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### Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

## **Budget performance for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara**

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

Appropriation for 2020/21	\$57,524,400
Expenditure for 2020/21	\$56,239,800
Unencumbered balance for 2020/21	\$1,284,900
Appropriation for 2021/22	\$56,537,800
Projected expenditure for 2021/22 <sup>a</sup>	\$56,450,000
Projected underexpenditure for 2021/22 <sup>a</sup>	\$87,800
Proposal submitted by the Secretary-General for 2022/23	\$61,039,200
Adjustment recommended by the Advisory Committee for 2022/23	(\$446,500)
Recommendation of the Advisory Committee for 2022/23	\$60,592,700

<sup>a</sup> Estimates as at 31 March 2022.



## I. Introduction

1. During its consideration of the financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) ([A/76/529](#) and [A/76/692](#) (advance version)), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions met online with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 25 March 2022. The comments and recommendations of the Committee on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations are contained in its report ([A/76/760](#)), and those pertaining to the findings and recommendations of the Board of Auditors on United Nations peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 can be found in its related report ([A/76/735](#)).

## II. Budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

2. By its resolution [74/294](#) and decision 74/571, the General Assembly appropriated an amount of \$57,524,400 gross (\$54,996,800 net) for the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. Expenditure for the period totalled \$56,239,800 gross (\$53,585,300 net), for a budget implementation rate of 97.8 per cent. The resulting unencumbered balance of \$1,284,600, in gross terms, represents 2.2 per cent of the overall level of resources approved for the financial period.

3. The unencumbered balance of \$1,284,600 of the overall level of resources approved for 2020/21 reflects lower-than-budgeted expenditure under operational costs (\$1,867,800, or 6.5 per cent), offset in part by higher requirements under civilian personnel (\$1,046,600, or 5.0 per cent). Summary information on the redeployment (\$1,047,700, or 1.8 per cent) from group III to group II is provided in section III.B of the report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance for the Mission in 2020/21 ([A/76/529](#)). A detailed analysis of variances is provided in section IV of the report.

4. The Advisory Committee was informed that unliquidated obligations amounted to \$7,734,200 as at 30 June 2021, compared with \$6,811,800 as at 30 June 2020. **The Advisory Committee notes that the level of unliquidated obligations increased by \$922,400, or 13.5 per cent, for 2020/21, compared with the 2019/20 financial period.**

## III. Information on performance for the current period

5. With respect to current and projected expenditure for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 March 2022, the estimated total expenditure amounted to \$43,834,990. At the end of the current period, the total expenditure was estimated at \$56,450,000, with a projected unencumbered balance of \$87,800, or 0.2 per cent.

6. The Advisory Committee was also informed that, as at 31 December 2021, claims for the reimbursement of troop costs had been settled up to September 2021, leaving an outstanding balance of \$57,000. Contingent-owned equipment had been certified and paid up to 30 September 2021, leaving an outstanding balance of \$104,000 as at 31 December 2021. With regard to death and disability compensation, as at 31 January 2022, an amount of \$80,000 had been paid to settle two claims since the inception of the Mission, and no claims were pending.

7. The Advisory Committee was further informed that, as at 23 February 2022, a total of \$1,476,854,000 had been assessed on Member States in respect of MINURSO since its inception. Payments received as at the same date amounted to \$1,417,090,000, resulting in an outstanding balance of \$59,765,000. The Committee was informed that, as at 21 February 2022, the cash available to the Mission amounted to \$14,006,000, including loans in the amount of \$15 million from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, which is sufficient to cover the three-month cash operating reserve of \$13,987,000 (excluding reimbursements to troop- and police-contributing countries).

### **Outstanding assessed contributions**

(Millions of United States dollars)

<i>As at 31 December 2018</i>	<i>As at 31 December 2019</i>	<i>As at 31 December 2020</i>	<i>As at 31 December 2021</i>	<i>As at 9 March 2022</i>
44.8	70.0	60.3	41.8	57.3

8. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with an update on the cash position (\$15.8 million as at 7 March 2022) and the status of outstanding assessed contributions of MINURSO (see table above). **The Advisory Committee is increasingly concerned about the continuing deterioration of the cash position of the Mission, as the outstanding contributions of \$57.3 million are higher than the appropriation of \$56.5 million approved for the 2021/22 period for MINURSO. The Committee recalls that the General Assembly has repeatedly urged all Member States to fulfil their financial obligations, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations, on time, in full and without conditions (A/75/822/Add.5, para. 9).**

## **IV. Proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023**

### **A. Mandate and planning assumptions**

9. The mandate of MINURSO was established by the Security Council in its resolution [690 \(1991\)](#) and extended most recently, until 31 October 2022, in its resolution [2602 \(2021\)](#). The planning assumptions and mission support initiatives for 2022/23 are summarized in section I.B of the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed budget for Mission for the period ([A/76/692](#)).

