

(Please check against delivery)

Statement by Mr. Toshihiro Aiki
Minister, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

Organization of Work, Second Part of the Resumed Session of Fifth Committee
Of the Sixty-Seventh Session of the United Nations General Assembly

6 May 2013

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

At the outset, since this is the first opportunity for my delegation to address the Fifth Committee in the second part of the resumed session, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the chairman, the facilitators and the fellow Member States for the Committee's success in the first part of the resumed session, wherein resolutions on thirteen out of sixteen items were agreed on, which was a much greater number than those in previous years.

Mr. Chairman,

Regarding the deliberation of peacekeeping budget proposals, I would like to say first that my delegation is of the view that the Member States should be prepared to provide adequate capacity and resources to peacekeeping operations for the successful implementation of their mandates to maintain international peace and security. At the same time, the need for efficient, effective and accountable management of these operations cannot be over emphasized, not only due to the current difficult financial situations of many Member States including my own, but, more essentially, because experience shows that redundant resources without adequate management often does not contribute to effective operations and the long-term sustainability of this organization.

This year, the Secretary-General has indicated that the overall budget is expected to be around 7.2 billion dollars, a 1.4% decrease from the previous year's budget. However, my delegation would like to underline that this decrease is largely a result of reduced requirements due to the mandate changes of several missions, particularly, the closure of UNMIT. Moreover, we should factor in the additional requirements for the United Nations peacekeeping operation in Mali, MINUSMA. The total requirements will most likely be much bigger. My delegation is committed to working on each and every item in the budget so that this Committee can reach agreement on a budget level which will neither exceed nor fall short of the requirements for the implementation of each mission's mandate.

Second, my delegation would like to highlight the importance of civilian staffing review. The budget proposal contains a decrease in civilian personnel costs of only 1.3%, while military and police personnel costs are reduced by 7.3%. While my delegation appreciates the Secretary-General's efforts to decrease civilian personnel in some missions in accordance with the GA Resolution 66/264, my delegation is of the view that the staffing review process has not produced expected results yet and urge the Secretariat to work further on this in a comprehensive manner as required in the Resolution. Similarly, we should closely examine the backstopping requirements under the Support Account. We note the upward trend of the Support Account despite a decrease of the total peacekeeping budget. My delegation believes that it would be useful to consider a mechanism to ensure the scalability of the Support Account.

Third, my delegation notes an increase in the area of operational costs of 4.5% despite the aforementioned decrease in personnel costs and various efficiency measures by the Secretariat. Commending the efficiency gains achieved by the Resource Efficiency Group in several areas, we would like to encourage the Secretariat to redouble its efforts in this regard. My delegation is committed to examining operational costs, including achievements of efficiency measures.

Fourth, my delegation supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to improve the timeliness and quality of service delivery to field missions through the Global Field Support Strategy (GFSS). We also expect that the GFSS will achieve greater efficiency and economies of scale. My delegation is of the view that it is now appropriate for us to examine the concrete outcomes and gains of the first three years of implementation of GFSS.

Mr. Chairman,

Last but not least, my delegation will be engaged in the discussions in a positive and constructive manner and looks forward to working with all the other delegations toward achieving consensus agreement on all the items by the scheduled end of this session.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.