

**Statement of the Chairman**  
**Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions**  
**18 December 2012**

ACABQ reports relating to:

1. **Revised estimates resulting from the decisions contained in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”**  
*ACABQ report: A/67/641; related report of the Secretary-General: A/67/591*
2. **Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first sessions**  
*ACABQ report: A/67/647; related report of the Secretary-General: A/67/607*
3. **Request for a subvention to the Special Court for Sierra Leone**  
*ACABQ report: A/67/648; related report of the Secretary-General: A/67/606*
4. **Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.11 on the arms trade treaty**  
*ACABQ report: A/67/649; Statement of the Secretary-General: A/C.5/67/13;*
5. **Contingency Fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates**  
*ACABQ report: A/67/650; Report of the Secretary-General: A/C.5/67/15*

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce five reports of the Advisory Committee: the first relates to the revised estimates, contained in the outcome document of the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want” (A/67/641); the second concerns the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Human Rights Council at its nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first sessions (A/67/647); the third relates to the request for a subvention to the Special Court for Sierra Leone (A/67/648); the fourth is on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.11 on the arms trade treaty (A/67/649); and the fifth concerns the consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates to be charged to the contingency fund (A/67/650).

The Advisory Committee is recommending approval of the proposals for 2013 concerning the outcome of the **Rio+20 Conference**, while encouraging the Secretary-General to make every effort to implement additional activities within existing capacity. The Committee will comment on

the requirements for the next biennium when it takes up the proposed programme budget for 2014-2015.

The Advisory Committee recognizes that the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference will have deep and far-reaching implications for the work of the Organization, supplanting its existing framework – institutional, normative and structural - in the area of sustainable development through a process that will span several years. It welcomes the emphasis placed in the Outcome Document on the need to promote synergies and coherence; to avoid duplication and eliminate unnecessary overlaps within the United Nations system; and reduce administrative burdens and build on existing arrangements.

The Committee has recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide in his future report(s), an update on the strategies/measures envisaged to achieve such synergies and efficiency gains. Given the complexity of this initiative, which involves several parts of the Organization, the Committee has also recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to enhance the information available to the Assembly for decision-making on those proposals.

Regarding the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the **Human Rights Council** at its nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first sessions, the Secretary-General proposes to accommodate additional requirements in an amount of \$3,076,600 for the biennium 2012-2013 from within the resources appropriated for the biennium, and seeks to accommodate additional requirements of \$7,461,800 from additional appropriations in the context of the contingency fund for the biennium 2012-2013. The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the proposals of the Secretary-General, taking into account the observations and recommendations contained in the Committee's report.

The Advisory Committee is of the view that the presentation of proposals for additional requirements for implementation of new mandates should include a clear analysis of actual expenditures in respect of similar activities and the current status of expenditure under the affected budget sections. In addition, the Committee reiterates its view that, before resorting to the contingency fund, the first option should be to explore if relatively small amounts for activities of a shorter duration could be absorbed from within the programme budget.

The Committee notes that there is some lack of consistency in the approach of the Secretary-General in proposing to finance the additional requirements. It considers that there is a need for a consistent approach and clear criteria in determining the financing of the revised estimates resulting from the resolutions and decisions of the Council, whether it be from additional appropriations through the contingency fund or from within existing resources.

Regarding the adoption of resolution 19/11 on the rights of persons with disabilities: participation in political and public life, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure that content on all United Nations websites is fully accessible to persons with disabilities, and to report thereon in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015.

With respect to the request for a **subvention to the Special Court for Sierra Leone**, the Advisory Committee notes that despite its fundraising efforts, the Court has not been able to secure sufficient funding from voluntary contributions for the completion of its work. Bearing in mind the importance of the Court's activities, the Committee recommends approval of a subvention of \$14 million for the period up to 31 December 2013 to enable the completion of the Charles Taylor trial. Given the fundraising challenges encountered by the Special Court, the Advisory Committee is concerned about the sustainability of voluntary contributions to finance the activities of the Residual Court. In that regard, the Committee recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to analyze lessons learned from the Special Court's experience and to examine alternative means of financing the activities of the Residual Court.

Concerning the **programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.11 on the arms trade treaty**, subject to the comments and recommendations contained in paragraphs 7, 8 and 12 of its report, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.11, additional requirements of \$89,000 under section 4 would arise under the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013. This would represent a charge against the contingency fund and, as such, would require appropriation for the biennium.

With respect to the additional resources requested under sections 2 and 29D, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to make every effort to absorb the additional requirements, failing which the additional expenditures should be reflected in the context of the second performance report for the biennium 2012-2013.

Finally, turning to the Committee's report on the **Contingency fund: consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates**, the Secretary-General's related report indicates that the remaining balance of the fund for the biennium 2012-2013 is \$13,762,500. The total potential charges detailed in the annex to the Secretary-General's report would amount to \$19,741,800. Taking into account the relevant recommendations of the Advisory Committee, which would result in an overall reduction of \$3,042,700, potential new charges would therefore amount to \$17,685,400. Accordingly, should the Assembly approve the appropriation, there would be a shortfall of \$3,922,900 in the contingency fund. The General Assembly may wish to consider the potential charges related to new and expanded mandates against the fund and offer appropriate guidance to the Secretary-General accordingly.

The Advisory Committee recalls its previous observation that, while recognizing that additional resource requirements must be considered and that it is not always possible to fit new initiatives within the biennial cycle of the regular budget, it is the responsibility of the Secretary-General to ensure that the proposed programme budget presents the fullest possible picture of the Organization's requirements for any given biennium.

The Committee suggests that the Secretary-General be requested to analyse the way in which the contingency fund has been utilized for 2012-2013, recognizing that the projected shortfall may not constitute a long-term trend, but rather an exceptionally high level of legislative activity for the period.

The Committee stresses the need to adhere to the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211 on its use. In the event of any constraints faced, the Committee believes that the Secretary-General should bring the problems encountered to the attention of the General Assembly in a timely manner.

Thank you Mr. Chairman