With respect to the basis for budgeting for 224 days for 2015, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that it was assumed that the Special Adviser would work the maximum number of days each month, and that as a result, the budget would provide for the full amount of the annual salary for a Under-Secretary-General position.

101. Upon enquiry, the Committee was also informed that the former Special Adviser worked for 147 days in 2013 and for 39 days from January to April 2014 before his departure. However, it should be noted that (a) the substantive negotiations, which were suspended in March 2012, resumed in September 2013; between March 2012 and September 2013, despite the suspension of the talks, the United Nations remained active, including through regular visits by the Special Adviser, preparing the ground for resumed negotiations and promoting confidence-building measures; (b) between September 2013 and October 2014, the substantive negotiations were ongoing under the United Nations auspices; and (c) since 6 October 2014, the negotiations had remained suspended, although the United Nations was working actively to identify ways of diffusing the tensions and bringing the parties back to the negotiating table.

102. The Advisory Committee was further informed, upon enquiry, that the current estimates for 2015 include at least two trips to Cyprus every month, as well as one trip every month to regional capitals and to other relevant places. Each mission will take place for an average of 5 days. Further, Geneva is the home base of the newly appointed Special Adviser and being based in Geneva will allow the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General to undertake frequent trips to Cyprus, to the region and other relevant places, as needed. **Taking into account the actual number of days**

**the former Special Adviser worked in 2013 and 2014, the Advisory Committee recommends a 25 per cent reduction to the proposed provision for 224 work days for 2015 for the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Cyprus.**

*Co-location of the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel with UNOWA*

103. It is stated that the Office of the Special Envoy is co-located with UNOWA, with the latter providing the necessary logistical and infrastructure support on site, which is complemented by the services of the Global Service Centre. Economies of scale are achieved by using the existing service capacity, expertise, communications and information and communications technology network of the Global Service Centre and UNOWA. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the co-location with UNOWA had helped in avoiding duplicative support structures and thereby included economies of scale in providing support services. For instance, the support component of the Office had been functionally integrated with the Support Unit of UNOWA, which had helped to leverage existing support capacity in the mission area.

**B. Thematic cluster II: sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels**

104. The resource requirements proposed for 2015 amount to \$35,211,000 (net) for the 13 special political missions under thematic cluster II, representing an overall decrease of \$901,200, compared with the resources approved for 2014, primarily owing to the discontinuation in 2015 of a one-time expense of \$2 million for the relocation of the office of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) in 2014 ([A/69/363](#), para. 122; see also para. 121 below). Information on the variances for each mission is provided under the respective mission in the report of the Secretary-General ([A/69/363/Add.2](#)). Taking into account the projected unencumbered balance of \$290,700 at the end of 2014, the net amount being sought for the missions under the cluster amounts to \$34,920,300 (see table 6).

Table 6  
**Thematic cluster II: summary of resource requirements**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	1 January-31 December 2014			Requirements for 2015			Variance (2014-2015)
	Appropriation	Estimated expenditure	Variance	Total	Net <sup>a</sup> Non-recurrent		
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)=(4)-(3)	(6)	
Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea	2 514.7	2 465.3	49.4	2 406.6	2 357.2	–	(108.1)
Panel of Experts on Liberia	531.6	320.9	210.7	314.0	103.3	–	(217.6)
Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire	1 307.8	1 204.9	102.9	1 282.5	1 179.6	–	(25.3)
Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo	1 424.8	1 334.9	89.9	1 364.7	1 274.8	–	(60.1)
Panel of Experts on the Sudan	1 322.6	1 311.0	11.6	1 468.1	1 456.5	–	145.5
Panel of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	2 797.9	2 704.2	93.7	2 729.6	2 635.9	–	(68.3)
Panel of Experts on the Islamic Republic of Iran	2 971.5	2 965.7	5.8	2 782.2	2 776.4	–	(189.3)
Panel of Experts on Libya	1 270.7	1 502.9	(232.2)	1 593.2	1 825.4	2.1	322.5
Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic	1 476.1	1 222.7	253.4	1 519.6	1 266.2	–	43.5
Panel of Experts on Yemen	2 217.3	2 254.0	(36.7)	2 830.4	2 867.1	–	613.1
Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1526 (2004) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities	4 447.0	4 504.0	(57.0)	4 496.1	4 553.1	–	49.1
Support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction	3 112.0	3 098.7	13.3	3 102.0	3 088.7	13.3	(10.0)
Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate	10 718.2	10 932.3	(214.1)	9 322.0	9 536.1	8.3	(1 396.2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>36 112.2</b>	<b>35 821.5</b>	<b>290.7</b>	<b>35 211.0</b>	<b>34 920.3</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>(901.2)</b>

<sup>a</sup> Net requirements after taking into account the estimated underexpenditure or overexpenditure for 2014.

105. As shown in table 6 above, of the 13 missions under cluster II, resources for 8 missions reflect decreases in 2015 compared with 2014, while increases in 5 missions are requested. The Secretary-General indicates that the increases in the 5 missions are mainly attributable to mandate-driven changes, inter alia: (a) the Panels of Experts on Libya and on the Sudan, increase in number of experts and/or increase in the working months of the Panels from 11 to 12 months; (b) the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1526 (2004) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, new requirement to translate sanctions consolidated lists into the six official languages of the United Nations; and (c) the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the proposed establishment of 2 additional

positions and upward reclassification of 1 position (A/69/363, para. 122). In addition, for the Panel of Experts on Yemen, the increase is attributable to the application of a zero vacancy rate in 2015, compared to a budgeted vacancy rate of 63 per cent in 2014, when it was first established.

106. With respect to the locations of the staff and experts working for the group and panels under cluster II, the Advisory Committee was provided, upon request, with table 7 below.

Table 7

**Thematic cluster II: location of staff and experts**

	<i>Location of staff</i>	<i>Location of experts</i>
Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea	Nairobi and New York	Nairobi
Panel of Experts on Liberia	New York	home-based
Panel of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire	New York	home-based
Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo	New York	home-based
Panel of Experts on the Sudan	New York	home-based
Group of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	New York	New York
Panel of Experts on the Islamic Republic of Iran	New York	New York
Panel of Experts on Libya	New York	home-based
Panel of Experts on Central African Republic	New York	home-based
Panel of Experts on Yemen	New York and Sana'a	home-based
Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1526 (2004) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities	New York	New York

**Comments and recommendations on positions**

107. Table 8 below presents positions approved for 2014, the vacancy situation as at 30 September 2014 and the proposed staffing requirements for 2015 for the 13 missions under cluster II.

Table 8  
**Thematic cluster II: staffing requirements**

	Approved for 2014	Vacant positions as at 30 September	Proposed for 2015	New positions	Abolitions	Reclassifications
Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea	7 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL), 5 LL)	–	7 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL), 5 LL)	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on Liberia	–	–	–	–	–	–
Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire	1 (1 P-3)	–	1 (1 P-3)	–	–	–
Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo	1 (1 P-3)	–	1 (1 P-3)	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on the Sudan	1 (1 P-3)	–	1 (1 P-3)	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	4 (2 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	4 (2 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on the Islamic Republic of Iran	4 (1 P-4, 1 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	4 (1 P-4, 1 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on Libya	2 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	–	2 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic	2 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	1 (1 P-3)	2 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Panel of Experts for Yemen	8 (1 P-3, 5 FS, 2 LL)	7 (5 FS, 2 LL)	8 (1 P-3, 5 FS, 2 LL)	–	–	–
Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1526 (2004) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities	12 (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-3, 6 GS (OL))	–	12 (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-3, 6 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction	5 (1 P-5, 2 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	5 (1 P-5, 2 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate	41 (1 ASG, 1 D-2, 2 D-1, 9 P-5, 12 P-4, 4 P-3, 4 P-2, 8 GS (1 PL, 7 OL))	1 P-2, 1 GS (OL)	43 (1 ASG, 1 D-2, 2 D-1, 9 P-5, 13 P-4, 6 P-3, 3 P-2, 8 GS (1 PL, 7 OL))	2 (1 P-4, 1 P-3)	–	1 (1 P-2 to 1 P-3)

*Abbreviations:* ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; FS, Field Service; GS (OL), General Service (Other level); LL, Local level; NPO, National Professional Officer; USG, Under-Secretary-General; UNV, United Nations Volunteer.

#### *Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate*

108. In view of the broader scope of the responsibilities assigned to the Executive Directorate by the Security Council in resolution 2129 (2013), it is proposed to (a) establish two positions of Political Affairs Officer (1 P-4, 1 P-3); and (b) to reclassify a position of Associated Political Affairs Officer from the P-2 to the P-3 level in the Strategic Planning Unit. It is indicated that the Council has assigned additional tasks to the Executive Directorate, in particular, to identify emerging issues, trends and developments related to resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1624 (2005),

and to provide advice to the Counter-Terrorism Committee on practical ways for Member States to implement the two resolutions (A/69/363/Add.2, paras. 228-231). The Advisory Committee requested information on the functions of the proposed new positions, as well as those of the existing two positions (1 P-3 and 1 P-2) in the Strategic Planning Unit of the Executive Directorate. With the proposed two new positions at the P-4 and P-3 levels, the Unit would have a staffing capacity of 4 positions at 1 P-4, 2 P-3 and 1 P-2 levels.

**109. The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the proposed establishment of the two new positions at the P-4 and P-3 levels in the Executive Directorate. However, the Advisory Committee is not convinced by the justification provided for the proposed reclassification of the P-2 position to P-3 level and recommends against the proposal.**

#### *Vacancy rates*

**110. With respect to the vacancy factors applied for the staff supporting the Panel of Experts on Yemen, the Advisory Committee recommends the application of a 25 per cent vacancy factor to the estimates for international staff for 2015 (compared with 0 per cent proposed by the Secretary-General), taking into account the actual average vacancy rate of 100 per cent for the period from January to August 2014, and the actual vacancy rate of 83.3 per cent as at 30 September 2014 (see the comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the provisions requested for additional security officers for 2015 in paragraphs 117 to 120 below).**

#### **Comments and recommendations on operational costs**

111. The Advisory Committee was provided with information on the operational costs for cluster II, which is shown in table 9 below, including the appropriation and estimated expenditure for 2014 and the projected requirements for 2015.

