

**Statement of the Chairman**

**Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions**

**11 May 2016**

**Revised estimates relating to the report of the Secretary-General on the future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations**

**Section 3, Political affairs, section 29D, Office of Central Support Services and section 36, Staff assessment**

*ACABQ report: A/70/7/Add.49; related report of the Secretary-General: A/70/745*

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report (A/70/745) on revised estimates under sections 3 (Political Affairs), 29D (Office of Central Support Services ) and 36 (Staff assessment) relating to the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations.

The Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General is proposing a substantial increase in the capacity of the Department of Political Affairs, with a 15 per cent increase in the overall staffing levels of the Department, including an increase of some 29 per cent under subprogramme 1, Prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

The Advisory Committee considers that such a significant increase in staffing levels should be fully justified and supported by a comprehensive analysis of requirements and of the outputs to be delivered, taking into account current capacities and relevant workload factors. The Advisory Committee is of the view that the proposals put forward are not supported by such a fully developed analysis.

With regard to the timing of the submission of the report, the Advisory Committee considers that every effort should be made to present proposals for major changes in resource levels in the context of the programme budget in order to ensure the integrity of the budget process. It is concerned that greater efforts were not made to avoid a piecemeal approach and facilitate the deliberations of the General Assembly.

Furthermore, the Advisory Committee is not convinced about the urgent need for the submission of the report within such a short period following the adoption of the programme budget for 2016-2017 by the General Assembly. The Committee considers that further efforts should have been made to develop fully justified proposals based on a detailed analysis of requirements, rather than submitting an insufficiently developed report prematurely.

In view of its observations on the content of the report and the timing of its submission, the Advisory Committee is not in a position to recommend approval of the Secretary-General's proposals. The Committee is recommending instead that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to develop a fully justified proposal, taking into account the recommendations and observations in its report.

Notwithstanding its position, the Advisory Committee notes the interest expressed by Member States in strengthening conflict prevention and mediation capacities, and recognizes also that there is an increasing demand on the Department of Political Affairs in those areas. Pending submission and consideration of a fully justified proposal, the Advisory Committee is recommending approval of general temporary assistance equivalent to a total of 10 positions under subprogramme 1, Prevention, management and resolution of conflict.

In this regard, I would also mention that the Committee concurred with a request from the Controller for the establishment of a post of Chief Electoral Officer (D-1) in the United Nations Office to the African Union in Addis Ababa, to be funded from extrabudgetary resources, up to 31 December 2016.

Finally, Mr. Chairman

Given that the recommendations of the High-level Panel cover a broad range of areas, the Advisory Committee is of the view that information accompanying budgetary proposals should be enhanced to provide a clearer and more holistic picture of overall resource requirements related to the implementation of the Panel's recommendation.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.