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Proposed programme budget for 2023

Oceans and the law of the sea

Oceans and the law of the sea

Programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/77/L.36](#)

Forty-first 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 in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly on the programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/77/L.36](#) ([A/C.5/77/25](#)). During its consideration of the statement, the Advisory Committee received additional information and clarification from the representatives of the Secretary-General, concluding with written responses dated 9 December 2022.

2. In the statement, it is indicated that, under the terms of operative paragraph 275 of draft resolution [A/77/L.36](#), the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to convene the resumed fifth session of the intergovernmental conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction for 10 working days from 20 February to 3 March 2023, with full conference services, including documentation, provision for parallel meetings and overtime, webcast and press and meeting coverage, as required, for the 10-day duration of the session.

II. Resource requirements

3. The table below provides the related resource requirements in the amount of \$998,700 for 2023, as well as an additional amount of \$132,600 under section 36, Staff assessment.



Additional resource requirements for conference services

(United States dollars)

	<i>Additional requirements 2023</i>
Section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management	
Other staff costs	
Interpretation services	322 000
Documentation services	491 300
Subtotal, section 2	813 300
Section 28, Global communications	
Other staff costs	
Meetings coverage and press releases	43 800
Contractual services	
Webcasting services	8 100
Subtotal, section 28	51 900
Section 29B, Department of Operational Support	
Other staff costs	
Overtime for staff	3 900
General operating expenses	
Maintenance of premises	8 600
Elevator operator costs	4 800
Subtotal, section 29B	17 300
Section 29C, Office of Information and Communications Technology	
Contractual services	
Information technology servicing of meetings	93 000
Subtotal, section 29C	93 000
Section 34, Safety and security	
Other staff costs	
Overtime for security personnel	23 200
Subtotal, section 34	23 200
Total	998 700

4. Paragraphs 4 to 8 of the statement provide more information on mandate implementation by budget section. For the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the implementation of the mandate would require interpretation in all six languages for 20 meetings over 10 days (1 each morning and afternoon) for the resumed fifth session of the conference in 2023. In addition, interpretation in all six languages would be required for 20 parallel meetings over the 10-day period. With regard to documentation services, the requirements comprise three pre-session documents with a total word count of 27,000 words, five in-session documents with a total word count of 72,700 words, and three post-session documents with a total word count of 60,000 words, to be issued in all six languages in 2023.

5. For the Department of Global Communications, the implementation of the mandate would require webcasting services for 20 meetings and provision for overtime for staff for meetings scheduled beyond the normal working hours over the 10-day period of the conference in 2023, and for full meetings coverage in English and French, including press releases, for 12 days of meetings comprising the 10-day period of the conference plus 2 weekend days, including provision for overtime sessions. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the provision of \$43,800 for meetings coverage and press releases would cover the cost of salaries of staff (6 P-3 and 2 General Service (Other level) under general temporary assistance), including overtime for the General Service staff during the period of the conference, at the corresponding standard salary rates. The provision of \$8,100 for webcasting services would cover 20 meetings at the standard rate of \$296 per three-hour meeting (\$5,920) and estimated overtime of \$2,222. The number of meetings to be covered by meetings coverage services had been estimated on the basis of past practice of the conference, whereby daily meetings coverage had been provided for plenary sessions and informal working groups. Open, plenary sessions of intergovernmental meetings or conferences were generally covered with meetings summary press releases, provided that such coverage was requested or mandated with funding provided. The two additional days would cover the two weekend days in between the working weeks of the conference, in the event that meetings would take place during the weekend. **The Advisory Committee notes the provision under the Department of Global Communications for 12 days of meetings, while the other departments/offices propose provisions for 10 days. The Committee is of the view that there is scope for absorption of some of the proposed resources, and recommends that the amount of \$8,100 for webcasting services be provided within existing resources.**

6. With respect to the Department of Operational Support, the implementation of the mandate would require resources to cover additional requirements for maintenance of premises, elevator operator costs and overtime for staff for meetings scheduled beyond the normal working hours up to midnight over the 10-day period of the conference, and beyond midnight for 3 of those days. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the provision for maintenance of premises would cover the cost of additional utilities and custodial services. The provision for elevator operator costs would cover the cost of contracted services after 6 p.m. The overtime provision would cover the coordination services of Special Events Unit staff during the after-hour meetings. The resource requirements for overtime had been estimated on the basis of one special event coordinator being present during the after-hour meetings over the course of the conference. The coordinator would facilitate all the services provided for the meetings until all participants had exited the building and would ensure that the conference rooms were ready for the following day. **The Advisory Committee is not fully convinced of the need for the elevator operators and for the proposed resource requirements for the maintenance of premises, as the latter constitutes the usual, core functions of the Department of Operational Support, and therefore recommends that the related resources in the amount of \$13,400 be absorbed.**

7. Regarding the Office of Information and Communications Technology, the implementation of the mandate would require: (a) technical and conference services for 10 days of plenary meetings during working hours; (b) technical and conference services for one parallel session over 10 days during working hours; (c) provisions for auto-sound for an additional parallel session for 20 meetings over 10 days during working hours; (d) overtime costs for technical and conference services, excluding interpretation costs; and (e) overtime costs for technical and conference services for parallel meetings, excluding interpretation costs. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the level of proposed resources for contractual services, in the amount of \$93,000, is not fully justified, and recommends a reduction of 15 per cent, or \$14,000.**

8. For the Department of Safety and Security, the implementation of the mandate would require overtime costs for security personnel for 10 working days. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the additional requirements referred to the deployment of security officers beyond regular working hours (9 a.m.–6 p.m.), since the programme of the event included meetings extending up to 9 p.m. Security officers would have to be deployed at access control points, conference room entrances and areas of circulation until the closing of all the meetings for the day. **The Advisory Committee considers that there is scope for absorption of some of the proposed resources, and recommends a reduction of 10 per cent, or \$2,300.**

9. It is indicated in paragraph 12 of the statement that no provision has been made in the proposed programme budget for 2023 for the implementation of the mandate contained in the draft resolution. 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.

III. Conclusion

10. Taking into account its observations above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should the Assembly adopt draft resolution [A/77/L.36](#), an additional appropriation of \$960,900 would be required, representing a charge against the contingency fund, under the following sections of the proposed programme budget for 2023:

- (a) Section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management (\$813,300);
- (b) Section 28, Global communications (\$43,800);
- (c) Section 29B, Department of Operational Support (\$3,900);
- (d) Section 29C, Office of Information and Communications Technology (\$79,000);
- (e) Section 34, Safety and security (\$20,900).

11. Additional resource requirements in the amount of \$132,300 would arise under section 36, Staff assessment, of the proposed programme budget for 2023 and would require an additional appropriation by the General Assembly, to be offset by an equivalent increase of \$132,300 under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.