



General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 March 2021

Original: English

Seventy-fifth session

Agenda item 141

Programme budget for 2021

Standards of accommodation for air travel

Fortieth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for 2021

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on standards of accommodation for air travel ([A/75/654/Rev.1](#)). During its consideration of the report, the Committee was provided with additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses dated 26 February 2021.
2. The report of the Secretary-General was submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolutions [42/214](#), [45/248 A](#), [53/214](#), [63/268](#), [65/268](#), [67/254 A](#), [69/274 A](#), [71/272 B](#), [72/262 B](#) and [74/262](#), and decisions 44/442 and 46/450, as well as decision 57/589, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit his report on a biennial basis.
3. In the paragraphs below, the Advisory Committee provides its observations and recommendations on the report of the Secretary-General, as follows: (a) matters related to standards of travel accommodation and air travel activities; (b) proposal of the Secretary-General (i) to establish a single threshold for the use of business class applicable for staff below the level of Assistant Secretary-General (and eligible family members); and (ii) to apply business class if the combined flight time exceeds 9.5 hours; and (c) proposal of the Secretary-General to revert to a lump-sum option of 75 per cent.

Impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic

4. The global travel restrictions, in place since the first quarter of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, have resulted in plummeting travel volumes and, according to the Secretary-General, have made it difficult to ascertain statistical trends and allow comparisons to pre-pandemic data, for example, with respect to requests for exceptions or upgrading of cabin class; adherence to the advance purchase policy; the opting by staff members for a lump-sum payment instead of an Organization-purchased ticket; and trends regarding the proposed single threshold with a combined flight time of over 9.5 hours. In the paragraphs below, the Committee addresses the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on these and other aspects of standards of travel



accommodation and air travel activities, as appropriate. The Advisory Committee recalls its comments and recommendations on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in its first report on the proposed programme budget for 2021, including that remote working and the holding of virtual meetings instead of in-person meetings should result in savings with respect to travel. The Committee considers that the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to continue to have an impact on travel in the near future (A/75/7, chap. I, paras. 12–15 and 62).

II. Matters related to standards of travel accommodation and air travel activities

5. Information on the various aspects pertaining to the Organization's air travel activities, including data from the Umoja travel module, is provided in paragraphs 13 to 53 of the report of the Secretary-General.

Commercial air travel volume

6. As recommended by the Advisory Committee in its previous report, Umoja has been enhanced with the capability to extract separate data, including data pertaining to travel on commercial aircraft (A/73/779, paras. 11–13). Upon enquiry, the Committee was provided with updated information, showing that from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic between January and June 2020 and during the six months thereafter, from July to December 2020, the volume of travel by commercial aircraft showed a significant reduction, as shown in tables 1 and 2 (see also A/75/654/Rev.1, tables 7 and 8).

Table 1

Commercial air travel volume by Umoja travel category, 1 July 2018 to 31 December 2020

(Number of trips)

<i>Travel category</i>	<i>July–December 2018</i>	<i>January–June 2019</i>	<i>July–December 2019</i>	<i>January–June 2020</i>	<i>July–December 2020</i>	<i>Total</i>
Official travel	54 553	52 832	59 000	16 829	4 038	187 252
Entitlement travel	427	168	331	146	280	1 352
Human resources travel	2 501	2 469	2 638	1 378	1 730	10 716
Uniformed personnel travel	6 388	7 309	6 120	3 367	5 408	28 592
Total	63 869	62 778	68 089	21 720	11 456	227 912

Table 2

Commercial air travel volume by standard of accommodation, 1 July 2018 to 31 December 2020

(Number of trips)

<i>Standard of accommodation</i>	<i>July–December 2018</i>	<i>January–June 2019</i>	<i>July–December 2019</i>	<i>January–June 2020</i>	<i>July–December 2020</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Economy class	56 983	54 761	60 856	19 106	10 436	202 144	91
Business class	6 242	7 346	6 485	2 273	886	23 232	8
First class	3	4	5	3	0	15	–
Multiple classes of service (including first-class travel)	11	6	8	4	2	17	–

