

**Statement of the Vice-Chairman  
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)**

**25 March 2014**

**Revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015  
under section 22, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, and section 33,  
Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance**

*ACABQ report: A/68/808;*

*Report of the Secretary-General: A/68/748*

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report on mitigation measures to strengthen the safety and security of United Nations staff at the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, based in Beirut. The Advisory Committee notes that the measures have been proposed by the Secretary-General under the authority vested in him by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/249, paragraph 1(c) relating to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for security measures.

In its report, the Advisory Committee takes note of the deteriorating security situation in Lebanon and the vulnerability of the ESCWA headquarters to attack with an explosive device owing to its location in the city centre and its architectural design. The Committee therefore recognizes the continued security risk exposure to United Nations staff, notwithstanding the extensive mitigation measures that have already been put in place, and the new measures now being proposed. In this regard, the Advisory Committee calls upon the Secretary-General to intensify his engagement with the Host Country in order to find a lasting solution to the issue of a new permanent location for ESCWA.

Coming to the \$7.3 million in resource requirements proposed by the Secretary-General for the structural enhancement of the ESCWA building, the Advisory Committee recommends reductions in the percentages used to calculate the overhead and contingency provisions that have been factored into the resource estimates. In this regard, the Committee regrets that such important information was not included in the Secretary-General's report and also questions the method that was used to determine these overhead and contingency provisions.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly approve the establishment of one temporary position at the P-4 level to serve as project manager. However, taking into account ESCWA's existing staffing capacity, the Committee recommends against the proposed establishment of a temporary position for the project at the Local level.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.