Table 9  
**Thematic cluster II: operational costs**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	<i>1 January to 31 December 2014</i>			<i>Requirements for 2015</i>			<i>Variance (2014-2015)</i>
	<i>Appropriations</i>	<i>Estimated expenditure</i>	<i>Variance under-(over-) expenditure</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Net<sup>a</sup> Non-recurrent</i>		
					<i>(5)=(4)-(3)</i>	<i>(6)</i>	
	<i>(1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(3)=(1)-(2)</i>	<i>(4)</i>	<i>(5)=(4)-(3)</i>	<i>(6)</i>	<i>(7)=(4)-(1)</i>
<b>Operational costs</b>							
Experts	16 567.6	15 975.9	591.7	16 564.1	15 972.4	–	(3.5)
Consultants	173.6	137.2	36.4	172.7	136.3	–	(0.9)
Official travel	1 901.3	1 861.8	39.5	1 942.9	1 903.4	–	41.6
Facilities and infrastructure	4 475.8	4 377.9	97.9	2 127.3	2 029.4	–	(2 348.5)
Ground transportation	477.6	511.6	(34.0)	257.4	291.4	–	(220.2)
Communications	467.5	481.6	(14.1)	459.7	473.8	–	(7.8)

	1 January to 31 December 2014			Requirements for 2015			
	Appropriations	Estimated expenditure	Variance under-(over-) expenditure	Total	Net <sup>a</sup> Non-recurrent	Variance (2014-2015)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)=(4)-(3)	(6)	(7)=(4)-(1)
Information technology	421.1	584.9	(163.8)	460.1	623.9	23.7	39.0
Other supplies, services and equipment	139.4	216.8	(77.4)	195.3	272.7	–	55.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 623.9</b>	<b>24 147.7</b>	<b>476.2</b>	<b>22 179.5</b>	<b>21 703.3</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>(2 444.4)</b>

<sup>a</sup> Net requirements after taking into account the estimated underexpenditure or overexpenditure for 2014.

#### *Determination of cost-of-living allowance*

112. For the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, the variance between the 2015 requirements and the 2014 appropriation is attributable in part to the reduction of the cost of living allowance of the experts from \$3,900 to \$3,700 (A/69/363/Add.2, para. 17). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that in addition to their fees, non-home-based experts received a monthly cost of living allowance in lieu of daily subsistence allowance. The level of cost of living allowance was established by the Office of Human Resources Management and reviewed periodically in conjunction with ICSC cost-of-living surveys. Under the Office of Human Resources Management Guidelines for sanctions experts, the cost of living allowance rate was deducted when experts were on official travel or on personal break. This resulted in a cumbersome process of recording and verifying detailed attendance and travel of the experts and depended on whether travel or a break occurred on a week day or weekend day. To simplify the calculation, the Office of Human Resources Management determined a lower fixed monthly cost of living allowance rate with no deduction during travel days. The Committee was further informed that the reduction in cost-of-living allowance by the Office of Human Resources Management was based on the number of break days for experts with appointments of more than 12 months (21 calendar days over a 12-month period), in which they would receive a lower cost of living allowance rate. (This was averaged out and applied as a reduction to the regular monthly rate.) The lower monthly rate was now applied to all new experts at the respective duty station (New York: \$5,500 instead of \$5,700; Nairobi: \$3,500 instead of \$3,700).

#### *Provisions for information and communications technology services*

113. For the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, the Advisory Committee notes from the information provided to it that the provision was made to cover charges pertaining to a service level agreement for 10 computers in New York (\$11,000) and 8 computers in Nairobi (\$9,800). Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that there were 10 computer devices in Nairobi (8 laptop computers for the 8 experts and 2 desktop computers for the two local staff), and 2 desktop computers in New York for the 2 staff based in New York. As for the provisions requested, the Committee was informed that (a) the amount of \$11,000 would provide for 10 network accounts (Lotus Notes account, webmail account, access to United Nations Headquarters enterprise software) for the 8 experts and 2 New York-based staff, as per the level C agreement in New York with the Office for Information and Communications Technology (regardless of the locations of the computers); and

(b) the requirement of \$9,800 was requested for information technology and support services by UNSOA to the 8 experts and 2 local staff in Nairobi. The Committee was further informed that there was no duplication of services provided by the Office for Information and Communications Technology and UNSOA. In addition, the Committee notes that while the description (charges pertaining to the service level agreement for computers) is a standard one under information technology for missions under cluster II, the descriptions for such services vary notably under cluster I (information technology services for staff members, the cost of the service level agreement for the positions and the cost of two service level agreements for the positions), and under cluster III (centrally provided information technology support services for computers, information technology services required for the provision of centralized information technology, centralized information technology support services and centralized data storage, retrieval and maintenance services). **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the descriptions of the resource requirements requested under information technology in the budget estimates for the special political missions lack of clarity and consistency and should be improved in future budget proposals.**

*Official travel*

114. Under official travel for support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction, a provision of \$158,700 is requested for the nine experts, while an amount of \$112,700 is requested for the travel of the five staff for outreach activities and regional meetings to assist States in implementing the resolution. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the travel for outreach activities and to attend regional meetings involved not only staff members of the Support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, but also other staff of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, including the High Representative, the Deputy High Representative, the Chiefs of Branches and staff of the three Regional Centres, who provided support and were involved in related activities and so designated to attend such events as representatives of the Office. The Committee requested a breakdown of the travel requirements for the other staff of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and was informed that it was not possible to forecast which staff would attend such events at this time. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that travel resources requested for the Support to the 1540 Committee should be limited to staff who provide direct support to the activities of the 1540 Committee. The Committee expects that travel expenses for other staff of the Office of Disarmament Affairs will be covered by the provisions for travel allocated for the Office.**

115. With respect to the travel requirements for the Panel of Experts on Yemen, the Advisory Committee requested a breakdown of the proposed provision of \$476,600 for the 4 experts, as well as the provision of \$351,100 for the 8 staff and 11 Security Officers for the Panel of Experts on Yemen. The Committee was informed of the following, inter alia:

(a) The travel of the four experts would include travel (i) to Yemen 24 times (\$168,600) (an average of six trips for each expert); (ii) to the region 22 times (\$142,700) (an average of five to six trips for each expert); and (iii) to other international locations 28 times (\$164,700) (an average of six to seven trips for each

expert). **The Advisory Committee notes that the resources requested would provide for an average of 18.5 trips for each experts in 2015 to Yemen, the region and international destinations.**

(b) In support of the Panel, the Political Affairs Officer will travel to Yemen three times (\$21,200) and to other international locations twice (\$18,600). Security Officers will travel to Yemen in support of the small close protection planning team three times for 11 officers (\$311,300) (see paras. 117-120 below).

*Other supplies, services and equipment*

116. A provision of \$11,300 is requested to cover the cost for a media training programme for the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the Directorate had been witnessing increasingly high interest from the media in the work of the United Nations in general and the Directorate in particular in the field of counter-terrorism, especially following events such as the adoption of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014). The Committee was also informed that the objectives of the Directorate communications strategy, which was approved by the Counter-Terrorism Committee in May 2014, were to raise awareness and enhance the understanding of the work of the Committee and the Directorate, among others. Further, according to the Secretary-General, communications and advocacy efforts would emphasize the added value provided by the Committee and the Directorate within the framework of the overall United Nations counter-terrorism efforts by informing the target audience about Committee and Directorate activities around the world. Securing dedicated media and communications training for the Executive Director and senior Directorate staff would be a necessity to this end. The requested resources would provide for the training components as follows, inter alia: (a) advanced media training for the Executive Director, comprising one full day, followed by a second day three to six months later and including a full year accountability programme and coaching services; and (b) one group full day training for senior management staff and a full year accountability programme and coaching.

**Other matters**

*Collaboration between the security and close protection operations of the Panel of Experts on Yemen and the Office of the Special Adviser on Yemen*

117. For the Panel of Experts on Yemen, the proposed resources for 2015 related to the provision of Security Officers from other United Nations offices include (a) \$311,300 for the travel of 11 Security Officers three times to Yemen; and (b) \$232,100 for the replacement costs and overtime for the Security Officers (to ensure there is close protection coverage when the Panel and the Special Adviser are in Yemen at the same time). In addition, for the Office of the Special Adviser on Yemen, official travel provision for 2015 includes travel of 5 Security Officers from other United Nations offices (2 trips for 15 days each) (\$57,800) and the replacement costs and overtime for the 5 Security Officers (\$52,000). **The Advisory Committee notes that the combined resources proposed for 2015 related to the additional security officers amount to \$653,200 (under official travel and under facilities and infrastructure) for the Panel and the Office on Yemen (see para. 120 below).**

118. The Advisory Committee recalls that a full-time close protection team was established in 2014 for the Panel (5 FS Officers and 2 LL Drivers). The Secretary-General explained at the time that the team would provide a dedicated security capacity to the Panel of Experts, leveraging security support from the close protection team of the Office of the Special Adviser on Yemen (10 FS Officers with 1 P-3 Chief Security Officer) whenever the Special Adviser was not in Yemen. At other times, it was proposed that the Panel would supplement its close protection team from other United Nations offices (A/68/7/Add.27, paras. 4-6 and 19). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the team of the total of 16 Close Protection Officers (based in Yemen) support either the Special Adviser or the experts when they are present in the country. When the Special Adviser and the experts travel to Yemen at the same time, additional officers have to be flown in from other United Nations offices to supplement the existing Officers. So far, of the three trips undertaken by the Experts in 2014, one trip took place at a time when the Special Adviser was present in the country (an overlap of three days).

119. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was informed that for the Panel of Experts on Yemen, the budget proposals under travel, for both 2014 and 2015, include (a) 3 trips to Yemen for 11 security officers for 17 days each; and (b) 3 trips within Yemen for 9 security officers for an additional 6 days each. Total expenditures of \$98,500 have been incurred under official travel for 2014, compared with the provision of \$311,283. The Committee was informed that the lower expenditure was owing to the shorter duration of the three trips undertaken by the Experts in 2014. **However, the Advisory Committee notes that underexpenditure is not projected under official travel for 2014 in the information provided to the Committee.**

120. **The Advisory Committee recalls that in its resolution 68/280, the General Assembly encouraged close collaboration between the security and close protection operations of the Office of the Special Adviser and the Panel of Experts on Yemen, in order to avoid, to the extent possible, any duplication. Furthermore, cognizant that the travels have been and will be coordinated to avoid that the Special Adviser and the Panel of Experts are in Yemen at the same time to the extent possible, and taking into account the lower-than-budgeted expenditure under official travel for 2014 for the Panel of Experts on Yemen, the Advisory Committee is of the view that resources required for the additional security officers for both the Panel and the Office of the Special Adviser on Yemen should be closely monitored.**

*Relocation of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate*

121. The Advisory Committee recalls that resources in the amount of approximately \$2 million for 2014 were provided for the relocation of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate from its current office in the Chrysler Building in New York City to a new office space to be identified by the Facilities Management Service of the Office of Central Support Services (A/68/7/Add.10, paras. 101-104). The Secretary-General indicated in the proposed budget that the Executive Directorate will, at the end of November 2014, be temporarily relocated from its current office in the Chrysler Building to a swing space in the temporary North Lawn Building. The new office space identified for it, located on the 23rd floor of the Daily News Building, is currently occupied by the United Nations Development Programme, which is expected to hand over the office space in November 2014.

Following construction work, the Executive Directorate is expected to be at this location in the second quarter of 2015 (A/69/363/Add.2, para. 233). In its recent consideration of the capital master plan project, the Advisory Committee requested additional information on the plan of the Secretariat concerning the use of the office space in the temporary North Lawn Building as a swing space during the relocation and expressed concerns about the potential delay such a temporary move could have on the planned demolition of the temporary North Lawn Building (A/69/529, paras. 30 and 31).