### **B. Resource requirements**

10. The total resource requirements in an amount of \$61,039,200 requested for the 2022/23 period represent an increase of \$4,501,400, or 8.0 per cent, compared with the provision of \$56,537,800 approved for the 2021/22 period (see table below).

**Financial resources**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Category	Apportionment (2020/21)	Expenditures (2020/21)	Apportionment (2021/22)	Expenditure 31 March 2022	Cost estimates (2022/23)	Variance	
						Amount	Percentage
Military and police personnel	7 664.5	7 201.1	7 703.9	5 915.0	8 158.1	454.2	5.9
Civilian personnel	21 011.4	22 058.0	22 178.1	17 471.2	24 545.7	2 367.6	10.7
Operational costs	28 848.5	26 980.7	26 655.8	20 448.7	28 335.4	1 679.6	6.3
<b>Gross requirements</b>	<b>57 524.4</b>	<b>56 239.8</b>	<b>56 537.8</b>	<b>43 834.9</b>	<b>61 039.2</b>	<b>4 501.4</b>	<b>8.0</b>

*Note:* Detailed information on the financial resources proposed and an analysis of variances are provided in sections II and III of the proposed budget (A/76/692).

11. The increase is attributable primarily to higher requirements under international staff (\$1,416,900) and national staff (\$720,400) (see para. 14 below), facilities and infrastructure (\$798,500) (see para. 26 (b) below) and air operations (\$837,100).

**1. Military and police personnel**

Category	Authorized 2021/22 <sup>a</sup>	Proposed 2022/23	Variance
Military observers	218	218	—
Military contingent personnel	27	27	—
United Nations police	12	12	—

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

12. The proposed resources for military and police personnel for 2022/23 reflect an increase of \$454,200, or 5.9 per cent, compared with the apportionment for 2021/22. The proposed increase is mainly attributable to the higher cost of mission subsistence allowance under military observers (\$701,400), offset in part by lower requirements under rations for military observers (\$189,600) and military contingents (\$88,200) due to the depreciation of the euro against the United States dollar (A/76/692, paras. 69–71). The Advisory Committee further discusses the increase in rates for mission substance allowance in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/76/760).

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

**2. Civilian personnel**

Category	Approved 2021/22	Proposed 2022/23	Variance
Posts			
International staff	82	85	3
National Professional Officers	2	2	—
National General Service	161	161	—

<i>Category</i>	<i>Approved 2021/22</i>	<i>Proposed 2022/23</i>	<i>Variance</i>
United Nations Volunteers	18	18	–
Government-provided personnel	10	10	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>3</b>

14. The proposed resources for civilian personnel for 2022/23 reflect an increase of \$2,367,600, or 10.7 per cent, for 2022/23 due mainly to: (a) increased requirements under international staff (\$1,416,900), owing to the application of higher rates based on revised salary scales as at 1 January 2022 and the proposed establishment of two new international posts (1 P-4 and 1 Field Service post, see paras. 16 and 17 below and [A/76/692](#), paras. 49 and 50); and (b) increased requirements under national staff (\$720,400), reflecting the application of a higher step level in the computation of national General Service staff salaries, the application of a revised salary scale at the Laayoune duty station and the strengthening of the United States dollar against the Moroccan dirham ([A/76/692](#), para. 74).

#### *Recommendations on posts and positions*

15. The Secretary-General proposes a total of 276 civilian posts and positions for 2022/23 reflecting: (a) the establishment of one new Professional post (1 P-4 Medical Officer; see paras. 16 and 17 below); (b) the establishment of one new general temporary assistance Professional position (1 P-4 Programme Management Officer; see paras. 18 and 19 below); (c) the establishment of one new Field Service post (Air Operations Assistant; see [A/76/692](#), paras. 49 and 50); (d) the abolishment of one United Nations Volunteer position (Air Terminal Assistant) and the establishment of one United Nations Volunteer position (Data Analyst) (*ibid.*, paras. 49 and 52); and (e) the reassignment of one national General Service post within the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (*ibid.*, paras. 42 and 43).

