



(As delivered)

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Agenda item 133: Programme Budget biennium 2012-2013
Second Performance Report

Fifth Committee
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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, my delegation would like to thank Ms. Maria Eugenia Casar, Assistant Secretary-General/Controller and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for introducing their respective reports on the second performance report of the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013. I wish to briefly outline my delegation's views on this issue.

Mr. Chairman,

First, my delegation would like to express its deep regret over the late issuance of documents. This Committee was originally supposed to be closed by Friday of last week. Late issuance of documents has unduly extended the period of this main session, which inherently has budgetary implications. My delegation strongly urges the Secretariat to submit all required documentation in a timely manner, so that this Committee can finish its work as scheduled.

Mr. Chairman,

Two years ago, we achieved a historical reduction in the budget by adopting a budget for this biennium of \$5.152 billion, which is about 5% less than the previous budget of \$5.416 billion.

My delegation would like to recall the commitment of the Secretary-General, made when addressing the General Assembly on December 24, 2011, to instruct all of his managers "to continue finding new ways to make the most of our precious resources and in one year to return with greater cost savings." As Japan has always counted on the Secretary-General's sincere commitments, our delegation has carefully followed how this commitment would be followed through in this Organization especially with respect to cost savings.

Last year, therefore, my delegation was very surprised to find out that there would be huge amount of additional resource requirements. At the end, we were able to reach consensus to approve a revised budget of \$5.396 billion.

And today, again to our deep regret, the final figure presented by the second performance report amounts to as much as \$5.603 billion, which, if approved by the General Assembly, will not only be larger than the previous budget by \$187 million, but will also be the largest budget in the history of the United Nations, despite the severe financial constraints which many Member States including my country are suffering from. Though we deferred the consideration of re-costing with the expectation that the Secretariat would find "new ways to make the most of our precious resources," our delegation deeply regrets that cumulatively \$451 million is now proposed to be added to the initially approved budget. Most of us did not imagine then that two years later we would risk going back to business as usual with such a proposal for substantial increase to the initial budget amount.

While some part of this increase might be attributed to the Member States through the creation of new mandates, my delegation believes that majority of the increase is attributed to the methodology of re-costing, which is unique to this Organization. My delegation would like to reiterate its urgent call to explore among Member States a better way forward on two particular issues. The

first is how we might enable this Organization to prioritize its activities and its commensurate staffing, such that we can tackle emerging and urgent issues while at the same time discontinue other obsolete activities which can be addressed in other ways. The second is how we might make sense of the budgetary envelope of this Organization, and correct the habits of managers who have become accustomed to expecting that more resources will always come at the end of the budgetary cycle rather than operating within the resources initially approved. I would like to underscore the fact that most of the national governments, unlike the United Nations, are not allowed to spend beyond the initially approved resources.

Mr. Chairman,

Regarding the Secretary-General's Second Performance Report, my delegation has some questions which we would like to obtain answers in the informal meeting. For example, my delegation would like to know whether the Secretariat has put in sufficient efforts towards vacancy management, since the lower-than-budgeted vacancy rate seems to have contributed to an increase of approximately \$70 million to the budget. My delegation also has questions concerning the appropriateness of some of the non-post resource requirements.

Furthermore, my delegation strongly requests the Secretary-General not to allow any last minute unnecessary spending by all departments and offices.

Mr. Chairman,

Since we are in uncharted territory for the United Nations, the Member States might need to explore an unprecedented and creative solution to balance the need to cover already spent expenditures on the one hand and the need to take into account the financial constraints that so many Member States are currently suffering from on the other. As the Secretary-General mentioned in his address to the General Assembly on 22 January of this year, "this is no time for business as usual." My delegation would also like to recall that the Secretary-General stressed the need for thinking and acting "innovatively and differently" and cautioned against "the tyranny of

status quo." My delegation would like to urge all Member States to work together in exploring innovative ways to address this issue under the very spirit called for by the Secretary-General.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to assure you that my delegation will participate actively and constructively in the consultations on this agenda item under your able guidance.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.