### C. Thematic cluster III: United Nations offices, peacebuilding support offices, integrated offices and commissions

122. The proposed resources for 2015 for nine special political missions grouped under cluster III, except for the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), for which the proposed resources reflect six-month interim funding, amount to \$181,424,300, which represents 37.3 per cent of the total resources requested for all 35 special political missions in 2015 (see A/69/363 and Corr.1-3 and Add.3). Taking into account the projected unencumbered balance of \$8,246,200 at the end of 2014, the net requirements for 2015 would amount to \$173,178,100.

123. The table below provides a breakdown, by mission, of the estimated expenditure until 31 December 2014 and the projected requirements for 2015.

Table 10  
Thematic cluster III: summary of resource requirements

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	1 January-31 December 2014			Requirements for 2015			
	Appropriation <sup>a</sup>	Estimated expenditure <sup>a</sup>	Variance	Total	Net <sup>b</sup>	Non-recurrent	Variance (2014-2015)
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)=(4)-(3)	(6)	(7)=(4)-(1)
United Nations Office for West Africa	9 417.8	9 540.1	(122.3)	10 211.0	10 333.3	35.0	793.2
United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau	20 763.1	18 953.9	1 809.2	21 124.1	19 314.9	365.6	361.0
United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia	70 148.6	71 079.4	(930.8)	84 015.0	84 945.8	8 761.2	13 866.4
United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia	2 881.6	2 881.6	–	2 937.5	2 937.5	13.3	55.9
United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission	5 771.3	5 596.2	175.1	5 112.8	4 937.7	35.0	(658.5)
United Nations Electoral Observer Mission in Burundi	–	–	–	12 256.7	12 256.7	–	12 256.7
Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon	8 750.6	8 308.7	441.9	8 609.0	8 167.1	–	(141.6)

	1 January-31 December 2014			Requirements for 2015			Variance (2014-2015)
	Appropriation <sup>a</sup>	Estimated expenditure <sup>a</sup>	Variance	Total	Net <sup>b</sup>	Non-recurrent	
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)=(4)-(3)	(6)	
United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa	5 754.9	5 452.0	302.9	5 727.9	5 425.0	–	(27.0)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>123 487.9</b>	<b>121 811.9</b>	<b>1 676.0</b>	<b>149 994.0</b>	<b>148 318.0</b>	<b>9 210.1</b>	<b>26 506.1</b>
United Nations Support Mission in Libya <sup>c</sup>	69 430.7	62 860.5	6 570.2	31 430.3	24 860.1	–	(38 000.4)
<b>Total</b>	<b>192 918.6</b>	<b>184 672.4</b>	<b>8 246.2</b>	<b>181 424.3</b>	<b>173 178.1</b>	<b>9 210.1</b>	<b>(11 494.3)</b>

<sup>a</sup> The appropriation and estimated expenditure for 2014 do not include four missions under cluster III: the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, the United Nations Office in Burundi and the Joint Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic, which completed their mandates during the year.

<sup>b</sup> Net requirements after taking into account the estimated underexpenditure or overexpenditure for 2014.

<sup>c</sup> Net total requirements for 2015 reflect 6-month interim funding, pending preparation of a 12-month budget.

124. As indicated in the table above, expenditure for eight missions grouped in cluster III for 2014 is estimated at \$184,672,400, reflecting a projected underexpenditure of \$8,246,200 compared with the appropriation of \$192,918,600 for the same period. The Advisory Committee notes that the projected underexpenditure relates mainly to UNSMIL and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), partially offset by overexpenditure under the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM). Information on the variances for each mission listed in table 10 is provided in the report of the Secretary-General concerning thematic cluster III (A/69/363/Add.3).

125. For 2015, the estimated requirements of \$181,424,300 reflect a decrease of \$11,494,300 compared with the appropriation of \$192,918,600 for 2014. The Advisory Committee notes that the decrease reflects mainly reduced requirements for UNSMIL (\$38,000,400), for which only six months of funding is requested, partially offset by increased requirements for UNSOM (\$13,866,400) and for the newly established United Nations Electoral Observer Mission in Burundi (MENUM) (\$12,256,700). The variances under this cluster are discussed in further detail in paragraphs 123 and 124 of the Secretary-General's overview report (A/69/363 and Corr.2).

### Comments and recommendation on staffing requirements

126. The approved positions under cluster III for 2015, the vacancy situation as at 30 September 2014 and the staffing proposals of the Secretary-General for 2015 are summarized in the table below. The comments of the Advisory Committee and its recommendations on variances, resource requirements and staffing proposals are set out under the discussion of the individual missions in the paragraphs that follow.

Table 11  
**Thematic cluster III: staffing requirements**

	<i>Approved for 2014</i>	<i>Vacant positions as at 30 September</i>	<i>Proposed for 2015</i>	<i>New positions</i>	<i>Abolitions</i>	<i>Reclassifications</i>
United Nations Office for West Africa	44 (1 USG, 2 D-1, 3 P-5, 8 P-4, 3 P-3, 6 FS, 5 NPO, 16 LL)	4 (2 P-4, 1 NPO, 1 LL)	46 (1 USG, 2 D-1, 4 P-5, 8 P-4, 4 P-3, 6 FS, 5 NPO, 16 LL)	2 (1 P-5, 1 P-3)	–	–
United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau	129 (1 USG, 2 D-2, 2 D-1, 6 P-5, 13 P-4, 10 P-3, 30 FS, 18 NPO, 40 LL, 7 UNV)	11 (2 P-4, 1 P-3, 7 FS, 1 UNV)	133 (1 USG, 2 D-2, 2 D-1, 6 P-5, 13 P-4, 10 P-3, 30 FS, 22 NPO, 40 LL, 7 UNV)	4 (4 NPO)	–	–
United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia	217 (1 USG, 2 ASG, 1 D-2, 7 D-1, 28 P-5, 28 P-4, 28 P-3, 1 P-2, 36 FS, 56 NPO, 25 LL, 4 UNV)	117 (2 D-1, 9 P-5, 16 P-4, 13 P-3, 1 P-2, 16 FS, 38 NPO, 18 LL, 4 UNV)	238 (1 USG, 2 ASG, 1 D-2, 7 D-1, 29 P-5, 30 P-4, 28 P-3, 1 P-2, 37 FS, 63 NPO, 33 LL, 6 UNV)	21 (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 FS, 7 NPO, 8 LL, 2 UNV)	–	–
United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia	30 (1 ASG, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 2 FS, 4 NPO, 18 LL)	–	30 (1 USG, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 2 FS, 4 NPO, 18 LL)	–	–	1 (1 ASG to 1 USG)
United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Commission	12 (3 P-5, 6 P-4, 1 FS, 2 LL)	1 (1 P-4)	12 (3 P-5, 6 P-4, 1 FS, 2 LL)	–	–	–
United Nations Electoral Observer Mission in Burundi	–	–	88 (1 USG, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 15 P-4, 10 P-3, 21 FS, 9 NPO, 16 LL, 11 UNV)	88 (1 USG, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 15 P-4, 10 P-3, 21 FS, 9 NPO, 16 LL, 11 UNV)	–	–
Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon	83 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 D-1, 2 P-5, 5 P-4, 2 P-3, 1 P-2, 9 FS, 3 NPO, 58 LL)	8 (3 FS, 5 LL)	81 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 D-1, 2 P-5, 5 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 P-2, 7 FS, 4 NPO, 58 LL)	–	2 (2 LL)	3 (1 P-3 to 1 NPO and 2 FS to 2 LL)
United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa	27 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 3 P-4, 4 P-3, 7 FS, 2 NPO, 6 LL)	2 (1 P-5, 1 P-3)	27 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 3 P-4, 4 P-3, 7 FS, 2 NPO, 6 LL)	–	–	–

	<i>Approved for 2014</i>	<i>Vacant positions as at 30 September</i>	<i>Proposed for 2015</i>	<i>New positions</i>	<i>Abolitions</i>	<i>Reclassifications</i>
United Nations Support Mission in Libya <sup>a</sup>	384 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 3 D-2, 8 D-1, 11 P-5, 40 P-4, 44 P-3, 1 P-2, 148 FS, 1 GS (OL), 33 NPO, 88 LL, 5 UNV)	150 (4 D-1, 2 P-5, 15 P-4, 9 P-3, 74 FS, 15 NPO, 29 LL, 2 UNV)	384 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 3 D-2, 8 D-1, 11 P-5, 40 P-4, 44 P-3, 1 P-2, 148 FS, 1 GS (OL), 33 NPO, 88 LL, 5 UNV)	–	–	–

*Abbreviations:* ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; FS, Field Service; GS (OL), General Service (Other level); LL, Local level; NPO, National Professional Officer; USG, Under-Secretary-General; UNV, United Nations Volunteer.

<sup>a</sup> Interim funding is proposed for 6 months, pending the presentation of a 12-month budget to the General Assembly in the second part of the resumed sixty-ninth session. The information on the vacant positions for UNSMIL is valid as at 31 August 2014.

127. The staffing changes proposed for 2015 under cluster III include the following (ibid., paras. 22-24, 51, 130-131, 153-155, 212-218, 248-251):

(a) United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA): establish 2 new positions (1 P-5 Senior Information Analyst and 1 P-3 Information Analyst) in the new Research and Analysis Section (see paras. 129-130 below);

(b) UNIOGBIS: establish 4 new National Professional Officer positions (2 Political Affairs Officers, 1 Security Sector Reform Officer and 1 Public Information Officer); and redeploy 1 P-3 Political Affairs Officer from the Political and Civil Affairs Section to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General;

(c) UNSOM: establish 21 new positions (1 Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5), 2 Political Affairs Officers (P-4), 1 Human Resources Officer (Field Service), 3 Gender Officers and 4 Political Affairs Officers (National Professional Officer), 3 Drivers, 3 Language Assistants, 1 Logistics Assistant and 1 Human Resources Assistant (Local level), and 1 Logistics Assistant and 1 Medical Officer (United Nations Volunteers)). In paragraph 131, the Secretary-General indicates that 5 of the above positions (1 Human Resources Officer (Field Service), 1 Logistics Assistant and 1 Human Resources Assistant (Local level), and 1 Logistics Assistant and 1 Medical Officer (United Nations Volunteers)) are proposed for transfer to the United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOA) on 1 July 2015 (see paras. 131-132 below);

(d) United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia: reclassify the position of Special Representative of the Secretary-General from the Assistant Secretary-General level to the Under-Secretary-General level (see paras. 136-139 below);

(e) MENEUB: establish 88 new positions (Office of the Head of Mission: 1 Under-Secretary-General, 1 D-2, 1 D-1, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, and 1 Field Service; Monitoring and Reporting Unit: 1 P-5, 5 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 Field Service and 6 National Professional Officers; Field Coordination Unit and regional offices: 5 P-4, 6 P-3, 1 National Professional Officer, and 9 UNV; Security Unit: 2 P-3 and 4 Field Service; Support Component: 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 15 Field Service, 2 National Professional

Officer, 16 Local level, 2 United Nations Volunteers; Electoral Assistance Division, Department of Political Affairs, New York: 1 P-4) (see paras. 140-141 below);

(f) Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL): abolish 2 positions (1 Budget Assistant and 1 Driver (Local level)) and reclassify 3 positions (1 P-3 Budget Officer to 1 National Professional Officer Budget Officer and 2 Field Service Security Officers to 2 Local level Security Assistants).