16. With respect to the proposed establishment of the post of Medical Officer (P-4) (*ibid.*, para. 48), the Secretary-General indicates that the incumbent of the post would be responsible for: targeting follow-ups related to the provision of medical services; liaising and coordinating with United Nations Headquarters on occupational safety, medical and casualty evacuations and planning for contingencies; conducting follow-ups with treating physicians; and handling all medical aspects concerning civilian personnel, especially during the rotation of military medical personnel. It is also indicated that the proposed establishment of the post is pursuant to the recommendations of an occupational risk assessment conducted by United Nations Headquarters. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with a summary of the findings and recommendations of the occupational assessment, conducted in 2017, and was informed that, while aspects of the assessment remained valid, the overall findings should be updated as the situation on the ground had changed fundamentally both operationally and politically since 2017.

17. In his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the Mission medical unit comprises 20 military personnel and that additional requirements for individual contractual services have been budgeted for the 2022/23 period with the aim of providing support (1 nurse, 1 paramedic and 3 ambulance drivers) to the unit during the deployment of medical personnel to team sites (*ibid.*, paras. 15 and 85). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the medical unit maintained a clinic in Laayoune and had limited capacities, owing to the shift of personnel to team sites, according to the occupational assessment of 2017. The operational effectiveness of the unit was further hampered by the rotation of the Force Medical Officer and the

Senior Medical Officer within the same month each year, presenting a challenge to the continuity of functions and oversight in the provision of services. The Committee was also informed that the current Force Medical Officer had a military background without the sufficient expertise to advise the Mission leadership on policy issues or to address the administrative and care issues of a mission in a family duty station. **The Advisory Committee notes the existing medical services capacity within the Mission, including under individual contractual services, and is of the view that the proposed functions of Medical Officer can be undertaken at the P-3 level. Therefore, while the Committee recommends against the establishment of the post of Medical Officer (P-4), it recommends the establishment of one post of Medical Officer (P-3).**

18. In his report, the Secretary-General also proposes the establishment of a temporary position of Programme Management Officer (P-4) (*ibid.*, paras. 39–41) as chief of the mine action programme within the Mission, delivered to date through the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with a cost comparison of both arrangements, which indicated that the shifting of resources for mine action management from UNOPS to MINURSO would yield reduced requirements of approximately \$67,900 in the 2022/23 period, inclusive of the application of a 50 per cent vacancy rate. The Committee notes, however, from the information provided to it upon enquiry that, once the position is filled, the use of the general temporary assistance modality for the mine action component would be more expensive in future periods than the current contractual arrangement with UNOPS, by approximately \$105,000 per year, subject to applicable vacancy and costing factors.

19. With regard to mine action activities to be implemented by the Mission in 2022/23, the Secretary-General indicates in his report that the activities have been halted as a result of the ongoing hostilities. MINURSO will continue, however, to work with parties east of the berm in gathering information on the location of hostilities and on the munitions used, while west of the berm, demining activities will be conducted by the Royal Moroccan Army, with technical assistance provided by MINURSO through the Mine Action Service (*ibid.*, para. 8). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that mine action activities had not been totally suspended but were limited to providing support for surveying road and incident sites, supporting investigative work on alleged air-to-ground attacks and raising awareness among local populations moving east of the berm of the dangers posed by explosive ordnance. **The Advisory Committee notes that, following the resumption of hostilities, the mine action work of the Mission has centred on providing support to activities indirectly related to mine clearance and providing awareness training on mines and explosive remnants of war, and is of the view that the proposed activities can be undertaken at the P-3 level. Therefore, while the Committee recommends against the establishment of the temporary position of Programme Management Officer (P-4), it recommends the establishment of one temporary Programme Management Officer (P-3) position.** The Committee considers matters pertaining to demining activities, including the management fees paid to UNOPS, in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations ([A/76/760](#)).

20. With regard to the proposed establishment of the Data Analyst (United Nations Volunteer) position ([A/76/692](#), paras. 51 and 52), the Secretary-General indicates that the proposal is tied to the planned creation of a Fuel Fraud and Loss Prevention Consumption Monitoring Cell within the Fuel Unit of MINURSO. A dedicated post of Data Analyst is proposed in order to manage the cell and conduct fuel consumption and monitoring analysis using the electronic fuel management system, as existing staff of the Fuel Unit (2 national General Service staff and 2 United Nations

