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Proposed programme budget for 2021

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session

Twenty-third report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for 2021

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General ([A/75/556](#)) requesting the approval of the General Assembly of an additional appropriation relating to requirements arising from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, held from 17 September 2019 to 15 September 2020, for which no provisions have been made in the proposed programme budget for 2021. During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee received additional information and clarification from the representatives of the Secretary-General, concluding with written responses received on 18 November 2020.

2. At its seventy-fourth session, the General Assembly adopted two decisions with budgetary implications for 2021, namely 74/550 B and 74/567.

Decision 74/550 B, on the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

3. In its decision 74/550 B, the General Assembly decided to hold the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Kyoto, Japan, from 7 to 12 March 2021, with pre-Congress consultations to be held on 6 March 2021. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to ensure proper follow-up to resolution [74/171](#) and decision 74/550 B and to report thereon, through the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, to the Assembly at its seventy-sixth session. Pursuant to Assembly resolution [73/184](#), the Fourteenth Crime Congress was originally scheduled to be held in Kyoto from 20 to 27 April 2020, with pre-Congress consultations to be held on 19 April 2020. In its decision 74/550 of 13 April 2020, the Assembly noted with concern the situation concerning the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and decided to postpone the holding of the Fourteenth Congress until further notice.



4. As shown in table 1 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/75/556), a provision of \$2,149,500 was approved in the programme budget for 2020 comprising \$1,508,300 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and \$641,200 under section 16, International drug control, crime and terrorism prevention and criminal justice. Preparatory activities for the Fourteenth Congress commenced in 2020 and expenditures are being incurred in 2020 for those activities, including under sections 2 and 16. Actual requirements for 2020 are estimated at \$639,900, comprising \$553,000 under section 2, and \$86,900 under section 16.

5. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that much of the preparatory work held in 2020, which will have to be repeated for the meeting in 2021, included support for: (a) negotiations on the outcome document of the Fourteenth Congress; (b) the preparation and coordination of substantive documentation for the Congress; (c) liaison with the host country and with other Member States; (d) the substantive review of proposals from individual experts; (e) the preparation of briefing notes and background information for the meetings of senior officials; (f) the registration of participants and the sending of invitations; and (g) the preparation of information for participants and the related correspondence. The Committee was further informed that the translation of pre-session documents was completed in 2020 and that the revised agenda, the consolidated update to the 2020 documents and post-session documents would need to be translated in 2021.

6. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the support to be provided to the Fourteenth Congress would constitute an additional deliverable for 2021 and would require estimated resources of \$1,411,200, for which no provision has been made in the proposed programme budget for 2021 (A/75/556, para. 5 and table 1). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the ratio between in-person and online participation would need to be adjusted depending on the COVID-19 pandemic situation. It is currently expected that there will be an in-person component, at least for Member States that do not have representation in Japan (which is the case for a considerable number of least developed countries), and whose representatives will have to travel to Japan to attend the Congress. If no in-person participation is possible, the Congress would take place in an online format.

7. Table 1 of the report of the Secretary-General shows that the total revised requirements for 2020 and 2021 amount to \$2,051,100, reflecting a decrease of \$98,400 compared with the approved resources in 2020, comprising lower requirements under different categories of expenditure as follows: (a) \$34,900 under interpretation services, attributable to the reduced number of days for which interpretation services will be required, offset in part by indemnity payments made to freelance interpreters for the cancellation in 2020; (b) \$27,900 under supplies and materials, attributable to the lower unit cost of portable storage devices; and (c) \$30,300 under travel of representatives and \$5,300 under travel of staff, owing to the reduced number of meeting days scheduled for the Fourteenth Congress in 2021 (ibid., paras. 5, 8 and 9). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the 2020 requirement of \$75,000 under interpretation was related to the cancellation fee for interpretation (see also para. 5 above).

Decision 74/567, on the Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes

8. In its resolution 74/247 of 27 December 2019, the General Assembly decided that the Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes should convene a three-day organizational session in August 2020,

in New York, in order to agree on an outline and modalities for its further activities, to be submitted to the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session for its consideration and approval. In its decision 74/567 of 14 August 2020, the Assembly: (a) noted with concern the situation concerning COVID-19; (b) decided to postpone the organizational session of the Ad Hoc Committee mandated under paragraph 3 of resolution 74/247 to a date as early as conditions permitted but not later than 1 March 2021; and (c) confirmed that the report of the organizational session of the Ad Hoc Committee, including the agreed outline and modalities for the further activities of the Committee, and any budgetary implications, should be submitted to the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session for its consideration and approval.

9. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that pursuant to General Assembly resolution 74/247, the full provision of \$194,400 was approved in the programme budget for 2020 for the three-day organizational session of the Ad Hoc Committee scheduled for August 2020. The preparatory activities for the organizational session of the Ad Hoc Committee commenced in 2020, and expenditures are still being incurred in 2020 for those activities, including under sections 2 and 16. Actual requirements for 2020 are estimated at \$14,900, comprising \$6,200 under section 2, and \$8,700 under section 16 (A/75/556, paras. 14, 16 and table 2). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the expenditures incurred in 2020 included editing and translation of the pre-session documents, namely, the background paper and provisional agenda. In addition, the pre-session documentation would require a technical update in 2021, including the dates of the organizational session, and post-session documents would also need to be translated in 2021.

Overall requirements

10. The Secretary-General indicates that the overall budgetary impact for 2021 resulting from the adoption of General Assembly decisions 74/550 B and 74/567, and for which no provision had been made in the proposed programme budget for 2021, amounts to \$1,590,700, comprising \$1,024,600 under section 2 and \$566,100 under section 16 (*ibid.*, table 3).

11. The Secretary-General further indicates that the difference between the approved budget for 2020 and the final expenditure will be surrendered in the context of the financial performance report for 2020, to be presented at the main part of the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly (*ibid.*, para. 16).

Conclusion

12. The action to be taken by the General Assembly is set out in paragraph 18 of the report of the Secretary-General. **For the implementation of General Assembly decisions 74/550 B and 74/567, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly:**

(a) **Approve additional appropriations, representing a charge against the contingency fund for 2021, in the amount of \$1,590,700, which is non-recurrent, comprising \$1,024,600 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, and \$566,100 under section 16, International drug control, crime and terrorism prevention and criminal justice, of the proposed programme budget for 2021;**

(b) **Approve an additional appropriation in the amount of \$3,300 under section 36, Staff assessment, of the proposed programme budget for 2021, to be offset by an equivalent amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.**