**128. The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the staffing changes proposed by the Secretary-General for UNOWA, UNIOGBIS, MENUB and UNSCOL.** The comments and recommendations of the Committee on specific staffing requirements related to UNSOM and the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia are provided in paragraphs 132, 135 and 139 below.

*United Nations Office for West Africa*

129. The Advisory Committee was informed that the two new positions of Senior Information Analyst (P-5) and Information Analyst (P-3) had been proposed in relation to the establishment of a Research and Analysis Section in UNOWA, based on the findings and recommendations of a United Nations joint assessment mission conducted in 2013. The Committee was also informed that, subsequent to that mission, the Secretary-General's recommendation in this regard was endorsed by the Security Council in a press statement of 9 July 2014 (SC/11466-AFR/2930). The Committee was further informed that the ongoing crises in the region had revealed the need for a dedicated capacity to seek and synthesize information from diverse sources in the region and to analyse the impact of developing trends on the implementation of the mandate of UNOWA. For that purpose, the Committee was informed that the analytical outputs prepared by the Section would be made available to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in order to support his decision-making.

130. Upon further enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that there would be no duplication of functions between the new Research and Analysis Section and the Political Affairs Section, which remains the primary political component of the Mission. It was indicated that the limited staff of the Political Affairs Section were fully engaged in providing ongoing support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, including his good offices efforts in countries throughout the region.

*United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia*

131. As indicated in paragraph 127 (c) above, the Secretary-General proposes 21 new positions for UNSOM. He also proposes the transfer of 5 of those new positions to UNSOA on 1 July 2015. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the five positions were new requirements, which were not part of the submission in the UNSOA budget for 2014/15, and would provide additional capacity to allow that mission to support UNSOM. The Committee was also informed that the positions would support UNSOM alone and not the African Union Mission in Somalia. In addition, it was explained that the substantive civilian staffing component of UNSOM had doubled since its inception, not including the deployment of a United Nations Guard Unit in Mogadishu, hence the requirement for additional capacity in UNSOA to

provide expedited coordination of logistical support to all UNSOM entities and to shorten the delays in providing that support.

**132. The Advisory Committee maintains the view that, while the two missions are co-located in Nairobi and Mogadishu and cover the same operational area, there is a clear separation of the mandates of UNSOM and UNSOA, which should continue to be reflected in their respective budgets (see [A/68/7/Add.17](#), para. 24). In that regard, any request for staffing resources to enable UNSOA to carry out its mandate of providing administrative, technical and logistical support to UNSOM, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2093 (2013), should be included in the budget proposal for UNSOA and not that of UNSOM. Therefore the Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's staffing proposals for UNSOM with the exception of five new positions of Human Resources Officer (Field Service), Logistics Assistant (Local level), Human Resources Assistant (Local level), Logistics Assistant (United Nations Volunteer), and Medical Officer (United Nations Volunteer). Should the Secretary-General still consider these five positions necessary, he should include them, with a full justification, in his 2015/16 budget proposal for UNSOA.**

*General temporary assistance positions*

133. In paragraph 132 of his report ([A/69/363/Add.3](#)), the Secretary-General indicates that the proposed requirements for UNSOM for 2015 reflect the need to establish a team with general temporary assistance to provide electoral support to the Government of Somalia in preparation for the elections in 2016. It is indicated in the information provided to the Advisory Committee that the following 17 positions have been proposed in the 2015 budget for this purpose: 1 Logistics Adviser (P-4), 1 Information Technology Adviser (P-4), 1 Legal Adviser (P-4), 1 External Relations Adviser (P-4), 1 Public Outreach/Media Relations Adviser (P-4), 1 Field Coordination Adviser (P-4), 1 Electoral Security Adviser (P-4), 1 Administrative Assistant (Field Service), 6 National Officers (National Professional Officer) and 3 Administrative Assistants (Local level). It is further indicated that those temporary staffing requirements are based on a recommendation of a needs assessment mission that was undertaken in November 2013 in response to a formal request from the Government of Somalia. The Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that the proposed resources under general temporary assistance were based on a phased deployment schedule and a 15 per cent vacancy rate.

134. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the functions of the External Relations Adviser (P-4) and the Public Outreach/Media Relations Adviser (P-4) were distinct and did not overlap. It was explained that the Public Outreach Adviser would assist the National Independent Electoral Commission in developing and implementing a public outreach and messaging strategy in relation to voter and civic education, while the External Relations Adviser would assist the Commission in building and maintaining relationships with election stakeholders such as political parties, media organizations and domestic and international observers. The External Relations Adviser would also support both the United Nations integrated electoral team and the Commission in the preparation of codes of conduct for domestic and international election observers.

**135. On the basis of the information provided, the Advisory Committee does not object to the Secretary-General's proposals under general temporary assistance for UNSOM.**

*United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia*

136. In paragraphs 154, 155, 160 and 161 of his report, the Secretary-General proposes the reclassification of the position of Special Representative of the Secretary-General from the Assistant Secretary-General level to Under-Secretary-General in order to elevate the Centre's access to the highest levels of Central Asian decision makers and also align its structure with that of other regional special political missions. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that although there was no significant change in the functions of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in principle, the growing concerns about developments in the region called for the elevation of the position of Head of Mission to the Under-Secretary-General level. The Committee was also informed that a higher-level interlocutor would show Governments of the region the firm commitment of the United Nations to conflict prevention efforts and would raise the mission's profile, thereby bringing greater credibility and esteem to the position.

137. During its consideration of the budget for the Centre, the Advisory Committee enquired whether the Secretary-General's proposal for the upward reclassification of the position of Special Representative was still relevant or had been overtaken by recent events. The Committee was informed that the reclassification was still being proposed.

138. On a related matter, the Advisory Committee was informed that, because Russian is widely spoken within the region, the incumbent of this position, irrespective of his or her level, would need to be proficient in the language. **The Committee concurs with this opinion.**

**139. On the basis of its views expressed in paragraph 61 above, the Advisory Committee is not convinced by the justification provided by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 154, 155, 160 and 161 of his report insofar as it relates to access, or lack thereof, to the highest levels of Central Asian decision makers. For that reason, the Committee recommends against the Secretary-General's proposal to reclassify the position of Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Asia from Assistant Secretary-General to Under-Secretary-General at this time.**

*United Nations Electoral Observer Mission in Burundi*

140. The Secretary-General proposes the position of his Special Envoy/Head of Mission for MENUB at the Under-Secretary-General level. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the incumbent would be employed on a when-actually-employed basis, whenever his or her presence was required in the mission area, which, for budgeting purposes, would be approximately 7 to 10 days a month. It was also envisaged that the Special Envoy would travel from his or her home country to Burundi once a month; visit a country within the region once a month; and travel to United Nations Headquarters at least three times a year. On that basis, the Committee was informed that the number of travel days, for budgeting purposes, would be equivalent to six months.

141. Upon enquiry as to why the position had been proposed at the Under-Secretary-General level, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Head of Mission was expected to be a figure of high political stature, and very possibly a former Head of State. It was indicated that the level of Under-Secretary-General was consistent with that of many other electoral observation missions, especially in Africa and particularly those conducted by the African Union, which had been led by former Head of State. In that regard, the Committee was informed that since 1989, and prior to the establishment of MENU, the following five United Nations electoral observation or verification missions had been mandated: the United Nations Electoral Observer Mission for the general elections in Fiji (2001); the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (1994); the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (1994); the United Nations Observer Group for the Verification of the Elections in Haiti (1990); and the United Nations Observer Mission to Verify the Electoral Process in Nicaragua (1989). The Committee was informed that all of the above-mentioned missions, except for the one in Fiji, had been led by a Head of Mission at the Under-Secretary-General level.

#### *Vacancy rates*

142. Annex VI to the Secretary-General's overview report (A/69/363) provides a detailed comparison of the budgeted vacancy rates for 2014 and the proposed vacancy rates for 2015. It also contains information on the actual vacancy rates as at 31 August 2014 for all categories of personnel. **Taking into account the actual vacancy rates during 2014, the Advisory Committee is of the view that some of the rates budgeted for 2015 are not realistic and therefore recommends that the General Assembly apply different vacancy rates as follows:**

(a) For UNOWA, the Committee recommends the application of a vacancy rate of 11 per cent (compared with 7 per cent proposed) for international staff, taking into account the expected delay in filling the two new positions proposed in this staff category;

(b) For UNIOGBIS, the Committee recommends the application of the following vacancy rates: Military Advisers, zero per cent (compared with 5 per cent proposed), taking into account the actual vacancy rates of zero per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and as at 30 September 2014; international staff, 15 per cent (compared with 12 per cent proposed), taking into account the actual vacancy rates of 19.1 per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and 15.6 per cent as at 30 September 2014; National Professional Officers, 9 per cent (compared with 2 per cent proposed), to include a 50 per cent delayed deployment factor for the new positions proposed; national staff (Local level), zero per cent (compared with 3 per cent proposed), taking into account the actual vacancy rates of zero per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and as at 30 September 2014; United Nations Volunteers, 11 per cent, in accordance with the clarification provided to the Committee indicating that a vacancy rate of 11 per cent had been applied to the 2015 estimates as opposed to the 5 per cent rate indicated in annex VI to the budget report (A/69/363);

(c) For UNSOM, the Committee recommends the application of the following vacancy rates: international staff, 18 per cent (compared with 15 per cent proposed), taking into account the actual vacancy rates of 17.5 per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and 29.9 per cent as at 30 September 2014;

National Professional Officers, 53 per cent (compared with 15 per cent proposed), taking into account the actual vacancy rates of 53.3 per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and 57.1 per cent as at 30 September 2014; Local level, 65 per cent (compared with 15 per cent proposed), taking into account the actual vacancy rates of 64.3 per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and 69.6 per cent as at 30 September 2014; United Nations Volunteers, 70 per cent (compared with 15 per cent proposed), taking into account the actual vacancy rates of 62.5 per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and 100 per cent as at 30 September 2014;

(d) For UNSOM police advisers, the Advisory Committee notes that a vacancy rate of 5 per cent is proposed for 2015, notwithstanding the actual vacancy rates of 85.4 per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and 64 per cent as at 30 September 2014, as well as a projected average vacancy rate of 62.3 per cent for 2014. **The Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General should explain to the General Assembly how he plans to achieve the proposed vacancy rate, failing which the Committee recommends the application of a vacancy rate of 70 per cent for UNSOM police advisers;**

(e) For the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, the Committee recommends the application of a vacancy rate for international staff of 18 per cent (compared with 15 per cent proposed) to take into account the actual vacancy rates of 16 per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and 10 per cent as at 30 September 2014, as well as the actual average vacancy rate of 18.5 per cent for 2014, as indicated in the information provided to the Committee;

(f) For MENUB, the Committee recommends the application of a vacancy rate of 50 per cent for the international staff, National Professional Officer, Local level and United Nations Volunteer categories, taking into consideration the expected recruitment delays for this newly established mission. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the recruitment process, including drawing from existing rosters, would commence before the end of 2014 with the expectation that it would be almost complete for most substantive positions by the beginning of 2015;

(g) For UNSCOL, the Committee recommends the application of the following vacancy rates: international staff, 10 per cent (compared with 5 per cent proposed), taking into account the actual vacancy rates of 13.1 per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and 13.6 per cent as at 30 September 2014, as well as the proposed conversion of 3 international staff positions to national staff; National Professional Officers, 12 per cent (compared with 5 per cent proposed), taking into account the expected delay in filling the newly converted position, and Local level, 4 per cent (compared with 3 per cent proposed), taking into account the actual vacancy rates of 5.2 per cent for the period from January to August 2014 and 8.6 per cent as at 30 September 2014.

