



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
26 April 2019

Original: English

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## Seventy-third session

Agenda item 151

### Financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

## Budget performance for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei

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

Appropriation for 2017/18	\$266,700,000
Expenditure for 2017/18	\$266,024,800
Unencumbered balance for 2017/18	\$675,200
Appropriation for 2018/19	\$263,858,100
Projected expenditure for 2018/19 <sup>a</sup>	\$262,027,300
Projected underexpenditure for 2018/19	\$1,830,800
Proposal submitted by the Secretary-General for 2019/20	\$267,918,400
Adjustment recommended by the Advisory Committee for 2019/20	(\$3,041,400)
Recommendation of the Advisory Committee for 2019/20	\$264,877,000

<sup>a</sup> Estimates as at 31 January 2019.



## I. Introduction

1. During its consideration of the financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 23 April 2019. The documents reviewed and those used for background by the Committee are listed at the end of the present report. The comments and recommendations of the Committee on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations, including those pertaining to the findings and recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, can be found in its related report ([A/73/755](#)). The main observations and recommendations of the Board pertaining specifically to UNISFA are discussed in paragraph 4 below.

## II. Budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018

2. By its resolution [71/298](#), the General Assembly appropriated an amount of \$266,700,000 gross (\$264,359,500 net) for the maintenance of UNISFA for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018. Expenditures for the period totalled \$266,024,800 gross (\$263,286,600 net), reflecting a budget implementation rate of almost 100 per cent (99.3 per cent). The resulting unencumbered balance of \$675,200 in gross terms represents 0.3 per cent of the appropriation, reflecting the combined effect of lower-than-budgeted expenditures under operational costs (\$12,764,000) mostly offset by higher-than-budgeted expenditures under military and police personnel (\$4,930,200) and civilian personnel (\$7,158,600). A detailed analysis of variances is provided in section IV of the report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of the mission for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 ([A/73/610](#)).

3. In his budget performance report, the Secretary-General indicates that, during the 2017/18 period, a total amount of \$12,184,200 was redeployed from group III, operational costs, to: (a) group I, military and police personnel, in the amount of \$5,002,500, to cover higher troop reimbursement costs; and (b) to group II, civilian personnel, in the amount of \$7,181,700, to cover the costs related to the lower actual average vacancy rate of 13.7 per cent for international staff compared with the budgeted rate of 23.6 per cent. The redeployment from group III was possible owing mainly to lower expenditures on facilities and infrastructure, air operations and other supplies, services and equipment (see [A/73/610](#), para. 37). The comments of the Advisory Committee on the information the Secretary-General presented in his performance report on individual objects of expenditure can be found, where relevant, in the discussion of the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 ([A/73/742](#)) in section IV below.

4. In considering the reports of the Secretary-General on the financing of UNISFA, the Advisory Committee also had before it the report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2018 ([A/73/5 \(Vol. II\)](#), chap. II). In its report, the Board indicates that certain recommendations pertaining to the prior period are under implementation, namely: (a) casualty evacuation/medical evacuation capability to manage emergencies between 5 p.m. and 6 a.m. (*ibid.*, annex II); and (b) usage of the Athony airfield (*ibid.*). The Committee recalls that, despite its completion on 13 December 2015, the airport had never been used, as the project had started before clearance was received from the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan (see [A/72/789/Add.13](#), para. 5). The Board noted that the recommendation remained under implementation, with outreach to the national authorities by the Administration to address the use of the airfield ([A/73/5 \(Vol. II\)](#), chap. II, annex II). **The Committee trusts that the mission-**

specific recommendations of the Board of Auditors accepted by the Secretary-General will be implemented expeditiously.

### III. Information on performance for the current period

5. With respect to current and projected expenditures for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 January 2019, expenditures amounted to \$186,242,800. At the end of the current financial period, the estimated total expenditures would equal 99.3 per cent of the appropriation of \$263,858,100.

6. The Advisory Committee was provided with information on the incumbency of UNISFA military and civilian personnel as at 31 January 2019 as follows:

<i>Category of personnel</i>	<i>Authorized/approved 2018/19<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Encumbered</i>	<i>Vacancy rate (percentage)</i>
<b>Military and police personnel</b>			
Military observers	225	134	40.4
Military contingent personnel <sup>b</sup>	4 566	4 408	3.5
United Nations police	50	45	10.0
Formed police	160	0	0
<b>Civilian personnel</b>			
Posts			
International staff	161	137	14.9
National Professional Officers	3	3	0.0
National General Service staff	83	73	12.0
General temporary assistance			
International staff	1	0	100.0
United Nations Volunteers	33	33	0.0

<sup>a</sup> Represents the highest authorized strength for military and police personnel and the number of approved posts for civilian personnel.

