

Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)

Financing of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

Financing of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)

Statement of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the Fifth Committee

15 May 2014

(ACABQ reports: A/68/782/Add. 13, 17 and 15)

(Secretary-General reports: A/68/823, A/68/828 and A/68/754)

Mr Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on MINUSMA, UNMISS and UNAMID contained in document A/68/782, addenda 13, 17 and 15 respectively.

Starting with the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), the Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of \$267,400 to the proposed budget of the Mission for 2014/15.

Under civilian staffing, the Committee recommends against the reclassification of the post of Principal Security Sector Reform Officer (D-1) to the Director of the Rule of Law and Security Institutions Division (D-2). The Committee also recommends against two reclassifications: one Human Resources Officer post from the P-3 level to Field Service and one Human Resources Officer post from Field Service level 7 to P-4.

Under operational costs, the Committee recommends a five per cent reduction, amounting to \$27,320, in the requested resources under consultants, and a five per cent reduction, amounting to \$183,400, in the resources requested for official travel.

Mr Chairman,

Turning to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the Advisory Committee notes that the current period has been marked by the crisis that started in South Sudan on 15 December 2013, which is still ongoing.

With regard to the personnel and assets transferred to UNMISS from other missions under inter-mission cooperation arrangements, the Advisory Committee expresses the view that the related costs should be charged to the receiving mission from the date of transfer. It recommends that the Secretary-General present in his next submission on the financing of

UNMISS, as well as in the respective performance reports of UNMISS and the sending missions, clear and transparent reporting of the services, assets and personnel provided to UNMISS in 2013/14 and related cost-recovery charges.

With regard to the Secretary-General's request for commitment authority with assessment for 2014/15, the Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a reduction of \$3.2 million to the interim resource requirements of \$599.3 million for the six month period from 1 July to 31 December 2014. The Committee is recommending that the proposed level of resources under the military and police components be reduced to reflect requirements for the deployment of the highest authorised level of military and police personnel. The Committee is also recommending a reduction of \$10.9 million under facilities and infrastructure, reflecting a 10 per cent decrease in the resources proposed for construction projects. It is of the view that full implementation of the envisaged construction plan is not likely to be achieved within the six month period from 1 July to 31 December 2014, given the continued operational challenges faced by the Mission, which have repeatedly caused delays in the implementation of construction projects.

With regard to inter-mission cooperation, the Advisory Committee notes that, should the existing temporary arrangements be extended, any services, assets and personnel that continued to be provided to UNMISS in 2014/15 by other missions would also be provided for in the respective 2014/15 proposed budgets of the sending missions. The Advisory Committee was informed that, to deal with this potential issue, when the full UNMISS 2014/15 budget is presented, the Secretariat will confirm if there are instances of double-funding and propose to reduce the relevant appropriations (and assessment) for previously-approved 2014/15 budgets. The Advisory Committee recommends that, should inter-mission cooperation arrangements be continued in the 2014/15 period, the General Assembly: (a) decide that all related costs should be funded from UNMISS; and (b) reduce the relevant appropriations (and assessment) for previously-approved 2014/15 budgets of the missions that continue to provide services, assets and personnel to UNMISS in 2014/15. The Committee stresses the need to ensure that there is no double budgeting and double assessment of Member States in respect of the same personnel and assets.

Finally, for UNMISS, the Advisory Committee commends the dedicated service of Mission's military and police personnel, as well as of its civilian staff, in the face of a difficult situation. It regrets the tragic loss of life and injury suffered and recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to improve the safety and security of the Mission's personnel. The Advisory Committee further recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to ensure that all outstanding death and disability claims are settled expeditiously.

Mr Chairman,

Coming to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General's 2014/15 budget proposal was developed in anticipation of a decision to be taken by the Security Council. The Committee further notes that the Council has not yet considered the Secretary-General's proposal, which

that has introduced some uncertainty regarding the Secretary-General's budget proposal. In this regard, the Committee stresses that planning assumptions of peacekeeping missions should take into account only those changes in the mandate, or the authorized strength of uniformed personnel, which have been decided by the Security Council.

Therefore, the Advisory Committee considers it premature to make any recommendations on the Secretary-General's proposed budget for 2014/15. On that basis, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly authorise the Secretary-General to enter into commitments amounting to \$667,624,000, or half of the Operation's budget for the 2013/14 period, for the maintenance of the Operation for the six month period from 1 July 2014 and 31 December 2014.

In addition, the Committee requests that the Secretary-General be requested to submit a revised budget proposal for 2014/15, which reflects the decision of the Security Council on the renewal of the Operation's mandate.

Mr Chairman,

I thank you for your attention.

Statement of the Chairman
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)
to the Fifth Committee
15 May 2014
Financing of the support account for peacekeeping operations

ACABQ report: A/68/861;

Reports of the Secretary-General: A/68/648 and Add.1, and A/68/742

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report (A/68/861) on the support account for peacekeeping operations. I am going to highlight a few points contained in the report of the Committee.