#### **Comments and recommendations on operational costs**

143. The Advisory Committee was provided with information on the operational costs for cluster III, which is shown in the table below, including the appropriation and estimated expenditure for 2014 and the projected requirements for 2015. The comments of the Committee on variances and resource requirements are provided in the discussion of the individual missions.

Table 12  
**Thematic cluster III: operational costs**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	<i>1 January to 31 December 2014</i>			<i>Requirements for 2015<sup>a</sup></i>			<i>Variance (2014-2015)</i>
	<i>Appropriation</i>	<i>Estimated expenditure</i>	<i>Estimated unencumbered balance</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Net</i>	<i>Non-recurrent</i>	
	<i>(1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(3)=(1)-(2)</i>	<i>(4)</i>	<i>(5)=(4)-(3)</i>	<i>(6)</i>	
<b>Operational costs</b>							
Experts	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Consultants	2 351.2	1 789.0	562.2	2 703.0	2 140.8	–	351.8
Official travel	4 340.1	4 234.4	105.7	5 497.2	5 391.5	–	1 157.1
Facilities and infrastructure	21 391.2	22 420.2	(1 029.0)	25 007.4	26 036.4	2 096.2	3 616.2
Ground transportation	6 500.6	6 624.3	(123.7)	6 839.3	6 963.0	4 045.4	338.7
Air transportation	9 052.2	8 770.4	281.8	14 235.1	13 953.3	1 550.0	5 182.9
Naval transportation	20.5	20.5	–	30.9	30.9	–	10.4
Communications	7 654.9	6 975.3	679.6	8 158.9	7 479.3	701.0	504.0
Information technology	2 571.6	2 657.5	(85.9)	2 820.5	2 906.4	809.4	248.9
Medical	2 413.8	2 295.2	118.6	3 058.4	2 939.8	8.1	644.6
Special equipment	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other supplies, services and equipment	5 077.4	4 795.9	281.5	3 977.4	3 695.9	–	(1 100.0)
Quick-impact projects	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>61 373.5</b>	<b>60 582.7</b>	<b>790.8</b>	<b>72 328.1</b>	<b>71 537.3</b>	<b>9 210.1</b>	<b>10 954.6</b>

<sup>a</sup> Net requirements after taking into account the estimated underexpenditure or overexpenditure for 2014.

<sup>b</sup> Proposed resources for 2015 for UNSMIL represent 6-month interim funding, pending the preparation of a 12-month budget in the first half of 2015.

#### *Consultants*

144. The information provided to the Advisory Committee regarding the UNSOM budget proposal indicates that the proposed requirements of \$863,400 for consultants comprise a provision of \$753,400 to cover 50 consultant assignments to provide technical assistance in various substantive areas and a provision of \$110,000 to cover 11 consultant assignments to provide training to staff in such skills as leadership, team-building, performance management, report-writing, supervising, communication and language training. In addition, the information indicates a projected underexpenditure of \$90,800 (19 per cent) under consultants in 2014 owing to delays in recruitment.

145. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with information on the 50 consultancy assignments listing the areas of expertise, outputs, travel costs and fees. In this connection, the Committee was informed that the consultancies provided the Mission with the flexibility to quickly mobilize expertise, which was

often not available within the United Nations system, in order to support the evolving priorities of the Somali Government.

146. The information provided to the Advisory Committee indicates that the estimates for the above consultant assignments include a provision for four Senior Political Advisers to work directly with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and four Senior Advisers to work directly with the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator to provide expert understanding of Somali politics. The two consultant contracts are budgeted for 90 days at an estimated cost of \$127,000 each, which includes fees and travel costs. **The Committee questions the necessity for the services of eight consultants for functions that, in principle, should be performed by the political affairs staff of the Mission. The Committee notes from the proposed staffing structure for UNSOM that the Mission's Political Affairs Section has 29 positions, of which 9 (2 P-4, 4 National Professional Officer and 3 Local level) are new positions being proposed for 2015. In the Committee's view, these resources provide adequate opportunity for the Mission to recruit staff with sufficient understanding of the country's politics to advise and guide the Mission's leadership. For that reason, and for reasons indicated in paragraph 149 below, the Committee recommends against the Secretary-General's proposal for the four consultant Senior Political Advisers in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and four consultant Senior Advisers in the Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator.**

147. As to why 3 consultants in the area of human rights were needed when UNSOM already had a team of 21 staff working on human rights, the Advisory Committee was informed that institutional support to the Somali National Human Rights Commission required that a consultant be embedded in the Commission for three months. In addition, the Committee was informed that a second consultant would be required to work with the one international staff member located in Hargeisa, Somaliland, to support the Somaliland National Human Rights Commission in very specialized area. The third consultant would be based in the Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General to perform technical functions with regard to youth empowerment, which the Somali Government considered a priority.

148. According to the information provided to the Advisory Committee, the requirements under consultants also include a provision for two consultants in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the capacity of gender specialists to provide technical assistance and strategic guidance to the minister for women and human rights in the development and implementation of a national gender policy. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the Gender Unit, which is embedded in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, was headed by a Senior Gender Adviser (P-5), whose responsibilities included monitoring and supporting women's political participation, with an emphasis on conflict resolution and mediation in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security. The Committee was also informed that the staff of the Unit included 1 P-3 and 2 National Professional Officers. **The Committee considers that the functions of the consultant gender specialists, as described by**

the Secretary-General, are non-specific and could overlap with those of the Senior Gender Adviser in the Office of the Special Representative. In view of the above observation, as well as the projected underexpenditure for 2014 under consultants, the Committee recommends that the number of consultant gender specialists proposed by the Secretary-General for UNSOM be reduced by one.

149. While recognizing the need for expertise in a range of specialized areas, as outlined in paragraph 145 above, the Advisory Committee reiterates the view that further efforts should be made to harness the existing capacity of the Mission in support of its mandated activities (see [A/68/782/Add.14](#), para. 65). The Committee expects that this category of expenditure will be kept under close review in order to reduce the reliance of UNSOM on external consultants.

150. Upon further request, the Advisory Committee was provided with information on the resources amounting to \$110,000 requested for training consultants, showing that 11 consultants would be required to provide training to 80 national and 126 international staff. The Committee was also informed that the training requirements had been identified by the global training needs assessment for the United Nations field missions conducted by Integrated Training Services of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. The Committee was further informed that the requirements identified included language training because the Mission anticipated that about 10 per cent of its staff members would require training in Arabic and Somali to enable them to perform their duties effectively.

151. The Advisory Committee is of the view that staff selected for positions that require such skills as leadership, team-building and communication should already have those skills at the time of their appointment. Therefore, the Committee recommends a 50 per cent reduction in the level of resources requested under training consultants for UNSOM.

152. Similarly, the Advisory Committee is of the view that staff selected for positions whose functions require proficiency in Arabic and Somali should have at least a working knowledge of those languages. In that regard, the Committee reiterates that in its recruitment practices UNSOM should place more emphasis on proficiency in the languages required by the Mission, including greater use of suitably qualified external candidates (see [A/67/604](#), para. 167).

153. As for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, the information provided to the Advisory Committee indicates that the resources amounting to \$1,445,900 requested for consultants in 2015 include a provision of \$788,400 to cover fees and travel costs for eight civilian observers. The information also indicates that the projected unencumbered balance of \$403,900 in 2014 is due mainly to the delay in the recruitment of civilian observers based in Calabar and Yaoundé. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that, from January to October 2014, only two of the eight civilian observers were on board. The Committee was further informed that four more observers had assumed duty in November 2014, while the recruitment of the two remaining observers was still in progress at the time of the Committee's consideration of the Commission's budget proposal. **In view of the delay in the recruitment of civilian observers in 2014, the Committee recommends a reduction in the resources proposed by the Secretary-General for the Commission from eight civilian observers to six.**

*Official travel*

154. The overall level of resources requested for 2015 under official travel for eight special political missions under cluster III amounts to \$5,497,200, which represents an increase of \$1,157,100 (or 26.7 per cent) compared with the appropriation of \$4,340,100 for 2014. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with detailed information on the travel estimates for 2015 for special political missions under cluster III. The Committee notes instances of multiple trips to New York in relation to Headquarters-based activities, which, with better planning, could be consolidated and the number of persons travelling on each trip reduced in order to achieve savings. As for the presentation of the information, the Committee notes that it lacked sufficient detail to allow a meaningful analysis of the travel requirements of the missions. The Committee also noted some apparent ambiguity in the categorization of trips between training and non-training travel requirements, which could have cost implications. **The Committee is of the view that requests for resources under official travel should be supported by clear and complete information to facilitate the Committee's consideration of the travel requirements of the missions. In addition, the Committee stresses the importance of the proper application of the decision of the General Assembly regarding standards of accommodation for travel for training** (see also para. 31 above).

155. The resources requested under official travel for UNOWA and the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission include a provision of \$13,000 for each entity to cover the travel of staff of the Global and Regional Service Centres to provide procurement support. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that UNOWA and the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission had not been provided any support from the Regional Procurement Office in Entebbe, Uganda, and that the Global Service Centre in Brindisi, Italy, was the focal point for their procurement and engineering-related support.

156. The Advisory Committee was further informed that until the present time, the Global Service Centre had provided support to the two entities under the comprehensive operational mission procurement and acquisition support service at no charge. In the future, however, the Centre would require the two entities to cover the cost for one Field Service staff member to travel from another office to the Centre in Brindisi on temporary duty assignment for up to 90 days in order to process the procurement requirements of the two entities. In addition, the Committee was informed that the above provisions would also cover the cost of the travel of one staff member from the Centre to conduct basic procurement training for staff of the two entities.

157. The proposed requirements for UNSOM under official travel for 2015 reflect an increase of \$664,500 (37.2 per cent), compared with the appropriation for 2014, due mainly to the increased number of staff deployed to the regional offices, travel to newly accessible locations within the mission area and travel related to preparation for elections. The information provided to the Advisory Committee indicates that a provision of \$257,300 has been budgeted to cover official travel to workshops and training courses in the areas of leadership skills, team-building, performance management, report-writing, supervisory skills, communication skills, language training, management development and senior management training.

158. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with information on the external training courses planned for 2015, which covered substantive as well as general subject areas. A total of 34 national and 93 international staff would participate in the various courses. **A number of the planned training courses relate to skills such as management, negotiation and team-building which, in the Committee's view, staff should possess in order to be selected for positions within the Mission which require such skills (see also para. 151 above). Therefore, the Committee recommends a 20 per cent reduction in the level of resources proposed for UNSOM under official travel for attending workshops and training.**

#### *Ground transportation*

159. According to the information on the proposed allocation of vehicles contained in table 1 of the Secretary-General's overview report (A/69/363), the vehicle holdings proposed for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission exceed the standard allocation by 75 per cent. The table shows a proposed allocation of 7 vehicles, compared to the standard allocation of 4 vehicles, for 11 proposed personnel (adjusted to 10 to reflect the vacancy rate). The Advisory Committee notes that the personnel referred to in the table include United Nations international staff, National Professional Officers, United Nations Volunteers and military and police personnel (military observers, military police and civilian police officers). Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that, in addition to the above personnel categories, the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission provided vehicles for eight civilian observers to perform their duties in accordance with the Mission's mandate, which not reflected in table 1. The Committee was also informed that, if the eight civilian observers were taken into account, the proposed holdings for the Commission, based on the standard ratio, should be eight vehicles. **The Committee notes that the number of civilian observers proposed for the Commission is not indicated in the table and is of the view that such information should be provided, at least in a footnote, to improve budgetary transparency (see also para. 22 above). Furthermore, the Committee recommends a reduction in the allocation of vehicles for the Commission in proportion to its recommended reduction in the proposed resources for civilian observers for the Commission indicated in paragraph 153 above.**

#### *Air transportation*

160. The proposed requirements under air transportation for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, UNOWA, UNIOGBIS and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel reflect the shared utilization of one fixed-wing aircraft. The cost of the new contract for the aircraft amounts to \$3,821,000 based on an estimated 720 flight hours for 2015. The Secretary-General indicates that the cost-sharing ratio of 5:65:20:10 among the four entities, respectively, takes into account the anticipated pattern of the use of the aircraft in 2015. The cost-sharing in 2014 was based on a ratio of a 10:65:25 among the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, UNOWA and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, respectively. The variance between the resources proposed for 2015 and the 2014 approved budget for the Commission and UNOWA reflect both the change in the cost-sharing ratios and the increase in the overall cost of the contract. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that long-term air charter contracts are tendered by Procurement Division, Office of Central Support Services, Department of Management, at Headquarters, based on technical requirements defined by the

Air Transport Section of the Department of Field Support, in consultation with the field missions.

161. As for UNOWA, the estimated requirements under air transportation for 2015 amount to \$3,258,100, which represents an increase of \$530,800 compared with the appropriation for 2014. The variance of \$530,800 consists of: \$2,300 due to the increase in aircrew daily subsistence allowance; \$334,800 due to the estimated increase in the consumption of fuel owing to the increase in budgeted total flight hours from 208 in 2014 to 468 (65 per cent of 720) in 2015; and \$193,700 due to the increase in the cost of the rental and operation of the fixed-wing aircraft under the new contract.

162. As for UNIOGBIS, estimated requirements under air transportation for 2015 amount to \$1,059,100, which represents an increase of \$709,200 (203 per cent) compared with the appropriation for 2014. According to the information provided to the Advisory Committee, the 2015 budget is based on higher estimated utilization of 144 flight hours/73 days of operations, in accordance with the new contract and cost-sharing arrangement (see also para. 160 above), compared with 113 flight hours/50 days budgeted for 2014. The information also indicates that the projected actual utilization of the aircraft in 2014 is 68 flight hours/30 days. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the budgeted increase in the Mission's utilization of the aircraft reflected its continued commitment to improve mobility in the region and strengthen its outreach and communication capacity. **The Committee does not object to the Secretary-General's proposals under air transportation for UNIOGBIS.**

163. As regards UNSOM, the proposed requirements for 2015 under air transportation reflect an increase of \$4,212,000 (81.4 per cent) compared with the appropriation for 2014, due mainly to an increase in the total number of air assets and the number of flight hours planned. According to the information provided to the Committee, the 2015 estimates provide for two fixed-wing aircraft, two helicopters and a total of 1,230 sorties, compared with two fixed-wing aircraft, one helicopter and 494 sorties budgeted for 2014. It is further explained that the increase in the number of sorties is due to the expected referendum and election exercises, which will necessitate an increase in flights by fixed-wing aircraft into the sectors as the Mission expands its area of operation and more helicopter operations into remote areas to transport electoral observers and materials. In that connection, the above increase consists mainly of: \$1,544,500 for petrol, oil and lubricants; \$1,400,300 for the rental and operation of fixed-wing aircraft; and \$1,485,100 for the rental and operation of helicopters. The estimated increases are offset in part by a decrease of \$217,900 under services, landing fees and ground-handling charges, aircrew subsistence allowance and liability insurance, based on actual expenditure in 2014.

164. **While the Advisory Committee does not object to the Secretary-General's proposals for air transportation under thematic cluster III of the budget for special political missions, it recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to keep the cost-sharing arrangements under review and realign them with the actual operational needs of the participating missions in the next budget submission.** The Committee's comments and observations on cost-sharing arrangements are contained in paragraph 29 above.

165. Upon further enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that all of the four aircraft budgeted would be managed by UNSOA under a cost-sharing arrangement between the two missions. It was explained that the budgeted cost-sharing ratio of 70:30 between UNSOA and UNSOM was based on the statistically recorded actual utilization of the available aircraft over a period of time.

#### *Communications*

166. According to the information provided to the Advisory Committee on the budget for UNSOM, a provision of \$1,323,000 for public information equipment is included in the resources requested under communications. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that no equipment acquisitions had been proposed and that the budget was for the engagement of contracting services for communication and media production support. The services included television production and broadcasting; radio production and broadcasting; design, printing and publishing; community outreach; capacity-building and training; SMS outreach and polling; and focus group testing campaigns. The Committee requested, but did not receive, more detailed information regarding the communication and media support services budgeted for 2015. **The Committee recommends that the information be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the budget proposal for UNSOM.**

#### **Other matters**

##### *United Nations Electoral Observer Mission in Burundi*

167. MENUB was established by the Security Council in its resolution 2137 (2014) to follow and report on the various stages of the presidential, parliamentary and local elections planned for 2015 as well as the overall context in which the elections take place. The Mission is to be operational from 1 January 2015, immediately after the end of the mandate of the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB), the mandate of which ends on 31 December 2014. The Secretary-General indicates that the new mission will be headquartered in Bujumbura on the former premises of BNUB, with field offices in four regional hubs: Bujumbura (to be co-located with Mission headquarters), Makamba (co-located with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)), Gitega and Ngozi.

168. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the existing cost-sharing arrangements for co-location and medical services between BNUB and the funds and programmes of the United Nations country team, namely, the United Nations Children's Fund, UNDP and the United Nations Population Fund, would continue through 2015 with MENUB. For that purpose, the Committee was informed that MENUB would contribute eight positions towards the medical clinic, and the United Nations country team would contribute six positions.

##### *United Nations Support Mission in Libya*

169. As indicated in table 10 above, the projected expenditure for UNSMIL for 2014 reflects an unencumbered balance of \$6,570,200 (9.5 per cent of the appropriation), which, according to the Secretary-General, is due to the inability of the Mission to fully carry out the activities related to its mandate during the year as a result of the evacuation and relocation of staff from Libya because of the deteriorating security situation in the country. Pending further clarification of the

situation, the Secretary-General proposes an interim financing arrangement, for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2015, in the amount of \$31,430,300 (net of staff assessment). The amount proposed represents a technical roll-over of 50 per cent of the level of projected expenditures during 2014. The Secretary-General further indicates that a detailed budget proposal for 2015, incorporating any decisions of the Security Council, will be prepared for consideration by the General Assembly during its resumed sixty-ninth session.

170. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the lack of a physical presence of the United Nations in the country was critical among the several factors affecting the uncertainty that had led to the Secretary-General's decision. The Committee was further informed that, since July 2014, the Mission had operated from outside the country and that it was unclear when conditions would allow for it to return to Libya and operate normally.

**171. The Advisory Committee is strongly of the view that, in keeping with the normal budget cycle, the Secretary-General's budget proposals should, to the extent possible, cover the full 12-month financial period and that any decision to propose an interim financing arrangement, rather than a full budget, should have been supported by a stronger justification based on technical budgetary assumptions as well as existing resolutions of the Security Council. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to submit a full budget proposal for UNSMIL for 2015 at the earliest opportunity.** The Committee comments further on this subject in its consideration of the Secretary-General's interim proposal for UNAMA.

#### **D. United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan**

172. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions recalls that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1401 (2002) for an initial period of 12 months. The mandate of UNAMA has been extended by subsequent resolutions of the Security Council, the most recent of which was resolution 2145 (2014), by which the Council decided to extend the mandate of the Mission until 17 March 2015.

##### **Resource utilization in 2014**

173. The Secretary-General indicates that the projected expenditure for UNAMA for 2014 amounts to \$189,936,000, which, given the appropriation of \$191,364,500, is anticipated to lead to an unencumbered balance of \$1,428,500 at the end of December (see [A/69/363/Add.4](#), para. 9). The Secretary-General indicates that the anticipated unencumbered balance is due mainly to a higher-than-budgeted vacancy rate, particularly for United Nations police, international staff and United Nations Volunteers, in view of their delayed deployment.

174. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with updated information showing that the projected expenditure for 2014 amounted to \$187,656,100, comprising the actual expenditure of \$145,892,900 as at 30 September 2014 and the projected expenditure for the three-month period from 1 October to 31 December 2014, amounting to \$41,763,200. On the basis of this

updated information, the projected unencumbered balance at the end of 2014 would be \$3,708,400.

175. An analysis of the information provided to the Advisory Committee indicates that the unencumbered balance is due mainly to underexpenditure in the category of international staff (\$2,669,500), resulting from a vacancy rate of 15 per cent compared with the budgeted rate of 7 per cent. Other factors include underexpenditure under facilities and infrastructure (\$1,974,600) and air transportation (\$1,345,900), partially offset by projected overexpenditure under national staff (\$2,213,200) resulting from retroactive salary increases for National Professional Officers and local level staff, from March 2014.

### **Proposed requirements for 2015**

176. The Secretary-General proposes resources in the amount of \$94,968,000 (net of staff assessment) for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2015, representing a technical roll-over of 50 per cent of the level of projected expenditure during 2014. He indicates that a detailed budget proposal for 2015 will be prepared and submitted for consideration by the General Assembly during the second part of its resumed sixty-ninth session following a decision of the Security Council regarding the Mission's mandate (*ibid.*, paras. 9 and 10).

177. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, in view of the uncertainty regarding planning assumptions for the Mission and pending a decision of the Security Council on the future role of UNAMA, the Secretary-General had proposed an interim financing arrangement for the first six months of 2015 on the basis of a technical roll-over, equal to 50 per cent of expenditure for the current period, to allow the Mission to operate for the first six months of 2015.

178. Upon further enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the interim financing arrangement allowed the time needed to determine the actual financial requirements of the Mission on the basis of the assumptions that: (a) the operational environment in Afghanistan would be more clear by the first quarter of 2015 in terms of the political, economic and security situation; and (b) the three focus areas of the Mission's mandate, namely, providing good offices and support to Afghan-led and Afghan-owned political processes, promoting human rights and promoting coherence in international support for socioeconomic development, would remain unchanged. Furthermore, the Committee was informed that the arrangement would ensure that funding would be available to support UNAMA for the first half of 2015, without pre-empting the technical assessment of the Mission, which is scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2014, and the subsequent consideration of that assessment by the Security Council.