<sup>b</sup> By its resolution [2416 \(2018\)](#), of 15 May 2018, the Security Council decreased the authorized troop ceiling of the mission from 4,791 (including 4,566 military contingent personnel and 225 military observers) to 4,500 (including 4,275 military contingent personnel and 225 military observers).

7. The Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 January 2019, a total of \$2,165,091,000 had been assessed on Member States in respect of the mission since its inception. Payments received as at the same date had amounted to \$2,057,450,000, leaving an outstanding balance of \$107,641,000. As at 4 March 2019, the cash available to the mission amounted to \$51,779,000, which was sufficient to cover the three-month operating reserve of \$37,633,000 (excluding reimbursements to troop- and police-contributing countries).

8. The Advisory Committee was also informed that, as at 31 January 2019, payments totalling \$77,146,000 had been made during the year 2018 for troop costs up to 30 September 2018. As at 31 December 2018, the amount owed for contingent-owned equipment was \$11,563,000. With regard to death and disability compensation, as at 31 January 2019, an amount of \$1,175,000 had been paid to settle 45 claims since the inception of the mission; payment for 12 claims was pending. **The Committee trusts that the outstanding claims will be settled expeditiously.**

## IV. Proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

### A. Mandate and planning assumptions

9. The mandate of UNISFA was established by the Security Council in its resolution [1990 \(2011\)](#). The mission is mandated to assist the Council in achieving an overall objective, namely, to support the implementation of the Agreement of 20 June 2011 between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, and to provide support to the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism in creating a safe and demilitarized border zone. In its resolution [2416 \(2018\)](#) of 15 May 2018, the Security Council decided to reduce the authorized troop ceiling from 4,791 to 4,500 until 15 November 2018. On 15 November 2018, the Security Council, in its resolution [2445 \(2018\)](#), extended the mandate of the mission until 15 May 2019 and decided to further reduce the authorized UNISFA troop ceiling by 360 from 4,500 to 4,140 until 15 May 2019, while increasing the authorized police ceiling from 50 to 345 police personnel, including 185 individual police officers and one formed police unit comprising 160 personnel. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that, following the commencement of the deployment of increased police personnel, the troop ceiling shall be decreased by another 295 troops, in addition to the reduction of 360 troops mentioned above ([A/73/742](#), paras. 1–8).

10. By its resolution [2445 \(2018\)](#), the Council decided that, as of 15 April 2019, the authorized troop ceiling would decrease by a further 557 troops, unless the Council decided to extend the support of UNISFA for the Joint Border Verification Monitoring Mechanism, contingent upon both parties demonstrating measurable progress towards reaching the benchmarks outlined in paragraph 3 of its resolution [2438 \(2018\)](#) ([A/73/742](#), para. 8). By its resolution [2465 \(2019\)](#) of 12 April 2019, the Council decided to extend until 15 October 2019 the mandate modification of UNISFA as set forth in resolution [2024 \(2011\)](#) and paragraph 1 of resolution [2075 \(2012\)](#), and decided that, as of 15 October 2019, the authorized troop ceiling for UNISFA would decrease by 557 troops, unless it decided to extend the mandate modification.

11. The planning assumptions and mission support initiatives for the 2019/20 period are summarized by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 9 to 26 of his report on the proposed budget for UNISFA ([A/73/742](#)) and take into account the effect of Security Council resolutions [2416 \(2018\)](#) and [2445 \(2018\)](#), which, taken together, reduced the military component by a total of 946 military contingent personnel and increased the police component by 135 additional individual police officers and one formed police unit comprising 160 officers. In his report, the Secretary-General proposes infrastructure improvements, provisions for the mission's multi-year headquarters camp development project, construction requirements, as well as upgrading and maintenance of the network and communication infrastructure currently in place (see paras. 26–31 and 34–35 below).