Volunteers) perform other roles and responsibilities in fuel management. The Advisory Committee recalls its concurrence in its previous report (see [A/75/822/Add.5](#), para. 24 (b)) with the recommendation of the Board of Auditors ([A/75/5 \(Vol. II\)](#), chap. II, para. 275) that the Administration provide training to staff members in the recording, monitoring, analysis and investigation of fuel consumption data. The Committee was informed that, as part of the actions taken by the Mission to implement the recommendation of the Board, MINURSO had trained an internal staff member tasked with identifying unusual transactions in the electronic fuel management system. Upon enquiry, the Committee was also informed that training had been delivered during the deployment of the electronic fuel management system and that the Mission had entered into a service-level agreement with the Office of Information and Communications Technology in Bangkok for training in data analysis, receiving such training from November 2020 to June 2021. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the Mission should seek further efficiencies in the effective management of fuel consumption, including in the analysis of data on irregular transactions, within existing resources and through the continued upskilling and training of existing staff. The Committee therefore recommends against the establishment of the proposed position of Data Analyst (United Nations Volunteer).**

#### *Vacancy rates and vacant posts*

21. The table below provides a summary of the vacancy rates for civilian personnel experienced during the 2020/21 and 2021/22 periods, as well as those proposed for 2022/23. The Advisory Committee notes the application of rates that differ from the actual vacancy rates experienced during the current period, namely the proposed 7.0 proposed vacancy rate for international staff and the 2.0 per cent vacancy rate for national General Service staff, compared with the actual average rates of 8.5 and 5.0 per cent, respectively, as at 31 March 2022.

#### **Vacancy rates**

(Percentage)

Category	Budgeted 2020/21	Actual 2020/21	Budgeted 2021/22	Actual as at 31 January 2022	Actual as at 28 February 2022	Actual as at 31 March 2022	Actual average as at 31 March 2022	Proposed 2022/23
<b>Civilian personnel</b>								
International staff	7.0	9.8	7.0	8.5	8.5	11.0	8.5	7.0
National staff								
National Professional Officers	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2.0
National General Service staff	2.0	1.9	2.0	11.8	9.9	9.9	5.0	2.0
United Nations Volunteers	20.0	27.8	20.0	16.7	33.3	33.3	22.2	20.0
Government-provided personnel	90.0	100.0	90.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	90.0

22. **The Advisory Committee again reiterates its view that proposed vacancy rates should be based, as much as possible, on actual rates. In cases where the proposed rates differ from the actual rates, clear justification should be provided systematically in the proposed budget and related documents (see [A/75/822/Add.5](#), para. 20 and [A/74/737/Add.1](#), para. 16).**

23. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 15 March 2022, 28 posts were vacant (3 P-5, 1 P-4, 2 P-3, 17 national General Service staff and 5 United Nations Volunteers) and that no posts had been vacant for more than two



years. The Advisory Committee trusts that all vacant posts will be filled expeditiously.

24. Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 17, 19 and 20 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposals of the Secretary-General for civilian staff. Any related operational costs should be adjusted accordingly.

### 3. Operational costs

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Category	Apportionment (2020/21)	Expenditure (2020/21)	Apportionment (2021/22)	Expenditure 31 March 2022	Cost estimates (2022/23)	Variance	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	Amount (6)=(5)-(2)	Percentage (7)=(6)÷(3)
<b>Operational costs</b>							
Civilian electoral observers	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Consultants and consulting services	26.5	—	13.5	4.3	13.5	—	—
Official travel	659.7	324.8	521.8	336.0	629.8	108.0	20.7
Facilities and infrastructure	4 551.0	6 309.9	4 391.5	3 102.4	5 190.0	798.5	18.2
Ground transportation	2 014.3	1 674.2	2 633.0	615.3	2 649.1	16.1	0.6
Air operations	13 361.4	9 942.3	10 433.6	10 074.8	11 270.7	837.1	8.0
Marine operations	59.6	184.0	55.3	96.8	65.0	9.7	17.5
Communications and information technology	2 760.0	3 027.2	2 841.1	2 040.9	2 902.6	61.5	2.2
Medical	154.7	163.6	172.0	142.7	249.9	77.9	45.3
Special equipment	—	—	100.0	—	—	(100.0)	(100.0)
Other supplies, services and equipment	5 261.3	5 354.7	5 494.0	4 035.5	5 364.8	(129.2)	(2.4)
Quick-impact projects	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>28 848.5</b>	<b>26 980.7</b>	<b>26 655.8</b>	<b>20 448.7</b>	<b>28 335.4</b>	<b>1 679.6</b>	<b>6.3</b>

25. The proposed resources for operational costs for the 2022/23 period represent a net increase of \$1,679,600, or 6.3 per cent, compared with the resources approved for the 2021/22 period. The proposed net increase for 2022/23 reflects lower requirements for special equipment and other supplies, services and equipment, offset in part by proposed increases under all other object classes, apart from consultants and consulting services.