179. The Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General's interim proposal for UNAMA for 2015 (A/69/363/Add.4) is very brief and contains no detailed information with regard to results-based-budgeting frameworks, actual and projected expenditure, staffing changes, vacancy rates, efficiency measures and other details pertaining to the Mission's performance in 2014. The Committee would have expected such details to be included in any budget document in order to facilitate its review of the Mission's budget performance during the 2014 financial period. **The Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General's present submission contains insufficient budgetary information, which, in the Committee's view, amounts to requesting resources without adequate**

**justification. The Committee recalls that it has made similar observations in its previous reports (A/67/604, para. 209) and expects that detailed information on the budgetary performance of the Mission will be included in future budget proposals.**

180. With regard to the uncertainty described in the report of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee notes that similar factors have existed in other settings where United Nations peacekeeping and special political missions operate, but that they have not had the same effect on the budgetary process for those missions. **In that regard, the Committee is of the view that matters affecting the political transition in the country are within the purview of the Security Council and will be addressed by the Council when it considers the Mission's mandate.** Should the decision of the Council entail budget implications, the existing budgetary process provides the flexibility necessary for the Secretary-General to propose appropriate changes.

181. **In view of the above observations, the Advisory Committee questions the criteria on which the Secretary-General has based his decision not to submit a full budget proposal for UNAMA for 2015. In that regard, the Committee reiterates its view that the estimates of the requirements of the Mission must be based on the existing resolutions of the Security Council rather than any anticipated further decisions that the Council may make in response to the Secretary-General's recommendations (see A/68/782/Add.17, para. 28).**

182. **Furthermore, the Advisory Committee is strongly of the view that, in keeping with the normal budget cycle, the Secretary-General's budget proposals should, to the extent possible, cover the full 12-month financial period. The Committee considers that the six-month financing arrangement proposed by the Secretary-General entails the consideration by the General Assembly of two proposals pertaining to the same financial period for a given mission, which in turn disrupts the normal budget cycle. Therefore, the decision to propose an interim financing arrangement, rather than a full budget, should have been supported by a stronger justification based on technical budgetary assumptions as well as existing resolutions of the Security Council. The Committee recommends that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to submit a full budget proposal for 2015 at the earliest opportunity.**

## **E. United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq**

183. Section I of the report of the Secretary-General provides an overview of the resource requirements for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) for 2015, including priorities and planning assumptions for 2015 and performance information for 2014 (A/69/363/Add.5, paras. 23-61). The table below provides a breakdown of the estimated expenditure of the Mission for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2014 and projected requirements for 2015.

Table 13  
**United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq: total resource requirements (net)**  
 (Thousands of United States dollars)

	<i>1 January to 31 December 2014</i>			<i>Requirements for 1 January- 31 December 2015</i>			<i>Variance (2014-2015)</i>
	<i>Appropriation</i>	<i>Estimated expenditure</i>	<i>Variance</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Net</i>	<i>Non-recurrent</i>	
	<i>(1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(3)=(1)-(2)</i>	<i>(4)</i>	<i>(5)=(4)-(3)</i>	<i>(6)</i>	
Military and police personnel	11 709.5	9 844.1	1 865.4	8 613.4	6 748.0	–	(3 096.1)
Civilian personnel	68 345.6	84 274.9	(15 929.3)	80 976.5	96 905.8	–	12 630.9
Operational costs	56 251.3	46 599.6	9 651.7	47 404.1	37 752.4	3 373.4	(8 847.2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>136 306.4</b>	<b>140 718.6</b>	<b>(4 412.2)</b>	<b>136 994.0</b>	<b>141 406.2</b>	<b>3 373.4</b>	<b>687.6</b>

184. Estimated expenditures for 2014 are shown in tables 1 and 6 and explained in paragraphs 264 to 307 of the report of the Secretary-General. The projected net overexpenditure for 2014 of \$4.4 million, or 3 per cent, comprises:

(a) Higher-than-budgeted expenditure for civilian personnel (\$15,929,300) owing to higher common staff costs and a vacancy rate of 10 per cent compared with the budgeted rate of 12 per cent for international staff; a projected vacancy rate for National Professional Officers of 16 per cent compared with the budgeted rate of 20 per cent; a projected vacancy rate for Local level staff of 13 per cent compared with the budgeted rate of 16 per cent; and a revised salary scale, effective 1 December 2013, for Local level staff and National Professional Officers;

(b) Lower-than-budgeted requirements for military and police personnel (\$1,865,400) owing mainly to the deployment of two military advisers against the seven advisers budgeted and the deployment of one United Nations police officer compared with the five officers budgeted; no projected requirements for death and disability payments; and lower rations requirements due to the relocation of the United Nations guard units from the Tamimi compound to the Erbil compound, effective June 2014, because of the security situation; partially offset by additional requirements for standard reimbursement of troop costs due to the increase in the rate;

(c) Lower-than-budgeted requirements under operational costs (\$9,651,700), mainly in relation to other supplies, services and equipment (\$3.3 million), due to the lower cost of rations because of the relocation of staff away from Baghdad, and lower costs for training fees and supplies owing to the provision of training in-house rather than externally; facilities and infrastructure (\$2.4 million) due to favourable contractual rates for maintenance services and lower consumption of fuel by generators because of the improved power supply in Iraq; and air transportation (\$2.3 million) due to fewer flight hours than budgeted because of the deteriorating security situation.

185. As shown in the table above, the proposed resources in the amount of \$136,994,000 for 2015 for UNAMI represent an overall increase of \$687,600 compared with the appropriation for 2014 and are attributable to decreased requirements of \$3.1 million under military and police personnel and \$8.8 million

under operational costs, offset by higher requirements of \$12.6 million for civilian personnel. The overall resources for 2015 are explained in paragraphs 264 to 307 of the report of the Secretary-General.

### Comments and recommendations on military and police personnel

186. The estimated requirements for military and police personnel for 2015 amount to \$8.6 million, reflecting a decrease of \$3.1 million, or 26.5 per cent, compared with the approved resources for 2014. The proposed resources would provide for the deployment of 2 military advisers, 245 United Nations Guard Unit personnel and 1 United Nations police adviser, compared with an authorized strength of 7 military advisers, 272 Guard Unit personnel and 6 police advisers in 2014. The variance between the proposed requirements for 2015 and the approved budget for 2014 reflects the reduced strength of military and police personnel, which, as indicated in paragraph 55 of the Secretary-General's report, is the result of the Mission's reduced role in security sector governance and policing. Furthermore, the positions of military and police advisers are to be reviewed in 2015. The variance between 2015 and 2014 also reflects the discontinuation of a provision for accommodation in the Tamimi compound and a reduced provision for travel owing to a new annual, instead of biannual, rotation schedule, partially offset by an increase in the standard troop cost reimbursement rate. **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the resources proposed for military and police personnel for 2015.**

### Comments and recommendations on staffing requirements

187. The approved staffing requirements for 2014 and the proposals of the Secretary-General for 2015 are summarized in the table below.

Table 14

#### United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq: staffing requirements

	<i>Positions</i>	<i>Level</i>
Approved positions for 2014	951	1 USG, 2 ASG, 1 D-2, 7 D-1, 23 P-5, 63 P-4, 63 P-3, 10 P-2, 224 FS, 91 NPO, 466 LL
Proposed positions for 2015	900	1 USG, 2 ASG, 1 D-2, 7 D-1, 20 P-5, 59 P-4, 61 P-3, 9 P-2, 223 FS, 97 NPO, 420 LL
Proposed new positions	41	3 P-4, 2 P-3, 17 FS, 6 NPO, 13 LL
Proposed redeployments	57	2 P-5, 1 P-4, 16 FS, 1 NPO, 37 LL
Proposed abolishments	92	2 P-5, 4 P-4, 7 P-3, 18 FS, 2 NPO, 59 LL

*Abbreviations:* USG, Under-Secretary-General; ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; FS, Field Service; LL, Local level; NPO, National Professional Officer.

188. Tables 2 and 3 and paragraphs 75 to 263 of the report of the Secretary-General contain information on the proposed staffing requirements for 2015, consisting of 900 positions comprising 383 international staff (160 in the Professional and higher categories and 223 Field Service) and 517 national staff (97 National Professional Officers and 420 Local level staff). The staffing requirements for 2015 reflect a net decrease of 51 positions from the approved level of 951 positions for 2014, reflecting a decrease of 11 international staff (10 Professional and 1 Field Service) and 40 national staff (comprising an increase of 6 National Professional Officers and a decrease of 46 Local level staff).

189. Tables 4 and 5 of the Secretary-General's report provide information on the proposed establishment of 41 new positions (3 P-4, 2 P-3, 17 Field Service, 6 National Professional Officer and 13 Local level staff) and the abolishment of 92 approved positions (2 P-5, 4 P-4, 7 P-3, 18 Field Service, 2 National Professional Officer, 59 Local level). The 57 positions proposed for redeployment in 2015 are shown in the table below, which was provided to the Advisory Committee upon request.

Table 15

**United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq: proposed redeployments**

	<i>From</i>	<i>To</i>
1 P-4, 1 National Professional Officer	Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General
2 P-5, 2 Local level	Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Electoral Assistance	Office of the Chief of Staff
2 Field Service, 4 Local level	Information and Communications Technology Services	Central Warehouse Section
1 Field Service, 4 Local level	Engineering Section	Central Warehouse Section
6 Field Service, 12 Local level	Aviation Section	Movement Control Section
1 Local level	Aviation Section	Central Warehouse Section
2 Field Service, 3 Local level	Acquisition Management Section	Central Warehouse Section
4 Field Service, 11 Local level	Property Management Section	Facilities Management and Services Section
1 Field Service	Human Resources Section, Kuwait Joint Support Office	Human Resources Section

190. **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the staffing changes proposed by the Secretary-General for UNAMI.** The comments and recommendations of the Committee on staffing requirements are contained in paragraphs 9 to 18 below.

191. The Advisory Committee recalls its observation in the context of the 2014 budget proposal for UNAMI that a number of the staffing proposals were not sufficiently justified and its recommendation that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to undertake a comprehensive review of the staffing requirements of the Mission, including the organizational structure and the number and level of

senior positions, for inclusion in the 2015 budget submission (see [A/68/7/Add.10](#), para. 222). In its resolution 68/247 A, the Assembly subsequently mandated UNAMI to conduct a comprehensive staffing review.

192. The Advisory Committee was informed that the 2015 budget reflects the outcome of the civilian staffing review process, which, according to the Mission, was undertaken in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 66/264 and 68/247 A. The Committee was informed, upon request, that the review was conducted from 25 to 29 May 2014. The Committee requested, but did not receive, details of the review.

