



General Assembly

Distr.: General
30 December 2020

Original: English

Seventy-fifth session

Agenda item 142

Programme planning

Report of the Fifth Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 2020, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its seventy-fifth session the item entitled “Programme planning” and to allocate it to the Fifth Committee.

2. During the main part of the seventy-fifth session, the Fifth Committee met formally and remotely owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, during which it considered the item. The Committee formally considered the item in person at its 3rd and 8th meetings, on 12 October and 30 December 2020. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee’s formal consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records.¹

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on its sixtieth session (A/75/16);

(b) Reports of the Secretary-General on the proposed programme budget for 2021: programme plan for programmes and subprogrammes and programme performance information (A/75/6 (Sect. 2), A/75/6 (Sect. 3), A/75/6 (Sect. 4), A/75/6 (Sect. 5), A/75/6 (Sect. 6), A/75/6 (Sect. 8), A/75/6 (Sect. 9), A/75/6 (Sect. 10), A/75/6 (Sect. 11), A/75/6 (Sect. 12), A/75/6 (Sect. 13), A/75/6 (Sect. 14), A/75/6 (Sect. 15), A/75/6 (Sect. 16), A/75/6 (Sect.16)/Corr.1, A/75/6 (Sect. 17), A/75/6 (Sect. 18), A/75/6 (Sect. 19), A/75/6 (Sect. 20), A/75/6 (Sect. 21), A/75/6 (Sect. 22), A/75/6 (Sect. 24), A/75/6 (Sect. 25), A/75/6 (Sect. 26), A/75/6 (Sect. 27), A/75/6 (Sect. 27)/Corr.1, A/75/6 (Sect. 28), A/75/6 (Sect. 29A), A/75/6 (Sect. 29B), A/75/6

¹ A/C.5/75/SR.3 and A/C.5/75/SR.8.



(Sect. 29C), A/75/6 (Sect. 29E), A/75/6 (Sect. 29F), A/75/6 (Sect. 29G), A/75/6 (Sect. 29G)/Corr.1, A/75/6 (Sect. 30), A/75/6 (Sect. 31) and A/75/6 (Sect. 34)).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution [A/C.5/75/L.5](#)

4. At the 8th meeting, on 30 December, the representative of the Russian Federation, also on behalf of Belarus, Burundi, China, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Myanmar, Nicaragua, the Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Zimbabwe, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Programme planning" ([A/C.5/75/L.5](#)).

5. At the same meeting, the representative of Switzerland (also on behalf of Liechtenstein) requested a recorded vote on the draft resolution.

6. Also at the same meeting, before the vote, statements were made by the representatives of Qatar and Germany (on behalf of the European Union and Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, which aligned themselves with the statement), in explanation of vote.

7. Also at its 8th meeting, the Committee rejected the draft resolution by a recorded vote of 92 to 21, with 45 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burundi, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia,² Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe.

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Saint Vincent and the

² The delegation of Ethiopia subsequently indicated that it had intended to abstain.

Grenadines, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam.

8. At the same meeting, after the vote, the representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and Ethiopia made statements in explanation of vote.

B. Draft resolution [A/C.5/75/L.7](#)

9. At its 8th meeting, on 30 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled “Programme planning” ([A/C.5/75/L.7](#)), submitted by the Chair of the Committee on the basis of informal consultations coordinated by the representative of Norway.

10. At the same meeting, the representative of Qatar orally proposed an amendment to the draft resolution by which a new operative paragraph would be inserted, relating to programme 6, Legal affairs, and reading:

Further approves the programme plan for programme 6, Legal affairs, of the proposed programme budget for 2021, as contained in the report of the Secretary-General ([A/75/6 \(Sect. 8\)](#));

11. Also at the same meeting, the representative of the Russian Federation requested a recorded vote on the proposed amendment.

12. Also at the 8th meeting, before the vote, statements were made by the representatives of the United States of America and the Syrian Arab Republic in explanation of vote.

13. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the proposed amendment to draft resolution [A/C.5/75/L.7](#) by a recorded vote of 89 to 17, with 48 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen.

Against:

Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burundi, China, Cuba, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, India,

Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam.

14. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted the draft resolution as a whole, as orally amended, without a vote (see para. 16).

15. After the adoption of the draft resolution as a whole, as orally amended, the representatives of the Russian Federation, Myanmar, the Syrian Arab Republic, Cuba, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Nicaragua, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Islamic Republic of Iran and China made statements, indicating that they wished to disassociate themselves from the oral amendment to the draft resolution.