### B. Resource requirements

12. The proposed budget for UNISFA for the 2019/20 period amounts to \$267,918,400, representing an increase of \$4,060,300, or 1.5 per cent, compared with the appropriation for the 2018/19 period. This reflects the combined effect of proposed increases under operational costs and civilian personnel (\$19,592,600, or 26.3 per cent, and \$1,113,100, or 3.1 per cent, respectively), partially offset by a proposed decrease under military and police personnel (\$16,645,400, or 10.8 per cent). Detailed information on the financial resources proposed and an analysis of variances is provided in sections II and III of the proposed budget ([A/73/742](#)).

## 1. Military and police personnel

<i>Category</i>	<i>Authorized 2018/19<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Authorized 2019/20<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Variance</i>
Military observers	225	225	0
Military contingent personnel	4 566	3 620 <sup>b</sup>	(946)
United Nations police	50	185 <sup>b</sup>	135
Formed police unit personnel	0	160 <sup>b</sup>	160

<sup>a</sup> Represents the highest level of authorized strength.

<sup>b</sup> By its resolution 2416 (2018) of 15 May 2018 the Security Council decided to reduce the authorized troop ceiling from 4,791 to 4,500 until 15 November 2018. By its resolution 2445 (2018) of 15 November 2018, the Council decided to further reduce the authorized UNISFA troop ceiling by 360 from 4,500 to 4,140, while increasing the authorized police ceiling from 50 to 345 police personnel, including 185 individual police officers and one formed police unit comprising 160 personnel.

13. The proposed resources for military and police personnel for 2019/20 amount to \$137,372,800, reflecting a decrease of \$16,645,400, or 10.8 per cent, compared with the apportionment for 2018/19. The decrease is mostly due to the reduction of the authorized troop ceiling by 946 military contingent personnel. The decrease would be partly offset by increased requirements due to: (a) the application of a lower average vacancy rate for military observers of 40.0 per cent, compared with 45.0 per cent applied in the approved budget for the 2018/19 period; (b) an increase in the authorized strength of individual police personnel from 50 to 185 United Nations police officers, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2445 (2018); and, (c) the establishment of one formed police unit comprising 160 personnel, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2445 (2018) (A/73/742, paras. 71–74).

14. **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for military and police personnel.**

## 2. Civilian personnel

<i>Category</i>	<i>Approved 2018/19</i>	<i>Proposed 2019/20</i>	<i>Variance</i>
<b>Posts</b>			
International staff	160	166	6
National Professional Officers	3	3	–
National General Service	83	83	–
<b>Temporary positions</b>			
International staff	1	1	–
United Nations Volunteers	33	34	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>7</b>

15. The proposed resources for civilian personnel for 2019/20 amount to \$36,496,400, reflecting an increase of \$1,113,100, or 3.1 per cent, compared with the apportionment for 2018/19. The Secretary-General indicates that the increase is mainly attributable to increased requirements under: (a) national staff (\$218,200, or 8.1 per cent), owing to revised rates for danger pay, effective January 2018, which were increased for the Sudan; and, (b) United Nations Volunteers (\$193,400, or 11.6 per cent), owing to a lower vacancy rate of 3.0 per cent compared with the 6.0 per cent applied in 2018/19 and the proposed establishment of one post of Nurse in the Medical Services Unit. The increase would be partly offset by decreased requirements under international staff (\$564,600 or

1.8 per cent), due mainly to the decrease in the post adjustment multiplier. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the variance is offset in part by the proposed establishment of six international staff posts (A/73/742, paras. 75–77).

#### *General temporary assistance*

16. The estimated resources under general temporary assistance amounts to \$1,456,200, representing an increase of \$1,266,100 or 666.0 per cent compared with the apportionment for 2018/19. The Advisory Committee was provided with information indicating that the actual expenditure for the 2017/18 period had amounted to \$343,400 and just \$1,500 as at 31 January 2019, against an apportionment of \$190,100 for the 2018/19 period. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the increased requirements were proposed to support activities for the roll-out of Umoja Extension 2 and cross-cutting initiatives as well as for identified skilled work that had previously been handled by individual contractors and did not fall under the scope of the new camp management services contract. This latter provision comprised 17 Language Assistants, two Water and Sanitation Assistants, four Air Operations Fire Safety Assistants, two Air Operations Ramp Controllers, one Supply Assistant (Life Support), one Field Security Assistant (Pass and ID), two Field Security Radio Operators, five Fire Safety Officers, two Movement Control Assistants, one Telecom Assistant, one national staff Nurse. The Committee comments further on this increase in requirements in paragraph 27 below.