<i>Standard of accommodation</i>	<i>July–December 2018</i>	<i>January–June 2019</i>	<i>July–December 2019</i>	<i>January–June 2020</i>	<i>July–December 2020</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Multiple classes of service (not including first-class travel)	630	661	735	334	132	2 492	1
Total	63 869	62 778	68 089	21 720	11 456	227 912	100

7. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the COVID-19 pandemic had had a significant impact on the travel volumes and patterns of the United Nations, and that it was generally expected in the travel industry that the situation could remain highly variable over the next one to two years. **The Advisory Committee notes the significant decrease in the volume of travel by commercial aircraft during the year 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and recognizes the difficulty in including that year, and possibly future time periods, in the overall assessment of statistical trends. The Committee, however, considers that the volume of commercial aircraft travel increased significantly during the preceding period and expects that after global travel restrictions are eased and/or removed, this trend will not continue (see also the Committee's comments on alternative methods of communication in paras. 15–18 below). The Committee looks forward to further updates and analyses in the next performance report, as well as in the context of its consideration of the next report on the standards of accommodation for air travel, in the year 2023.**

Exceptions authorized by the Secretary-General

8. An overview of instances of exceptions authorized by the Secretary-General is provided in paragraphs 13 to 22 of the report of the Secretary-General. In its resolution [72/262 B](#), the General Assembly eliminated the use of first-class travel of United Nations staff members for their official travel, with the discretionary authority of the Secretary-General exercised in accordance with section 4.8 of administrative instruction [ST/AI/2013/3](#), as amended, in cases in which special circumstances warrant exceptions, including for medical reasons, exigencies of service and a traveller who is an eminent person (former Head of State or Government) or a current or former cabinet minister. Exceptions are also granted in instances in which officers from the Department of Safety and Security provide close protection security services to the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General or the Deputy Secretary-General and their spouses.¹

9. The data presented in part IV of the report of the Secretary-General show that, from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2018, 1,204 exceptions (including 885 exceptions, or 73 per cent, for eminent and prominent travellers) were authorized by the Secretary-General and, from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2020, 841 exceptions (including 637 exceptions, or 76 per cent, for eminent and prominent travellers) were authorized, representing a decrease of 363 exceptions, or 30 per cent (248 exceptions, or 28 per cent, for eminent and prominent travellers). This decrease occurred presumably due to a combination of efforts to limit the number of authorized exceptions, and a reduction of global air travel during the first six months of 2020 as a result of COVID-19-related travel restrictions.

¹ As of June 2018, only the Executive Protection Officer accompanying the Secretary-General may travel in first class, and security personnel accompanying other senior officials generally travel, on a case-by-case basis, one level below first class (see also [ST/AI/2013/3/Amend.3](#), sect. 4.3). Authorized exceptions for security personnel from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2020 were made for 113 trips, amounting to \$563,648, or \$4,988 per trip, and from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2018 for 130 trips, amounting to \$801,562, or \$6,166 per trip, resulting in lower expenditures of \$1,178 per trip, or \$237,914 overall (see A/75/654/Rev. 1, para. 17 and tables 1–4).

10. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, during the period from July 2018 to June 2020, a total of 76 requests for exceptions had not been approved, as follows: 39 requests were based on medical grounds and the Division of Health-Care Management and Occupational Safety and Health did not support the requests; 30 requests in the prominent traveller category were not approved as the traveller was not at a prominent level, such as ministerial level for various government employees; and in the remaining requests, the regular standards of accommodation were not available, and the travellers were advised to revise their travel plans. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide information, in the next report, on the criteria applied for accepting or rejecting requests for exceptions.**

11. The Advisory Committee considers that, during the previous 24-month period, an average of 50 monthly exceptions (37 exceptions for eminent and prominent persons) were authorized, while an average of 35 monthly exceptions (27 exceptions for eminent and prominent persons) were authorized during the most recent period. Upon enquiry, the Committee was provided with data on the exceptions authorized from 1 January to 30 June 2020, or the time period of the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting global travel restrictions, showing that a total of 78 exceptions (including 56 exceptions for eminent and prominent travellers), an average of 13 exceptions a month, were authorized. The Committee notes that, therefore, during the prior 18 months of pre-COVID-19 travel, from 1 July 2018 to 31 December 2019, a total of 763 exceptions (581 exceptions for eminent and prominent persons) had been authorized, an average of 42 monthly exceptions (32 exceptions for eminent and prominent persons).