**193. The Advisory Committee observes that the civilian staffing review conducted by UNAMI appears not to have addressed the number and level of senior positions, as requested by the General Assembly, given that the number of positions at the Director level and above (1 Under-Secretary-General, 2 Assistant Secretary-General, 1 D-2 and 7 D-1 positions) for 2015 remains unchanged. Further comments on the management of senior-level positions across special political missions are provided in section III above.**

194. The Advisory Committee also observes that in many instances the proposed structural realignments, consolidations and staffing requirements were not adequately justified and were indicated merely in cross-references to the recommendations included in the staffing review, which, as noted above, was not provided to the Committee. Some instances in which the Committee finds the justification provided by the Secretary-General to be lacking include the proposed inward redeployment of substantive and administrative support provided to a P-5 Senior Planning and Coordination Officer in the Office of the Chief of Staff (*ibid.*, para. 83); the abolishment of 19 positions in favour of the outsourcing of those functions in the Security Section (*ibid.*, para. 147); the creation, in connection with the proposed consolidation and reprofiling of functions, of one P-4 Administrative Officer and eight positions related to finance, information management, and planning, monitoring and compliance in the Office of the Chief of Mission Support (*ibid.*, paras. 160-164); the redeployment of one P-4 Chief Training Officer from Kuwait to Baghdad (*ibid.*, para. 187); the abolishment of 18 positions in the Engineering Section (*ibid.*, paras. 206-207); and the abolishment of 17 positions in the Property Management Section (*ibid.*, para. 253).

**195. The Advisory Committee expects that the results of the review conducted by UNAMI will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its discussion of the present report, along with justifications for the proposed organizational and staffing changes. Furthermore, the Committee trusts that the proposed abolishment and outsourcing of security functions will not have an impact on the safety and security of United Nations personnel and property.**

196. With regard to national staff, the Advisory Committee observes that the Mission is proposing the creation of 19 positions against the reduction of 61. At the same time, with regard to international staff, the Mission is proposing the creation of 22 positions and the reduction of 31. This represents a net decrease of 42 national positions against a net decrease of only 9 international positions. According to the Secretary-General's proposal, new international positions are required, for example, in connection with the reprofiling of the Budget and Finance Unit (1 P-3 Budget Officer and 1 Field Service Finance Assistant); the proposed creation of a new Information Management Unit (2 Field Service Information Management

Assistants); and the creation of a new Planning, Monitoring and Compliance Unit (1 P-3 Planning Officer and 1 Field Service Administrative and Compliance Officer).

**197. The Advisory Committee is not convinced that there is an operational need to fill the above-noted and other proposed positions with international staff and believes that many of those functions should be performed using existing trained national staff. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly encourage the Secretary-General to undertake more robust efforts to strengthen the national staffing component, whenever appropriate, by nationalizing positions, considering the availability of qualified individuals in the local labour market. In this connection, the Committee reiterates its comments made in its report on observations and recommendations on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations, in which it expressed its support for the nationalization of posts and positions, whenever possible, in particular in terms of building local capacity within mission areas (A/68/782, para. 91).**

198. The Mission also proposes the central management and consolidation of several warehouses into a central warehouse, which would entail the creation of 3 international positions (1 Chief Warehouse Manager, P-4, and 1 Fuel Assistant and 1 Inventory Assistant, Field Service), 9 new national positions and 14 redeployments. In this connection, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the proposed functions in the Central Warehouse Section had formerly been performed within various sections where separate warehouses had been maintained. The efficiencies to be realized from the consolidation into a central warehouse would be expected in subsequent years once the initial set-up was accomplished in 2015.

**199. With regard to the proposed reprofiling and consolidation of offices and functions, including the proposed Central Warehouse Section, the Advisory Committee trusts that the resulting synergies would be evident within the year, realized through the effective utilization of approved staffing resources, especially at the national level. The Committee looks forward to an update on progress made and measurable efficiencies achieved in connection with the proposed budget for UNAMI for 2016.**

200. The Advisory Committee notes that a number of UNAMI positions are located at the UNAMI liaison offices in Tehran and Amman, as well as at Headquarters in New York. The Committee was informed, upon request, of the positions at those locations: (a) Amman (1 P-5 Senior Political Affairs Officer and 1 Local level Administrative Assistant); (b) New York (1 P-4 Political Affairs Officer, 1 P-4 Electoral Affairs Officer, 1 P-4 Security Coordination Officer and 2 P-3 Political Affairs Officers); and (c) Tehran (1 D-1 Liaison Officer, 1 P-4 Political Affairs Officer, 1 National Professional Officer Associate Translator and 1 Local level Administrative Assistant).

#### **Methodology for calculating common staff costs**

201. As indicated in paragraph 274 of the report of the Secretary-General, the percentage of common staff costs for UNAMI is based on actual expenditure in relation to common staff costs and salary costs for the period from 1 January 2013 to 31 August 2014. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the**

methodologies for calculating common staff costs should be uniform across all special political missions and provides its comments on this subject in section III above.

#### Comments and recommendations on operational costs

202. Table 6 and paragraphs 279 to 307 of the report of the Secretary-General provide a summary of the estimates of operational costs by category of expenditure, including the appropriation and estimated expenditure for 2014 and the projected requirements for 2015 (see table below).

Table 16

#### United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq: operational costs

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	1 January to 31 December 2014			Requirements for 2015			
	Appropriation	Estimated expenditure	Variance	Total	Net <sup>a</sup>	Non-recurrent	Variance
			under-(over-) expenditure				(2014-2015)
(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)=(4)-(3)	(6)	(7)=(4)-(1)	
<b>Operational costs</b>							
Consultants	332.9	257.9	75.0	508.4	433.4	–	175.5
Official travel	1 986.2	1 582.3	403.9	1 979.4	1 575.5	–	(6.8)
Facilities and infrastructure	12 321.1	9 921.3	2 399.8	11 615.6	9 215.8	1 197.5	(705.5)
Ground transportation	1 615.7	1 377.2	238.5	1 163.3	924.8	23.0	(452.4)
Air transportation	17 777.4	15 468.4	2 309.0	19 032.6	16 723.6	38.5	1 255.2
Communications	4 406.4	3 862.3	544.1	5 770.1	5 226.0	1 689.7	1 363.7
Information technology	1 936.2	1 826.0	110.2	2 049.3	1 939.1	424.7	113.1
Medical	757.5	445.5	312.0	694.1	382.1	–	(63.4)
Other supplies, services and equipment	15 117.9	11 858.7	3 259.2	4 591.3	1 332.1	–	(10 526.6)
<b>Total</b>	<b>56 251.3</b>	<b>46 599.6</b>	<b>9 651.7</b>	<b>47 404.1</b>	<b>37 752.4</b>	<b>3 373.4</b>	<b>(8 847.2)</b>

<sup>a</sup> Net requirements after taking into account the estimated underexpenditure or overexpenditure for 2014.

#### Consultants

203. A provision of \$508,400 is proposed for consultants for UNAMI, which would include one international consultant for a duration of four months to assist with missing Kuwaitis and property and one biometric voter registration expert for two months (*ibid.*, para. 279). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the cost of the required specialized expertise was estimated on the basis of various fee and remuneration levels set out in the administrative instruction on consultants and individual contractors (ST/AI/2013/4, annex III). **While the Committee has no objection to the proposed resources for consultants, it believes that further efforts should be made to ensure that UNAMI staff have a range of expertise so as to avoid the hiring of consultants for certain projects, when possible. The Committee provides further comments on this subject in section III above.**

*Official travel*

204. A provision of \$1,979,400 is proposed for official travel for 2015, while estimated expenditure for 2014 amounts to \$1,582,300, or approximately 20 per cent below the 2014 appropriation of \$1,986,200. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the projected underexpenditure in 2014 occurred primarily because of the restriction of within-mission travel owing to the deteriorating security situation.

205. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with a breakdown of travel requirements, which showed that the Office of Mission Support's requirements related to participation in workshops and courses are included under non-training travel costs. In the view of the Committee, all requirements related to training belong to the training category. The Committee comments further on this matter in section III above.

*Air transportation*

206. As indicated in paragraph 294 of the report of the Secretary-General, the 2015 proposed estimates under air transportation include the fitting of an aircraft missile protection system pursuant to a revised security assessment. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon request, that the Mission had proposed an amount of \$1 million for the installation of the system on one fixed-wing aircraft and \$1.9 million for both rotary-wing aircraft.

*Other supplies, services and equipment*

207. Concerning the discontinuation of the provision of free meals and accommodation to uniformed and civilian personnel, as indicated in paragraph 306 of the report of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that UNAMI was authorized to waive the reduction of mission subsistence allowance for accommodation and food provided by the Mission to staff members in Iraq since 2005. Furthermore, the Committee was informed that the waiver had been introduced to alleviate the difficult and stressful working conditions in the high-risk environment prevalent at that time in Iraq. The Committee was also informed that, in July 2009, when the conditions of service were harmonized, the Department of Field Support worked with the Mission to adjust its waiver for free meals and accommodation. UNAMI then instituted a rental deduction for accommodation in July 2012 and started to charge the costs of meals as at 1 April 2014. **The Committee requested, but was not provided with, additional information on the subject of free meals and accommodation for civilian personnel, such as conformity with staff regulations and rules. The Committee therefore intends to revert to this subject in the context of future relevant reports.**

208. **The Advisory Committee does not object to the Secretary-General's proposals for operational costs.**

*Kuwait Joint Support Office*

209. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was informed that, since the establishment of the Kuwait Joint Support Office in December 2012, the annual costs for operating the Office have amounted to \$9.3 million, including \$8.2 million in staff costs and \$1.1 million in operating costs, and are included on a cost-sharing

basis in the budgets of UNAMA and UNAMI. The Committee provides comments on the Kuwait Joint Support Office, including on its cost-sharing arrangements and the Committee's request for a cost-benefit analysis for that Office, in section III above.

*Trust fund for the construction of a United Nations integrated compound in Baghdad*

210. The Advisory Committee was informed that the construction of an integrated compound in Baghdad had not begun and would not be financially viable, as a security assessment had concluded that a large part of the trust fund would have to be used for security measures. Therefore, according to the Secretary-General, the focus was currently on renovating the existing premises. As noted in paragraph 308 of the report of the Secretary-General, the planning and design of the new compound have been completed and approved by the Steering Committee of the Mission, but the Mission is considering possible alternative sites, owing to security concerns.

**211. The Advisory Committee observes that the trust fund is currently being utilized for the renovation of existing premises, not for the original purpose of constructing a new compound. The Committee requests an update with regard to the overall status of the trust fund, including its financial position and its overall concept and purpose, in the context of the budget proposal for UNAMI for 2016.**

## **V. Recommendations for action required of the General Assembly**

212. With regard to the Secretary-General's proposals for action to be taken by the General Assembly, as set out in paragraph 133 of his report (see [A/69/363](#) and Corr.2 and 3), the Advisory Committee recommends that:

(a) With regard to the 35 special political missions listed in table 6 of the report for the period up to 31 December 2015, the Assembly approve the resources requested by the Secretary-General, subject to the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee as set out above. The Committee requests that the adjusted amount be provided to the Assembly at the time of its consideration of the proposals of the Secretary-General;

(b) The Assembly approve a charge totalling \$435,094,000 net, corresponding to the undistributed balance in the provision for special political missions for the biennium 2014-2015;

(c) The Assembly appropriate, under the procedures provided for in paragraph 11 of annex I to resolution 41/213, an additional amount, taking into account the recommendations in subparagraph (a) above, under section 3, Political affairs, and section 36, Staff assessment, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.