#### *Vacancy rates and vacant posts*

17. The table below provides a summary of the vacancy rates for civilian personnel, including: (a) for 2017/18, the budgeted and actual average vacancy rates; (b) for 2018/19 the budgeted rate, the actual average rate for the 7-month period between 1 July 2018 and 31 January 2019 and the actual rate as at 31 January 2019; and (c) the vacancy factor applied in estimating the requirements for 2019/20. The Advisory Committee notes that the 2019/20 proposed vacancy rates are: (a) for international staff, higher than both the actual average rate and the actual rate as at 31 January 2019; (b) for National General Service staff, lower than the actual average rate but equivalent to the actual rate as at 31 January 2019; (c) for United Nations Volunteers, higher than both the actual average rate and the actual rate as at 31 January 2019; and, (d) for international staff on temporary positions, lower than both the actual average rate and the actual rate as at 31 January 2019.

### **Vacancy rates**

(percentages)

	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20	
	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual average vacancy rate from 1 July 2018 to 31 January 2019	Actual vacancy rate as at 31 January 2019	Proposed vacancy rate
International staff	23.6	13.7	15.0	13.7	14.9	15.0
National Professional Officers	–	–	–	–	–	–
National General Service staff	15.0	11.6	10.0	12.2	12.0	12.0
United Nations Volunteers	10.0	3.3	6.0	2.2	–	3.0
Temporary positions:						
International staff	14.3	100.0	15.0	100.0	100.0	15.0

18. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that 24 posts were vacant as at 20 March 2019, including 16 international posts (1 P-5, 3 P-4, 4 P-3, 8 (FS)) and 8 national posts. The Committee was also informed that, as at 20 March 2019, four posts had been vacant for over two years: two positions of Administrative Assistant (G-4), one position of Team Assistant (G-4) and one position of Engineer (P-3). With respect to one of the Administrative Assistant positions and the Team Assistant position, vacant since December 2015 and July 2016, respectively, the Committee was informed that successful candidates had been selected for the posts. As regards the position of Engineer and the other Administrative Assistant position, vacant since July 2015 and July 2016, respectively, the Committee was informed that both positions were under recruitment at the time of the Committee's consideration of the budget proposal.

**19. The Advisory Committee recalls the request of the General Assembly, expressed consistently in its resolutions on peacekeeping budgets, that the Secretary-General ensure that vacant posts be filled expeditiously (A/71/836, para. 108). The Committee also reiterates its view 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 budget preparation, clear justification should be provided in related budget documents for the rates used (A/70/742, para. 45). The Committee stresses again that the continuing requirement for posts that have been vacant for two years or longer should be reviewed and the posts either proposed for retention with rejustification or abolishment in subsequent budget proposals (A/69/839, para. 67; see also General Assembly resolution 66/264).**

*Recommendations on posts and positions*

20. A total of 287 civilian posts and positions are proposed for the 2019/20 period, comprising 166 international posts, 86 national staff posts, 34 United Nations Volunteers and 1 international position funded under general temporary assistance. The staffing proposal reflects a net increase of seven posts compared with the approved posts and positions for the 2018/19 period. These include the proposed establishment of: (a) one post of Police Commissioner (D-1), with the overall responsibility to command and control 345 police personnel, as well as the administrative and language assistants in the established 15 team sites and mission headquarters; (b) one post of Police Chief of Operations (P-4), to support the expanded operations of the mission's police component; (c) one post of Gender-Based Violence Police Adviser (P-3), to assist in advising and mentoring local communities of the Abyei Area on human rights issues by reducing acts of violations, especially with respect to women and children; (d) two posts of Administrative Officer (P-3), in the regional sector offices of Gok Machar and Kadugli, to increase operational capability; (e) one post of Wastewater Plant Technician (FS), to support the continued operations of water plants and wastewater treatment plants in the mission; and, (f) one United Nations Volunteer position of Nurse, to provide medical services following the anticipated increase of the police component from 50 to 185 individual police officers. The proposed changes also include 11 redeployments and 3 reassignments (A/73/742, paras. 40 to 50).

21. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that both a strategic and independent review had been undertaken in 2017 and 2018, followed by a technical assessment of UNISFA police capability undertaken by the United Nations Headquarters Police Division in June 2018. The three proposed police-related posts, comprising one D-1 level Police Commissioner, one P-4 level Police Chief of Operations and one P-3 level Gender-Based Violence Police Adviser, had been recommended by the technical assessment. The Committee was further informed that

the two Administrative Officer and one Field Service posts as well as the United Nations Volunteer position had been based on the mission's assessment of its highest priority needs.

22. As regards the two posts of Administrative Officer (P-3), the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that there were currently 40 civilian personnel in Kadugli and 9 civilian personnel in Gok Machar and that the lack of administrative oversight and control in the two sector offices had created difficulties in ensuring that operations in both sectors were fully in compliance with administrative, human resources and financial rules and regulations. **The Committee is of the view that, given the numbers of civilian personnel in the regional sector office of Gok Machar, the establishment of an Administrative Officer post (P-3) in that location is not justified. The Committee therefore recommends against the establishment of the P-3 Administrative Officer post in the regional sector office of Gok Machar. Any related non-post resources should be adjusted accordingly.**

23. **Subject to its observation and recommendation in paragraph 22 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for civilian staff.**

### 3. Operational costs

(United States dollars)

	<i>Apportioned 2018/19</i>	<i>Proposed 2019/20</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Operational costs	74 456 600	94 049 200	19 592 600

24. The proposed resources for operational costs for 2019/20 amount to \$94,049,200, reflecting an increase of \$19,592,600, or 26.3 per cent, compared with the apportionment for 2018/19. The Secretary-General proposes increases mostly under the following classes of expenditure: facilities and infrastructure (\$12,584,300, or 55.4 per cent); communications and information technology (\$2,970,100, or 42.7 per cent); other supplies, services and equipment (\$2,557,000, or 14.2 per cent); and ground transportation (\$1,380,100, or 101.4 per cent). The increased requirements would be offset in part by decreases under marine operations (\$596,000, or 100 per cent).

#### *Official travel*

25. The resources for official travel for 2019/20 are proposed at the maintenance level of \$976,000. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that 38.4 per cent of official travel in 2017/2018 had been undertaken in compliance with the advance ticket purchase policy. **The Committee recalls that the General Assembly, on a number of occasions, has expressed concern at the low rate of compliance with the advance purchase policy directive. The Committee reiterates that stronger efforts are required, in particular in areas where travel can be better planned (see also [A/73/779](#), para. 16).**

#### *Facilities and infrastructure*

26. The increased requirements of \$12,584,300 under facilities and infrastructure for 2019/20 are attributable mainly to: (a) full-year implementation of the camp management services contract (\$3,181,300); (b) the acquisition of prefabricated facilities, including to accommodate the planned deployment of 135 additional United Nations police personnel and 1 formed police unit (\$3,031,800); (c) the acquisition

of generators and electrical equipment, including equipment needed for the mission to comply with the mission-wide environmental action plan (\$2,489,400); (d) increased requirements under petrol, oil and lubricants as a result of a projected requirement for fuel of 5.3 million litres, based on consumption patterns, at a higher projected unit cost (\$1,957,100); and (e) construction materials and field defence supplies for planned works (\$1,433,500) (see [A/73/742](#), para. 80).

27. As regards the implementation of the camp management services contract, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the increased requirements were mainly attributable to the cost of provision for vehicles, which had not been included in the initial contractual agreement, and that UNISFA had provided transportation for the camp services contractors during the current period. The Committee was also informed that net direct savings in the amount of approximately \$5 million per year would result from the outsourcing of camp services. The Committee would have expected that the increased requirements for the camp management services contract would have been compensated by a reduction in requirements under other relevant budget lines, given that camp services are proposed under a third-party contract. Instead, the Committee notes an increase in general temporary assistance requirements, as indicated in paragraph 16 above, and the fact that the skilled work previously handled by individual contractors could not be provided under the new camp management services contract.