With respect to the proposed budget for the support account for the period 2014/15, the recommendations of the Advisory Committee would entail a reduction of \$6,317,300 to the proposal by the Secretary-General contained in document A/68/742. The recommendations of the Committee are explained in section V of its report (A/68/861), and a summary of its recommendations is contained in section VI of the report.

Under budget parameters, the Advisory Committee discusses issues related to vacancy rates and common staff costs in paragraphs 25 to 33 of its report (A/68/861):

(a) The Committee notes that the Secretary-General has applied the approved vacancy rates for 2013/14 to the estimates for posts and positions for 2014/15, while the actual vacancy rates experienced were higher for the period from July 2013 to January 2014. The Committee believes that budgeted vacancy rates should be based, as much as possible, on actual vacancy rates. The Committee has, therefore, recommended revised rates to be applied to the estimates for posts and positions for 2014/15 in paragraph 29 of its report. The Committee has also requested that the most up-to-date information on incumbency rates be provided to the General Assembly now; and

(b) On common staff, the rate has been estimated at 49.3 per cent of net salaries, based on actual expenditures incurred in 2012/13 and the first six months of 2013/14, compared with 50 per cent for 2013/14. According to the Secretary-General, the impact of the reduced rate represents a decrease of \$1.5 million for 2014/15. The Committee notes the difference in the rates applied for the support account (49.3 per cent) and the regular budget for New York (43.5 per cent for 2012-2013 and 2014-2015). The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the difference between the rates was

indicative of the varied personal situation of each staff member, as common staff costs comprise a wide range of staff allowances. The Committee has no objection to the estimated rate for common staff costs at 49.3 per cent of net salaries for the support account for 2014/15 as proposed by the Secretary-General.

Regarding official travel, it is indicated in the budget proposal that the proposed requirements for 2014/15 amount to \$9,859,900, an increase of \$85,600, or 0.9 per cent, compared with the provisions for 2013/14. However, the Advisory Committee notes that, taking into account the amount of \$700,300 for 2013/14 that will not be required for 2014/15, the proposed requirements for official travel for 2014/15 would represent an increase of \$785,900, or 8.7 per cent. The Committee has identified reductions in five departments and offices, which would lead to a total reduction of \$ 283,300 to the proposed resources for official travel for 2014/15 (see A/68/861, para. 57).

Further on official travel, the Advisory Committee recalls that a series of measures related to the standards of accommodation for air travel have been adopted by the General Assembly. The Committee expected that the measures would have an impact on air travel related costs of the Organization and would contain costs under air travel. In this context, the Advisory Committee considers that the information regarding the increases in standard air ticket costs projected for 2014/15 is not clearly presented in the budget proposal nor sufficiently justified by the Secretariat through the additional information provided to the Committee. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the General Assembly requests the Secretary-General to provide detailed information with respect to the financial impact on the travel requirements under the support account in the performance report for 2014/15 and in future budget proposals (paras. 53-56).

Mr. Chairman,

With respect to the overall resource level of backstopping peacekeeping operations, the Advisory Committee notes the increases in both posts/positions and the senior level posts, as follows (see A/68/861, tables 1 and 2 and paras. 4-9):

(a) The total number of posts and positions under the support account and UNLB would increase from 1,702 for 2009/10 to 1,867 for 2014/15, representing increases under both the support account (1,388 to 1,442) and UNLB (314 to 425), against decreases of both military/police (113,613 to 109,415) and civilian staff (26,927 to 21,866) of peacekeeping operations for the same period; and

(b) The total number of posts at the D-1 and D-2 levels, under the support account and UNLB, have increased from 13 and 5 for 2005/06 to 27 and 10 for 2013/14, respectively. Furthermore, 4 additional posts at the D-1 level are being requested in the proposed budgets for 2014/15 for the support account and UNLB.

The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly, *inter alia*, emphasized that support functions should be scalable to the size and scope of peacekeeping operations, and that there should be a relationship between the level of backstopping capacity provided through the support account and the number, size and complexity of peacekeeping operations. The Assembly also reiterated its request to the

Secretary-General to review the level of the support account on a regular basis, taking into consideration the number, size and complexity of peacekeeping operations (A/RES/67/287, paras.12, 13, 15 and 16).

Mr. Chairman,

Let me turn to the financial period 2012/13. You will recall that the General Assembly, in its resolution 67/287, approved an additional amount of \$13,058,500 which was not assessed on Member States. The Secretary-General is now requesting the Assembly to assess an amount of \$11,692,300, which represents the difference between the actual expenditure of \$329,685,300 and the original appropriation of \$317,993,000 approved by the Assembly for the period (see A/68/861, para. 16). The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly assess the amount proposed by the Secretary-General with respect to the 2012/13 period.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.