12. **The Advisory Committee considers that the exceptions authorized by the Secretary-General for eminent and prominent persons represent a disproportionately high share, or 75 per cent, of all exceptions from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2020, and that it appears that such requests are authorized as a matter of routine. The Committee is of the view that there is a need to make the administrative process for the official travel of eminent and prominent persons more effective. The Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to obviate the need for exceptions in that category and to implement a policy that will grant a higher standard of accommodation for the official travel of eminent and prominent persons who are clearly defined as such. The Committee recalls that, in paragraph 15 of its resolution 72/262 B, the Assembly encouraged non-staff members entitled to travel first class, with the exception of representatives of least developed countries, to voluntarily downgrade to the class immediately below. The Committee therefore considers that eminent and prominent travellers should be made aware that they may opt for a voluntary downgrade from their entitled class of travel and/or that they may wish to apply their frequent flyer miles towards an upgrade to their desired cabin class (see also para. 14 below). The Committee looks forward to an update thereon, including statistical information, in the next report on the standards of accommodation for air travel.**

Voluntary downgrading and use of frequent flyer miles

13. The official travel policy of the Secretariat encourages voluntary downgrades by providing premium economy cabins or premium seats if a staff member downgrades to a class below the entitled class. Between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2020, 3,145 trips were requested in Umoja with a voluntary downgrade, or 11.3 per cent of all eligible trips by commercial aircraft purchased by the United Nations, representing a savings of \$5,036,299 (A/75/654/Rev.1, paras. 30–32). **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will continue to encourage staff members at all levels, including senior staff members at the Assistant Secretary-General level and above (and eligible family members), to voluntarily downgrade**

from their entitled class of travel when possible, including, for example, when travelling to regularly recurring events, such as meetings or conferences.

14. In response to the request of the General Assembly (resolution [72/262](#) B, section I, para. 8) to continue to monitor industry best practices in the area of frequent flyer miles and to report to the Assembly on any new trends with regard to making use of frequent flyer miles to improve the administration of travel, the Secretariat conducted a benchmarking exercise. This exercise reconfirmed previous conclusions that managing a corporate frequent flyer mile programme is uneconomical, as the costs of managing such a programme more than outweigh any associated benefits, and that negotiated airline agreements providing upfront discounts are preferred by the larger private and public sector organizations comparable in size to the Secretariat ([A/75/654/Rev.1](#), paras. 49–53). **The Advisory Committee recalls its report on the Secretary-General's proposals for a more effective and efficient utilization of resources for air travel, and its related observation that staff of the United Nations should not use for personal travel any frequent flyer miles which they earned by conducting official business and that staff should be encouraged to use such frequent flyer miles for the booking of official travel, when feasible ([A/66/739](#), para. 11). The Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General should continue his efforts and encourage all staff, and in particular senior United Nations officials at the level of Assistant Secretary-General and above, including their support staff, whose work duties often require regular commercial air travel, to use any frequent flyer miles earned for their official travel, and to book a voluntary downgrade to the least costly cabin class and then apply their frequent flyer miles towards an upgrade to their desired cabin class. The Committee looks forward to the inclusion of related statistical information in the context of the next report on the standards of accommodation for air travel.**

Use of alternative methods of communication

15. The use of alternative methods of communication is addressed in paragraphs 45 to 47 of the report of the Secretary-General. The number of videoconferences increased from 4,219 in 2015 to 9,506 in 2020. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, from 1 January to 31 December 2020, which was the year of the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Broadcast and Conference Support Section of the Office of Information and Communications Technology had organized and managed a total of 5,281 videoconferences and virtual meetings using various platforms at Headquarters. The Committee was furthermore informed that the Section had also facilitated virtual collaboration and videoconferences across the United Nations system in support of meetings using a hybrid model, therefore enabling both on-premises meetings and remote participation. For that purpose, the Section had reconfigured the existing infrastructure and systems to deliver in an environment for which the communications and technical equipment had not originally been designed.

16. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was also informed that the United Nations videoconferencing system, the Cisco WebEx platform (at an annual cost of \$12,450 for the license for the Secretariat in New York) and the Microsoft Teams platform (the cost of which is included in the bundled Microsoft Office 365 package of \$13.27 million globally for the Secretariat) had been integrated with other platforms. That had involved varying degrees of preparation time. For example, the complexity of supporting the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly in a hybrid manner had required months of preparation, the setting up of new systems and procedures, and the conducting of test runs. The Committee recalls that self-operated technologies, such as instant video or text messaging (for example, Skype for Business and WhatsApp), are not captured in the statistics but are also commonly used ([A/73/779](#), para. 19).

17. The Advisory Committee was furthermore informed that lessons learned from the best practices developed during the COVID-19 pandemic had shown higher levels of engagement, including direct communication, of participants in the scheduling and planning arrangements for meetings and events, with an increasing willingness and capability of event organizers to hold virtual, hybrid meetings and events. The Committee was also informed that the provision by staff of the Office of Information and Communications Technology of direct technical support and operational guidance on how best to use equipment and platforms before, during and after meetings and events had received positive feedback from both United Nations meeting organizers and participants. **The Advisory Committee commends the continued support provided by the Office of Information and Communications Technology, which has enabled the Organization, including the Committee itself, to continue its work without interruption.**

18. The Advisory Committee recalls the request, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, of the General Assembly for the Secretary-General to increase the use of alternative methods of communication and representation (see resolution 72/262 B, para. 6). The Committee also recalls its observation, in its first report on the proposed programme budget for 2021, regarding the use of virtual meetings and online training tools and that, in general, travel for workshops, conferences or meetings should be kept to a minimum (A/75/7, chap. I, para. 62). The Committee looks forward to further updates, and in particular lessons learned on the use of alternative methods of communication during the COVID-19 pandemic and for the time thereafter, in the context of the next report on the standards of accommodation for air travel.

Adherence to the advance purchase policy

19. Information on adherence to the advance travel policy is presented in paragraphs 35 to 44 of the report of the Secretary-General and indicates that, overall, 38 per cent of travel complied with the advance purchase policy from 1 July 2018 to 30 July 2020, compared with 33 per cent from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2018. The Secretary-General indicates that compliance trends have proved difficult to predict as a result of the travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that travel requests decreased by 65 per cent from January to June 2020 compared with the same period in 2019. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with information showing that, from 1 July to 31 December 2020, adherence to the policy was 40 per cent (see table 3).

Table 3

Advance purchase policy adherence, by travel category, 1 July to 31 December 2020

Travel category	Number of trips	Adherence (percentage)	Submission	Average time (days) ^a		
				Human resources partner	Travel and shipment approver	Travel-processing office
Official travel	4 038	38	9.1	N/A	1.3	1.3
Entitlement travel	280	59	12.6	2.9	5.9	3.1
Human resources travel	1 730	39	18.2	1.3	2.4	1.0
Uniformed personnel travel	5 408	59	26.1	N/A	0.5	3.1
Total (weighted average)	62 867	40	18.6	N/A	1.3	1.9

^a All average times presented in the overall "total" row are weighted to take account of the number of trips made in each travel category. Weighted averages are used to account for the large variance in the travel volumes associated with each travel category and the difference in workflow steps for entitlement and human resources travel (i.e., the inclusion of a human resources partner approval step).