III. Recommendation of the Fifth Committee

16. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Programme planning

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [37/234](#) of 21 December 1982, [38/227 A](#) of 20 December 1983, [41/213](#) of 19 December 1986, [55/234](#) of 23 December 2000, [56/253](#) of 24 December 2001, [57/282](#) of 20 December 2002, [58/268](#) and [58/269](#) of 23 December 2003, [59/275](#) of 23 December 2004, [60/257](#) of 8 May 2006, [61/235](#) of 22 December 2006, [62/224](#) of 22 December 2007, [63/247](#) of 24 December 2008, [64/229](#) of 22 December 2009, [65/244](#) of 24 December 2010, [66/8](#) of 11 November 2011, [67/236](#) of 24 December 2012, [68/20](#) of 4 December 2013, [69/17](#) of 18 November 2014, [70/8](#) of 13 November 2015, [71/6](#) of 27 October 2016, [72/9](#) of 17 November 2017, [72/266 A](#) of 24 December 2017, [72/266 B](#) of 5 July 2018, section III of its resolution [72/262 C](#) of 5 July 2018 and its resolutions [73/269](#) of 22 December 2018 and [74/251](#) of 27 December 2019,

Recalling also the terms of reference of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, as outlined in the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 2008 (LX) of 14 May 1976,

Recalling further the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation,¹ by which the relevant programmes and subprogrammes of the proposed strategic framework shall be reviewed by the relevant sectoral, functional and regional intergovernmental bodies, if possible during the regular cycle of their meetings,

Having considered the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the work of its sixtieth session² and the reports of the Secretary-General on the proposed programme budget for 2021: part II, proposed programme plan for 2021 and programme performance for 2019,³

1. *Reaffirms* the role of the Committee for Programme and Coordination as the main subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council for planning, programming and coordination;

2. *Also reaffirms* the role of the Committee for Programme and Coordination in verifying that the programmes of activities of the Organization are implemented in line with the legislative mandates and that the full implementation of regulations and rules is ensured;

¹ ST/SGB/2018/3.

² *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-fifth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/75/16).*

³ [A/75/6 \(Sect. 2\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 3\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 4\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 5\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 6\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 8\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 9\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 10\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 11\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 12\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 13\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 14\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 15\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 16\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 16\)/Corr.1](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 17\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 18\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 19\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 20\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 21\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 22\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 24\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 25\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 26\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 27\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 27\)/Corr.1](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 28\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 29\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 29A\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 29B\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 29C\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 29E\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 29F\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 29G\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 29G\)/Corr.1](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 30\)](#), [A/75/6 \(Sect. 31\)](#) and [A/75/6 \(Sect. 34\)](#).

3. *Re-emphasizes* the role of the plenary and the Main Committees of the General Assembly in reviewing and taking action on the appropriate recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination relevant to their work, in accordance with regulation 4.10 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation;

4. *Stresses* that setting the priorities of the United Nations is the prerogative of the Member States, as reflected in legislative mandates;

5. *Reiterates* the need for Member States to participate fully in the budget preparation process, from its early stages and throughout the process;

6. *Recalls* its resolution 72/266 A, in which it approved the change from a biennial to an annual budget period on a trial basis, beginning with the programme budget for 2020;

7. *Also recalls* paragraph 13 of its resolution 72/266 A, and reaffirms that no changes to the budget methodology, established budgetary procedures and practices or the financial regulations may be implemented without prior review and approval by the General Assembly in accordance with established budgetary procedures;

8. *Recommends* that the Committee for Programme and Coordination, in accordance with its mandate, provide recommendations on all programmes of the proposed programme budget;

9. *Confirms* that, in the rare event that the Committee for Programme and Coordination cannot provide conclusions and recommendations on a given subprogramme or programme of the proposed programme budget, the plenary or the relevant Main Committee or Main Committees of the General Assembly responsible for those mandates will have the subprogramme or programme before it in order to provide any conclusions and recommendations on the said subprogramme or programme to the Fifth Committee, at the earliest opportunity, for timely consideration by the Committee;

10. *Expresses its support* for the efforts of the Secretariat to better engage and support programme managers with the aim of making the Organization more effective, and welcomes the commitment and ongoing efforts of the Secretariat to improve the programmatic aspects of the programme budget;

11. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to ensure that results and, where possible, performance measures actually reflect achievements and impacts in the implementation of the programmes of the Organization and not those of individual Member States;

12. *Endorses* the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the proposed programme plan for 2021 and programme performance for 2019, contained in its report on the work of its sixtieth session, subject to the provisions of the present resolution;

13. *Approves*, on an exceptional basis and without creating a precedent, for programmes 3, 7, 13, 14, 20, 23 and 25 of the proposed programme budget for 2021, a programme narrative that is composed solely of the list of mandates at the programme level and the objectives approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/6 and the deliverables for 2021 at the subprogramme level;

14. *Also approves*, on an exceptional basis and without creating a precedent, in the case of the programmes mentioned in paragraph 13 above, where new mandates imply changes to the objectives at the subprogramme level as approved in their agreed

formulation under its resolution [71/6](#), the relevant objectives as updated in the proposed programme budget for 2021;

15. *Further approves* the programme plan for programme 6, Legal affairs, of the proposed programme budget for 2021, as contained in the report of the Secretary-General;⁴

16. *Endorses* the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the United Nations system support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development,⁵ contained in its report on the work of its sixtieth session, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure the timely implementation of the recommendations.

⁴ [A/75/6 \(Sect. 8\)](#).

⁵ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-fifth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/75/16)*, chap. III.