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Prevention of an arms race in outer space: prevention of an arms race in outer space

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space

Programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.1/72/L.54](#)

Thirty-ninth 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 considered the statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly on the programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.1/72/L.54](#) ([A/C.5/72/11](#)). During its consideration of the statement, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with responses received on 12 December 2017.

2. Under the terms of draft resolution [A/C.1/72/L.54](#), the General Assembly would:

(a) Request the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations Group of Governmental Experts, with a membership of up to 25 Member States chosen on the basis of fair and equitable geographical representation, to consider and make recommendations on substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, inter alia, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space;

(b) Decide that the newly established Group of Governmental Experts will operate by consensus, without prejudice to national positions in future negotiations, and hold two 2-week sessions in Geneva, one in 2018 and the other in 2019;

(c) Request the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts to organize, in New York, a two-day open-ended intersessional informal consultative meeting, in



2019, so that all Member States can engage in interactive discussions and share their views on the basis of a report on the work of the Group to be provided by the Chair in his own capacity;

(d) Request the Secretary-General to transmit the report of the Group of Governmental Experts to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session and to the Conference on Disarmament prior to its 2020 session.

II. Resource requirements

3. The Secretary-General indicates that the request would entail additional resource requirements in the amount of \$994,300 for the following activities:

(a) Under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management: meetings services in the amount of \$400,000 for the biennium 2018–2019 (see [A/C.1/72/L.54](#), operative paras. 3 and 4), for a total of 44 meetings with interpretation in the six official languages, consisting of 20 meetings each in 2018 and 2019, lasting 10 days each, in Geneva of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts, and 4 meetings, lasting 2 days, in New York in 2019 organized by the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts. In addition, under section 29F, Administration, Geneva, the requirements include sound technician and recording services amounting to \$14,200;

(b) Under section 2: documentation services in the amount of \$130,100 for the biennium 2018–2019 (see [A/C.1/72/L.54](#), operative paras. 3–6), consisting of 7 pre-session documents (9,000 words) in the six official languages, 50 in-session documents (50,000 words) in English only, and 2 post-session documents (10,700 words) in the six official languages;

(c) Under section 4, Disarmament: travel requirements in the amount of \$450,000, to cover the travel costs, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses of up to 25 State representatives to attend the sessions in 2018 and 2019, as well as the costs of the services of a consultant to provide technical and substantive support to the Group of Governmental Experts during the biennium 2018–2019.

4. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with a breakdown of the resources in the amount of \$400,000 for simultaneous interpretation (under section 2), as follows:

(United States dollars)

	Year/biennium		
	2018	2019	2018–2019
Meeting requirements			
Number of days	10	12	22
Number of meetings	20	24	44
Venue/location	Geneva	New York and Geneva	
Languages	Six official	Six official	
Estimated cost			
Simultaneous interpretation (Geneva rate) 18,800 x 10 days	188 000	188 000	376 000
Simultaneous interpretation (New York rate) 12,000 x 2 days	–	24 000	24 000
Total meeting cost	188 000	212 000	400 000

5. **The Advisory Committee considers that transparency is required with respect to the estimated cost for simultaneous interpretation for different locations and time periods, as indicated in the table above, and therefore requests the Secretary-General to provide details thereon to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

6. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the resource requirements for two sound technicians in Geneva, at a cost of \$14,200, or a rate of \$355 per person per day, would provide support for 20 days of meetings for the biennium 2018–2019. The Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that the two sound technicians would be required as the meetings with interpretation were in addition to the regular meetings workload, and that the technicians would verify that the audiovisual system was operational, monitor the meeting, activate the microphones, operate the recording system and, following the conclusion of the meeting, tidy up the room and shut down the audiovisual system. **The Committee considers that it has commented previously on inconsistent approaches with respect to the operational and cost requirements for sound engineers (see [A/71/688](#), para. 25). Furthermore, the Committee notes that the costs relating to sound technicians are not included within the cost components for meetings support services and reiterates its view that the cost parameters should include all applicable costing elements (see [A/71/662](#), para. 5). The Committee is not convinced that there is an operational need for two sound technicians and, therefore, recommends a reduction of 50 per cent, or \$7,100, to the related resources proposed under sound technician/recording services for the biennium 2018–2019.**

7. With respect to travel requirements, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that should the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts not be based in Geneva, then she or he would be entitled to the same travel support as the other experts with respect to airfare, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses, with the costs for all experts, including the elected Chair/expert, being included in the resources requested.

8. It is indicated in the statement that no provision has been made in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 for the implementation of the activities requested in operative paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the draft resolution. It is also indicated that it is not possible at present to identify activities within the relevant sections of the proposed programme budget that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during the biennium 2018–2019, and that it is therefore necessary that one-time requirements in the amount of \$994,300 be provided through an additional appropriation for the biennium 2018–2019 (see [A/C.5/72/11](#), para. 10).

III. Conclusion

9. **Taking into account its recommendations in paragraph 6 above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution [A/C.1/72/L.54](#), an additional appropriation in the amount of \$987,200 would be required under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019, comprising \$530,100 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, \$450,000 under section 4, Disarmament, and \$7,100 under section 29F, Administration, Geneva, representing a charge against the contingency fund.**