20. The Advisory Committee considers that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw significantly lower travel volumes, the compliance rate has increased slightly, to 40 per cent from 38 per cent in the previous period. The Committee recalls that the General Assembly, on a number of occasions, has expressed concern regarding the low rate of compliance with the advance purchase policy (see also resolution 72/262 B, para. 4). The Committee reiterates that stronger efforts are required, in particular in areas where travel can be better planned, given that most official travel is not carried out for the purpose of emergency situations or unforeseen requirements, to improve the rate of compliance across all travel categories, taking into account the patterns and nature of official travel and the reasons for non-compliance (A/75/7, chap. I, paras. 62–63). The Committee also reiterates that efforts and initiatives should be undertaken to increase awareness of the advance purchase policy and requests the Secretary-General to provide information on the measures taken, including relevant lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, in the context of the next report (see also A/73/779, para. 16).

21. The Secretary-General indicates that, under the new delegation of authority framework established in January 2019, the Business Transformation and Accountability Division of the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance has produced quarterly key performance indicator reports for all Secretariat entities, including an indicator on the advance purchase policy (A/75/654/Rev.1, para. 35). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that compliance with the advance purchase policy was monitored by the Business Transformation and Accountability Division as part of the 16 key performance indicators of the delegation of authority framework and that the management dashboard provided a visualization of the compliance data. **The Advisory Committee recalls the request of the General Assembly that the Secretary-General hold managers accountable for the judicious use of travel resources and include the advance purchase of tickets as a key performance indicator in regular managerial and departmental performance evaluations (see resolution 72/262 B, paras. 5 and 6).** The Committee will provide further comments on key performance indicators in senior managers' compacts in the context of its forthcoming report on the tenth progress report of the Secretary-General on accountability: strengthening accountability in the United Nations Secretariat.

Procurement process for air travel management services

22. The Secretary-General indicates that an examination of best practices concluded that the United Nations should adopt a regional approach for local discounts and arrangements and to adapt to local market conditions. Furthermore, a standardized approach across the Secretariat has been employed and a template statement of requirements to ensure that procurement processes are in accordance with the United Nations procurement principles has been developed (A/75/654/Rev.1, para. 48). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, together with the aforementioned statement of requirements, a suggested structure for establishing technical evaluation criteria would be provided to potential bidders as a standard package. Furthermore, that approach would result in efficiencies, including a reduced procurement workload, as fewer contracts would need to be managed by the Secretariat, as well as economies of scale, and also facilitate airline discount negotiations. The Committee was furthermore informed that the regional approach to procurement of air travel management services would not have an impact on matters related to the advance purchase policy.

23. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the contract for the current provider for air travel management services at Headquarters had been in place

since 1 December 2005 and had been renewed twice, with the latest contract to expire in October 2021. **The Advisory Committee recalls the request of the General Assembly that the Secretary-General ensure that the procurement process for all air travel management services contracts is conducted in full compliance with general procurement principles as set out in financial regulation 5.12, namely, (a) best value for money; (b) fairness, integrity and transparency; (c) effective international competition; and (d) the interest of the United Nations, and to ensure that the procurement process includes the option of awarding a contract to multiple vendors to allow for greater competition among selected vendors (resolution 72/262 B, para. 20).**

System-wide standards of accommodation for air travel

24. The General Assembly, in its resolution 72/262 B, encouraged the International Civil Service Commission to assess system-wide standards of accommodation for air travel and to present relevant recommendations to the Assembly. **The Advisory Committee looks forward to the results and related recommendations of the assessment by the International Civil Service Commission (A/73/779, para. 23).**

III. Proposal to establish a single threshold for the use of business class by staff below the level of Assistant Secretary-General (and eligible family members)

25. Information with respect to the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish a single threshold for the use of business class by staff below the level of Assistant Secretary-General (and eligible family members) is provided in paragraphs 67 to 96 of the report of the Secretary-General. The General Assembly, in its resolution 72/262 B, requested the Secretary-General to include, in his report to the Assembly at its seventy-third session, an analysis and recommendations concerning a single threshold for the use of business class by staff below the level of Assistant Secretary-General (and eligible family members). The Advisory Committee, in its consideration of the subsequent proposal of the Secretary-General, recommended that the Secretary-General: (a) adopt a single threshold for the use of business class by staff below the level of Assistant Secretary-General (and eligible family members); and (b) implement the proposal of the Secretary-General for a travel time of 10 hours, consisting of actual flight time and actual stopover time, on a provisional, or pilot, basis (A/73/779, para. 31).