26. **The Advisory Committee is not fully convinced that the justifications provided support some of the requirements listed below and makes the following observations and recommendations:**

(a) *Official travel.* A provision of \$629,800 is proposed for 2022/23, representing an increase of \$108,000, or 20.7 per cent, as compared with the approved level of \$521,800 for 2021/22. Of the total travel resources for 2022/23, \$167,700 is proposed for official travel, training, representing an increase of \$43,300, or 34.8 per cent, while actual expenditure as at 31 March 2022 amounted to \$24,632. The Secretary-General indicates in his report that the increase in travel requirements is due to the higher number of within-mission trips for operational and training activities, owing to the easing of coronavirus disease (COVID-19)-related travel restrictions (A/76/692, para. 79). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed increase reflected the resumption of regular weekly flights east of the berm for maintenance repairs following the easing of COVID-19-related



travel restrictions, as well as new requirements for in-mission training for supervisory skills and the electronic rations management system, and outside-mission mandatory training, including workshops on rations quality management and dangerous goods handling, which could not be attended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that remote meetings and training activities had been undertaken by the Mission in response to COVID-19, such as the virtual delivery of the MINURSO induction programme, and that the use of virtual technologies was taken into account in the level of travel requirements proposed, with online meetings and training being incorporated to the maximum extent possible. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic should be further applied and reiterates that greater use should be made of virtual meetings and online training tools and that travel for workshops, conferences and meetings should be kept to a minimum and, if proposed, detailed justifications should be provided. The Committee therefore recommends against the proposed increase of \$108,000 to the provision for official travel (\$629,800);**

(b) *Facilities and infrastructure.* A provision of \$5,190,000 is proposed for 2022/23, representing an increase of \$798,500, or 18.2 per cent, as compared with the approved level of \$4,391,500 for 2021/22. An amount of \$1,625,500, representing an increase of \$934,000, or 135.1 per cent, is requested for maintenance services, primarily to provide for a new contract for technical support services for the maintenance and repair of team sites east of the berm (see also [A/76/692](#), para. 80). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, following the resumption of hostilities in November 2020, restrictions on air and ground movements had interrupted regular maintenance activities at team sites east of the berm, beginning to compromise the operational effectiveness of the Mission. The Committee was also informed that the proposed technical support services contract was part of a three-pronged logistical contingency plan for the maintenance of team sites east of the berm (see also [A/76/692](#), para. 29), comprising: (a) “sling operations” for the transport of heavier equipment using United Nations rotary-wing aircraft; (b) the technical support services contract, which would allow the Mission to bring in contractors to address infrastructure maintenance and repair issues; and (c) ad hoc temporary arrangements to ensure life sustainment at team sites east of the berm. The Committee was further informed that the technical services contract would be for a total period of three years, renewable in annual increments, and would cover areas requiring the presence of MINURSO engineering, transport and life support staff. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that additional efficiencies could be found within the overall implementation of the three-pronged logistical contingency plan to address the Mission’s critical infrastructure maintenance and repair requirements and recommends a reduction of 20 per cent (\$159,700) to the proposed increase under facilities and infrastructure (\$798,500);**

(c) *Communications and information technology.* Proposed requirements in the amount of \$2,902,600 reflect a net increase of \$61,500, or 2.2 per cent. The increase is attributed primarily to higher requirements for the maintenance of communications and information technology (an increase of \$64,600, or 7.7 per cent). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed of the overall approach of the Mission to the replacement of obsolete communications and information technology, including a list of obsolete systems and equipment to be replaced, and notes that approximately 40 per cent of the related systems and equipment is obsolete and in need of replacement. The Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that the planned upgrade of six information technology shelters (see also [A/76/692](#), para. 28) would be carried out within existing resources. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that further efficiencies can be found through the judicious maintenance and appropriate replacement of communications and information technology**

equipment and recommends against the proposed increase of \$61,500 to the provision under communications and information technology (\$2,902,600).

27. Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 24 and 26 above, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of the proposals of the Secretary-General for operational costs.

