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Prevention of an arms race in outer space: further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space

Proposed programme budget for 2023

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

Programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.1/77/L.70](#)

Thirtieth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for 2023

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered an advance version of the statement submitted by the Secretary-General ([A/C.5/77/14](#)), in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, on the programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.1/77/L.70](#) on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Committee received additional information and clarification from the representatives of the Secretary-General, concluding with written responses dated 30 November 2022.

2. It is indicated in the statement of the Secretary-General that, under the terms of operative paragraphs 8, 9, 10 and 11 of draft resolution [A/C.1/77/L.70](#), the General Assembly would:

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

(b) Decide that the newly established Group of Governmental Experts will operate by consensus, without prejudice to national positions in future negotiations, and hold two 2-week sessions in Geneva, one in 2023 and the other in 2024;



(c) Request the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts to organize, in New York, a two-day open-ended intersessional informal consultative meeting, in 2024, so that all Member States can engage in interactive discussions and share their views on the basis of a report on the work of the Group to be provided by the Chair in his own capacity;

(d) Request the Secretary-General to transmit the report of the Group of Governmental Experts to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session and to the Conference on Disarmament prior to its 2025 session.

II. Resource requirements

3. In his statement, the Secretary-General provides information on: (a) the relationship between the mandate contained in the draft resolution and the proposed programme budget for 2023 (A/C.5/77/14, para. 3); (b) the activities required to implement the mandate (ibid., paras. 4–9); and (c) the budgetary implications arising from the draft resolution (ibid., paras. 10–14).

4. A summary of the total additional resource requirements (\$1,302,600) for both 2023 and 2024 arising from draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.70 is provided in table 3 in the statement of the Secretary-General. It is indicated that the requirements for 2024 (\$683,700) would be reflected under the relevant sections of the proposed programme budget for 2024 (ibid., para. 13).

5. Tables 1 and 2 in the statement contain information relating to the additional requirements for 2023 for conference services (\$334,200) and non-conference services (\$234,700). The activities required to implement the mandate and the budgetary implications for 2023 are as follows:

(a) For the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (\$323,500): (i) interpretation services in all six official languages for 20 meetings over 10 days for the session of the Group of Governmental Experts in Geneva; and (ii) documentation services for 4 pre-session documents with a total word count of 5,280 words, 25 in-session documents with a total word count of 25,080 words and 1 post-session document with a word count of 10,700 words, to be issued in all six official languages;

(b) For the Office for Disarmament Affairs (\$234,700): travel costs, daily subsistence allowance and terminal expenses for up to 25 State representatives to attend the session in Geneva, as well as the costs for a consultant to provide technical and substantive support to the substantive servicing of the work of the Group of Governmental Experts;

(c) For the United Nations Office at Geneva (\$10,700): sound technicians and sound recording in the conference room during the two-week session of the Group of Governmental Experts in Geneva, as well as Webex support to facilitate the remote participation of speakers.

6. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the combined global documentation processing capacity of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management was substantially lower than the annual workload of the Department. While workshare might help in immediate operational management from time to time, it was not suitable for being considered a source of absorption capacity for new mandates given the unpredictability of their volume, scope and timing. In addition, the programme budget implication proposal is put forward based on the Department's analysis of the existing documentation workload on a case-by-case basis. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretariat will make further**

efforts to optimize the use of the combined global documentation process capacity, so as to increase absorptive capacity, whenever feasible.

7. Concerning sound and recording services, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that two electronic engineering technicians were required to provide sound and recording services for each meeting, one for operating the sound system and the other for recording the interventions and uploading the recordings to the dedicated server. It was indicated to the Committee that the approved resources are not enough to cover all the meetings that will arise from new mandates and are therefore complemented by additional resources for technicians who are requested on a daily basis subject to the number of additional meetings to be covered.

8. With respect to Webex support to facilitate the remote participation of speakers, the Advisory Committee recalls that, in the report of the Secretary-General on the pattern of conferences (A/77/91, para. 9), it was indicated that the tools, structures and procedures put in place in 2020 and further developed in 2021 had ensured that the Secretariat's meeting services could adjust to sudden fluctuations in the meetings management workload and switch quickly to remote or hybrid formats as and when required. For example, the fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Kyoto, Japan, was serviced on site by a reduced Vienna conference team, while interpretation was for the first time provided remotely by teams in Vienna and New York.

9. **The Advisory Committee encourages the Secretariat to make efforts to absorb, to the extent possible, the additional requirement within the resources of the proposed programme budget for 2023 and recommends a reduction of 25 per cent (\$2,700) to the proposed resources of \$10,700 under other staff costs for sound technician/recording services and Webex support for remote participation under section 29E, Administration, Geneva.**

10. It is indicated in the statement of the Secretary-General that no provisions have been made in the proposed programme budget for 2023 for the implementation of the activities mandated in the draft resolution and that, at this stage, it is not possible to identify activities within the relevant sections of the proposed programme budget for 2023 that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during 2023. It is therefore necessary that the additional resources be provided through an additional appropriation for 2023 (A/C.5/77/14, para. 15).

III. Conclusion

11. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly are contained in paragraphs 16 to 18 of the statement of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/77/14). **Subject to its recommendation above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should the Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.70, additional resource requirements would arise under the proposed programme budget for 2023, as follows:**

(a) **An amount of \$566,200, for section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management (\$323,500); section 4, Disarmament (\$234,700); and section 29E, Administration, Geneva (\$8,000). The amount of \$566,200 would require an additional appropriation for 2023 to be approved by the Assembly and, as such, would represent a charge against the contingency fund;**

(b) **An amount of \$49,600 under section 36, Staff assessment, would also be required for an additional appropriation, to be offset by an equivalent amount of \$49,600 under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.**