



# General Assembly

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## Seventy-second session

Agenda items 9, 135 and 136

### Report of the Economic and Social Council

#### Programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017

#### Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

## **Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council during 2017**

### **Twenty-third report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019**

## **I. Introduction**

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council during 2017 ([A/72/398](#)). During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 15 November 2017.

2. During its 2017 session, the Economic and Social Council adopted one resolution and two decisions in which it approved additional activities requiring modifications to the programme of work.<sup>1</sup> In his report, the Secretary-General notes that the related additional resources requirements are estimated at \$288,700, of which \$2,500 relates to the programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017 and \$286,200 to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019.

3. The amount of \$2,500 for the biennium 2016–2017 is to be accommodated within the approved appropriation for the biennium. Of the remaining amount of \$286,200 required for the biennium 2018–2019, a total of \$39,000 is to be accommodated within the proposed programme budget for the biennium. The remaining additional resources in the amount of \$247,200 would require an additional appropriation for the biennium 2018–2019 and, consequently, would

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<sup>1</sup> Economic and Social Council resolution [2017/26](#) and decisions 2017/214 and 2017/241.



represent a charge against the contingency fund, subject to the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions [41/213](#) and [42/211](#).

4. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee received additional information on the status of the contingency fund for the biennium 2016–2017, which indicated that the approved level of the contingency fund for 2016–2017 (in accordance with General Assembly resolution [69/264](#)) was \$41.7 million, the utilization of the fund during the seventieth and seventy-first sessions had totalled \$34.4 million, and the available balance amounted to \$7.3 million, net of staff assessment and after taking into account the relevant reports submitted to the General Assembly at its seventieth and seventy-first sessions. The Committee was also informed that the approved level of the contingency fund for the biennium 2018–2019 (in accordance with Assembly resolution [71/274](#)) was \$40.5 million, the proposed programme budget implications/revised estimates amounted to \$25.7 million and, if approved in full, the remaining balance of the contingency fund for 2018–2019 would be \$14.8 million, after taking into account potential charges arising from relevant reports submitted to the Assembly at its seventy-second session.

5. The Advisory Committee notes that a decision has not yet been made on the Secretary-General's proposal to utilize \$25.7 million of the \$40.5 million available in the contingency fund for the biennium 2018–2019, and that the balance of the contingency fund for 2018–2019 would be \$14.8 million, based on estimates as at 7 November 2017. **The Committee notes that if the programme budget implications/revised estimates are approved in full by the General Assembly, the additional requirements anticipated for 2018–2019 will represent 63.5 per cent of the contingency fund before the biennium has even started. While recognizing that additional resource requirements must be considered and that it is not always possible to fit new initiatives within the biennial cycle of the regular budget, the Committee reiterates that it is the responsibility of the Secretary-General to ensure that the proposed programme budget presents the fullest possible picture of the Organization's requirements for the coming biennium (see [A/70/7/Add.7](#), para. 8, and [A/68/7/Add.22](#), para. 6).**

## **II. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council during 2017**

### **A. Resolution [2017/26](#): Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti**

6. In its resolution [2017/26](#), the Council, inter alia, decided to extend the mandate of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti until the conclusion of the 2018 session; requested the Advisory Group to submit a report on its work, with recommendations, as appropriate, to the Council for its consideration at its 2018 session; and requested the Secretary-General to continue to support the activities of the Group adequately and within existing resources.

7. The Secretary-General indicates that the costs of support to be provided to the Ad Hoc Advisory Group would amount to \$39,000 and would cover: (a) the travel expenses of members of the Group and two staff members of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to meet with the international financial institutions and the Organization of American States in 2018 and undertake a mission to Haiti in the same year (\$36,500); and (b) meetings support services in Haiti (\$2,500).

8. The Secretary-General indicates that the additional amount of \$39,000 would be met within the approved appropriation under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, in accordance with resolution [2017/26](#), in which the Council, inter alia, requested the

Secretary-General to support the activities of the Group within existing resources (see para. 6 above). **While the Committee does not object to this approach, it stresses that the indication of absorption of additional requirements in a budget which has yet to be approved by the General Assembly could be viewed as reflective of overbudgeting and the need for improved budgeting.**

9. **Additionally, the Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will remind all relevant intergovernmental bodies that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibility for administrative and budgetary matters.**

## **B. Decision 2017/214: Appointment of an additional member of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti**

10. In its decision 2017/214, the Council decided to appoint an additional member of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the increase in the membership of the Group had accelerated following the period of protracted instability and humanitarian crisis that had persisted in Haiti for more than a decade until the latest transition to an elected Government.

11. The Secretary-General indicates that the support to be provided to the additional member would amount to \$2,500 in 2017, in accordance with previous resolutions extending the mandate of the Group, in which the Secretary-General had advised that those requirements would be met within the resources approved under section 9, Economic and social affairs of the programme budget for the biennium 2016–2017.

## **C. Decision 2017/241: Preparations for the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in 2019**

12. In its decision 2017/241, the Council approved the preparations for the sixty-second session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, to be held in 2019. The Council also took note of Commission resolution 60/1. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that additional tasks associated with the new mandate pursuant to the resolution included: (a) the holding of intersessional meetings of the Commission; (b) the conduct of the process of follow-up to the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, on the world drug problem; (c) the use of tools to enhance remote participation; (d) the preparations for the ministerial segment of the sixty-second session; and (e) the work of the Commission on the global follow-up to and support for the thematic review of progress in respect of the Sustainable Development Goals.

13. The Secretary-General indicates that, to support these activities, additional resource requirements in the amount of \$247,200 would be required under section 16, International drug control, crime and terrorism prevention and criminal justice, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019. The resources would provide for 24 months of temporary assistance at the P-3 level to deliver technical and substantive support to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

14. The Secretary-General explains that the related provisions have not been included under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 and therefore an additional appropriation in the amount of \$247,200 under section 16 of the proposed programme budget for 2018–2019 would be required and would represent a charge against the contingency fund. Upon enquiry, the Advisory

Committee was informed that resources proposed in support of the related intergovernmental bodies for the biennium 2018–2019 were expected to be fully utilized to service existing mandates, i.e., those approved prior to the adoption of decision 2017/241, and therefore no resources could be redeployed for the additional tasks and activities mentioned in paragraph 12 above.

15. The Secretary-General also indicates that the implementation of decision 2017/241 would require modifications under section 16, International drug control, crime and terrorism prevention and criminal justice, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, including revisions to outputs and non-recurrent outputs under subprogramme 9, Provision of secretariat services and substantive support to the United Nations intergovernmental bodies, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

### III. Conclusion

16. In respect of the report concerning the resolution and decisions adopted by the Council at its 2017 session ([A/72/398](#)), the actions requested of the General Assembly are set out in paragraphs 22 and 23 of the report. **Subject to its comments above, the Advisory Committee:**

(a) **Has no objection to the Secretary-General's approach of accommodating the proposed additional requirements of \$39,000 under section 9, Economic and social affairs, within the proposed programme budget for 2018–2019 and accommodating \$2,500 within the resources approved under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017;**

(b) **Recommends the approval of an additional appropriation of \$247,200 under section 16, International drug control, crime and terrorism prevention and criminal justice, which would represent a charge against the contingency fund for 2018–2019;**

(c) **Notes that an amount of \$32,800 would also be required under section 36, Staff assessment, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.**

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