## V. Other matters

### *Gender balance and geographical representation*

28. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the overall ratio of female personnel, including civilian staff and military personnel, had been increasing over the past three years and that, as at 28 February 2022, the percentage of female personnel within the Mission amounted to 28 per cent of total personnel, which was already above the planned parity target of 25 per cent set for 31 December 2022. The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that female representation by category for civilian staff was as follows: 33 per cent at the P-5 level and above, 30 per cent at the P-1 to P-4 level, 20 per cent in the Field Service category, 0 per cent at the National Professional Officer level, 25 per cent in the national General Service category and 33 per cent in the United Nations Volunteer category. The Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that, as at 28 February 2022, regional group representation among 75 international staff of the Mission was as follows: 26 from the African group, 27 from the Asia and the Pacific group, 12 from the Western and Eastern European groups, 8 from the North American group and 2 from the Latin American and Caribbean group. By contrast, representation as at 30 June 2021 was 23 staff from the African group, 28 from the Asia and the Pacific group, 13 from the Western and Eastern European groups, 10 from the North American group and 1 from the Latin American and Caribbean group. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the continued improvement in gender balance within MINURSO and trusts that the Mission will also pursue its efforts to improve geographical representation and will provide updates thereon in future reports.** The Committee further discusses gender balance and geographical representation in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations ([A/76/760](#)).

### *Cooperation with the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe*

29. From the supplementary information provided to it, the Advisory Committee notes the proposal of the Secretary-General for a new requirement under individual contractual services that would provide for a local individual contractor to assist with the high workload of the MINURSO Human Resources Section. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the contractor would be required to perform routine tasks, at an annual cost of \$12,800, to meet the operational requirements of the Section. As to the reasons for this increase in workload, clarification was provided to the Committee that, following the restructuring of the Mission and the transfer of support functions to the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, multiple accounts needed to be created for the upload of relevant files to the Centre for processing of human resource-related transactions (such as for onboarding, separation, travel and extension of contracts), which would then require additional manual processing by the Mission of documents received back from the Centre. Prior to the transfer, MINURSO would process such transactions directly in Umoja, without the additional paperwork required to allow the Mission to interface with the Regional Service Centre in a “service line” modality. The Committee was informed that the transfer of human resource transactional functions from the Mission to the Centre did not, therefore, reduce the workload of the Human Resources Section but, on the

contrary, increased both workload and processing times per transaction. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will conduct a further review of the existing capacities, transactions and operational challenges of the MINURSO Human Resources Section, including in its cooperation with the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, and will present the related findings in the context of the next budget submission.**

#### *Environmental management*

30. The Advisory Committee was provided, upon enquiry, with clarifications regarding past and future purchases of solar power systems by the Mission. The Committee was informed that ten 100-kilowatt systems comprised the full solar power requirement at MINURSO and that seven systems had been purchased up to and including the current period, with the purchase of an eighth system planned for the 2022/23 period and the acquisition of two more systems planned for the 2023/24 period. The Committee was also informed, with regard to petrol, oil and lubricants consumption, that an estimated efficiency of 62,500 litres of fuel was projected to accrue in the 2022/23 period as a result of replacing a diesel power generator with a hybrid diesel-photovoltaic solar power system. The Committee notes from the budget performance report of the Secretary-General (A/76/529, table, p. 16), that the MINURSO environmental management score of 51 for the 2020/21 period did not reflect, inter alia, the impact of the installation of the system on the Mission environmental footprint, owing to delivery delays experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also notes that the Mission projects an improvement in its environmental management score from 63 for the current 2021/22 period to 67 for the 2022/23 period (A/76/692, table, p. 18). **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Mission will reduce its environmental footprint, including by continuously improving its environmental score through the use of solar energy and the adoption, as appropriate, of environmental management best practices employed by other United Nations peacekeeping operations, in particular the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (see A/75/822/Add.5, para. 31, and resolution 74/294, para. 17), and will present an update on progress made in the context of the next budget submission.**

## VI. Conclusion

31. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly with regard to the financing of MINURSO for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 are indicated in section V of the budget performance report (A/76/529). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the unencumbered balance of \$1,284,900 for the period from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, and other revenue/adjustments amounting to \$1,274,400 from investment revenue (\$46,400), other/miscellaneous revenue (\$21,400) and the cancellation of prior-period obligations (\$1,206,600) for the period ended 30 June 2021, be credited to Member States.**

32. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly with regard to the financing of the Mission for the period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 are indicated in section IV of the proposed budget (A/76/692). **Taking into account its observations and recommendations above and its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/76/760), the Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed resources be reduced by \$446,500 from \$61,039,200 to \$60,592,700. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate the amount of \$60,592,700 for the maintenance of the Mission for the 12-month period from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.**