28. The Advisory Committee notes from additional information it received regarding expenditures for maintenance services that the actual expenditure for the 2017/18 period amounted to \$262,500 against an apportionment of \$4,221,300, and \$306,900 as at 31 January 2019 against an apportionment of \$5,132,700 for the 2018/19 period. In terms of security services, the Committee also notes that the actual expenditure for the 2017/18 period amounted to \$34,400 against an apportionment of \$286,400, and \$2,200 as at 31 January 2019 against an apportionment of \$984,500 for the 2018/19 period. In terms of field defence supplies, the Committee notes that the actual expenditure for the 2017/18 period amounted to \$726,000 against an apportionment of \$1,718,400, and \$171,200 as at 31 January 2019 against an apportionment of \$1,443,400 for the 2018/19 period. The Committee also notes significant increases in cost estimates on a number of budget lines for the 2019/20 period, including: (a) the acquisition of engineering supplies; (b) the acquisition of prefabricated facilities, accommodation and refrigeration equipment; (c) the acquisition of generators and electrical equipment; (d) the acquisition of water treatment and fuel distribution equipment; (e) maintenance services; and (f) field defence supplies and spare parts and supplies. **Based on the actual expenditure pattern relating to these budget lines for the 2017/18 and 2018/19 periods, the Committee considers that the proposed level of the requirements for the budget period is not fully justified.**

29. In terms of planned implementation of construction, renovation and alteration projects, the Advisory Committee was provided, upon enquiry, with a breakdown of projects to be implemented at Abyei headquarters, including: the camp infrastructure project (\$1,120,000); annual mandatory repair and maintenance of roads to UNISFA camps (\$925,000); the repair and stabilization of roads (\$300,000); secondary drainage improvements in all camps (\$207,000); the construction of 20 fuel tanks at team sites to reduce spillage, incidents of contaminated soil and for extra fuel storage needed for logistical operations during the rainy season (\$680,000); the construction of four incinerator sites (\$402,000); the construction of organic solid waste treatment sites (\$210,000); and the construction of six accommodation modules for the additional 135 United Nations police officers and the formed police unit (\$232,000). The Committee was informed that the camp infrastructure project was expected to be completed by the end of the 2021/22 period. **The Committee points out that**

**UNISFA has historically experienced difficulties in carrying out construction and maintenance projects as planned owing to a variety of specific circumstances. Based on past experience, the Committee considers that it would not be realistic to assume that the execution of the full scope of construction projects planned for 2019/20 will proceed as planned. The Committee is of the view, therefore, that the proposed level of requirements for the 2019/20 period is not fully justified.**

*Communications and information technology*

30. The estimated resources under communications and information technology for 2019/20 amount to \$9,926,000, representing an increase of \$2,970,100 or 42.7 per cent compared with the apportionment for 2018/19. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the increased equipment requirements were mainly due to the additional functions and services assigned to the Field Technology Unit, the replacement of current infrastructure equipment and wireless access points and the upgrade and expansion of communication and network coverage across all team sites. The arrival of the 135 United Nations police officers would also require additional equipment and wireless access points. **The Committee considers that, in view of the reduction of 946 military contingent personnel, the proposed level of requirements pertaining to communications and information technology is not fully justified.**

*Other supplies, services and equipment*

31. The estimated resources under other supplies, services and equipment amount to \$20,533,300 for 2019/20, representing an increase of \$2,557,000 or 14.2 per cent compared with the apportionment for 2018/19. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the increased requirements were mainly due to higher freight costs (\$1,616,400), mine action activities (\$568,200) and outsourcing of security guard services (\$898,900), partly offset by reductions in individual contractors (\$930,000) due to the outsourcing of camp management services. The Committee was also informed that the increase in freight costs of \$1,616,400 (or 39.2 per cent) was mainly attributable to the associated freight costs for the planned acquisition of equipment, including customs clearance, material handling equipment and rental costs at loading and off-loading sites for inbound freight.

*Consultants and consulting services*

32. The estimated resources under consultants and consulting services amount to \$466,400 for 2019/20, representing an increase of \$30,000 or 6.9 per cent compared with the apportionment for 2018/19. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the need for consultants was mainly attributable to urgent and temporary support projects and to an extensive capability gap in the mission. The proposed budget includes two civil engineering consultants for road maintenance and repair works and two environmental consultants specialized in waste management and modelling the emission profile of UNISFA to project future emission rates within and outside UNISFA locations. **The Committee is not fully convinced of the need for all four consultants to conduct the support projects.**

*Ground transportation*

33. The estimated resources under ground transportation amount to \$2,740,800 for 2019/20, representing an increase of \$1,380,100 or 101.4 per cent compared with the apportionment for 2018/19. The increased requirements are attributable mainly to: (a) the acquisition of 35 vehicles, comprising 27 vehicles required as a result of the increase in the police component in accordance with Security Council resolution 2445 (2018) and 8 vehicles to replace vehicles that have exceeded their useful economic life and mileage; and (b) increased requirements under petrol, oil and lubricants as a result of higher projected unit cost of fuel (A/73/742, para. 81). The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that increased requirements under liability insurance were also mainly attributable to the planned acquisition of additional light vehicles. **In view of the significant net downsizing of the mission's uniformed component and in the absence of a longer-term vehicle replacement plan, the Committee is not fully convinced of the need for the acquisition of 35 light vehicles.**