26. In his present report, the Secretary-General proposes: (a) a single threshold model for official travel, and (b) to apply business class if the combined flight time is longer than 9.5 hours, replacing the current dual threshold of 9 hours (direct flights)/11 hours (indirect flights). The Secretary-General indicates that total flight time would be calculated by combining the flying time of all travel legs to a destination based on the published flight schedules of available flights in the global distribution system at the time of ticketing. Stopover or connection times, or travel times to and from airports at origin and destination, would not be included in the calculation. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee received information showing total flight time alternatives ranging from 8 hours to 11 hours, in increments of 30 minutes (see table 4).

Table 4
Single threshold (total flight time) alternatives

(Number of trips)

Standard	Under current dual threshold policy	Under a single threshold						
		8 hours	8.5 hours	9 hours	9.5 hours	10 hours	10.5 hours	11 hours
Business class	16 314	24 339	21 540	17 052	15 814	14 738	13 798	12 271
Economy class	63 017	54 992	57 791	62 279	63 517	64 593	65 533	67 060
Total	79 331	79 331	79 331	79 331	79 331	79 331	79 331	79 331
Business class trips net impact (percentage)		49.2	32.0	4.5	(3.1)	(9.7)	(15.4)	(24.8)
Overall ticket expenditure net impact (percentage)		14.6	10.0	1.5	(0.4)	(2.0)	(3.6)	(6.9)

27. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that data extracted from Umoja for the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2020 showed that, by applying a single threshold policy, a flying time of 9.5 hours would have resulted in an overall reduction of 3.1 per cent in the number of trips in business class and a savings of 0.4 per cent in overall ticket expenditures. The Committee was also informed that, in the previous analysis concerning a single threshold, which had been based on a 10-hour travel time, a no-cost savings (or a less than a 0.05 per cent difference) had been estimated. The Committee recalls that the average business class threshold among 23 international organizations has been 8.3 hours, with most organizations applying a 9-hour threshold (see [A/73/779](#), annex II).

28. The Advisory Committee considers that the present proposal of the Secretary-General has reduced the previously proposed single threshold of 10 hours by 30 minutes, to 9.5 hours. While the Committee has, in principle, no objection to a 9.5-hour single threshold limit, it continues to be of the view that no convincing information was provided showing the effectiveness, cost efficiencies, impact on the productivity and the physical and mental health of staff, or the overall benefits of that particular number of hours, as compared with other travel times, both lower or higher (see also [A/73/779](#), para. 30). Therefore, the Committee is of the view that the determination of the number of hours of travel time to be applied in conjunction with a single threshold is a policy matter to be decided by the General Assembly.

IV. Lump-sum option

29. To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of travel management and to incentivize greater use of the lump-sum option, the Secretary-General proposes to discontinue the interim measure of a lump-sum payment at 70 per cent of the least restrictive economy ticket and to revert to a lump-sum option of 75 per cent, with the reinstatement of travel days having resulted in an increase of staff members opting for the lump sum option, as described in paragraphs 54 to 66 of the report of the Secretary-General. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the administrative overhead time and the cost of processing of lump-sum requests was reduced compared to when the Organization made the arrangements for home leave, family visit or education grant travel; in addition, there was no requirement for an external travel agency. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General**

Assembly request the Secretary-General to revert to the previous 75 per cent lump-sum option.

V. Conclusion

30. Subject to its observations and recommendations above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General:

(a) To discontinue the remaining part of the interim measure (i.e., determining the lump-sum payment at 70 per cent of the least restrictive economy ticket) and revert to the normal 75 per cent for the lump-sum option;

(b) To adopt a single threshold model for official travel of staff below the level of Assistant Secretary-General (and eligible family members) for select travel categories;

(c) To establish that the standard of accommodation for air travel will be business class if the total flight time (consisting of the combined flying time of all legs of the journey to a given destination) is over 9.5 hours, or any number of hours the General Assembly will deem appropriate.