34. **Overall, the Advisory Committee considers that the increased level of requirements for operational costs in 2019/20 in the amount of \$19,592,600 is not fully justified. The Committee is of the view that, based on past expenditure patterns, it would not be realistic to assume that a considerably higher rate of expenditure will be achieved in the 2019/20 budget period under operational costs. The Committee therefore recommends a reduction of 15 per cent in the amount of \$2,938,900 to the additional proposed resource requirements for operational costs.**

35. **Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 22 and 34 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for operational costs.**

**Other matters***Environmental issues*

36. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that, during the 2019/20 period, the mission plans to continue its efforts to mitigate the environmental impact: (a) through the use of alternate sources of energy, such as solar power, and environmentally friendly solutions, such as the composting of organic waste; (b) by increasing the number of landfill sites and expand existing recycling programmes; (c) by improving its water systems and the management of wastewater; (d) by building organic solid waste treatment sites and slabbed incinerator sites; and (e) by enhancing the greening of the UNISFA camps. The mission plans to continue its tree-planting initiative, with the goal of having more than 12,000 trees planted within its camps by June 2020. Additional greening is planned for the newly constructed accommodation sites as well as the proposed recreational area within UNISFA headquarters (A/73/742, para. 24). The Secretary-General also indicates that, in order to comply with the mission-wide environmental action plan, UNISFA will commence a multi-year project for the acquisition of equipment, including incinerators, organic waste rotational composters, a meter to measure water supply and treated wastewater and equipment for monitoring air quality. **The Advisory Committee acknowledges the mission's continued efforts to reduce its environmental footprint.**

*Gender balance*

37. The Advisory Committee was provided with the following table, which shows a breakdown of UNISFA personnel by gender. **The Committee notes the low level of female representation in all staff categories and encourages the mission to increase female representation.**

**Civilian personnel of UNISFA by gender as at 30 June 2018**

(percentage)

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
International staff		
P-5 and above	25	75
P-1 to P-4	15	85
Field Service	20	80
National Professional Officers	–	100
National General Service staff	8	92
United Nations Volunteers (Intl)	21	79

*Efficiency gains*

38. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that cost estimates for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 take into account efficiency gains of \$1,875,300 resulting from the non-renewal of the current contract for one CRJ-200 fixed-wing aircraft, for which annual operating costs totalled \$2,492,100. UNISFA will replace the CRJ-200 with an Embraer ERJ 145, the use and cost of which will be shared between UNISFA and UNMISS. The cost to UNISFA is estimated at \$616,800 for the 2019/20 period ([A/73/742](#), paras. 57).

**V. Conclusion**

39. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNISFA for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 are indicated in section VI of the performance report ([A/73/610](#)). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the unencumbered balance of \$675,200 for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, as well as other income/adjustments amounting to \$4,222,300 for the period ended 30 June 2018, be credited to Member States.**

40. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNISFA for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 are indicated in section IV of the proposed budget ([A/73/742](#)). **Taking into account its observations and recommendations above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed resources be reduced by \$3,041,400 from \$267,918,400 to \$264,877,000. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate the amount of \$264,877,000 for the maintenance of the mission for the 12-month period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.**

*Documentation*

- Report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 ([A/73/610](#))
- Report of the Secretary-General on the budget of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 ([A/73/742](#))
- Report of the Board of Auditors on United Nations peacekeeping operations for the 12-month period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 ([A/73/5 \(Vol. II\)](#))
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the United Nations peacekeeping operations and report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2017 ([A/72/850](#))
- Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2018 ([A/73/750](#))
- Report of the Secretary-General on the overview of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations: budget performance for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 and budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 ([A/73/776](#))
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei ([A/72/789/Add.13](#))
- General Assembly resolution [72/289](#)
- Security Council resolutions [2024 \(2011\)](#), [2075 \(2012\)](#), [2416 \(2018\)](#), [2445 \(2018\)](#) and [2465 \(2019\)](#)