



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

By

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Fifth Committee

**Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the
Economic and Social Council during 2016**

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- As Delivered -

Madam Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the European Union.

First, allow me to thank Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller, for introducing the revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council during 2016 as contained in SG Reports A/71/401 and A/71/401/Add1 as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for its related report containing the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

On July 25, the member states of the European Union/Members of ECOSOC have expressed their serious concern about some of the revised estimates contained in ECOSOC Resolution 2016/10 (ESCWA), 2016/11 (ESCAP) and 2016/12 (ECLAC). The considerations made at the time are still valid and will guide us through the informal consultations on these items.

We consider it is key to abide by common rules of procedure. This has not been done in the case of the revised estimates for the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Economic and Social Commission for the Asian Pacific (ESCAP) region in relation to their respective strategies and plans of action on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. That is why we had decided to call for a vote on the draft resolutions adopted by ECOSOC. It is our understanding that on the adoption by the ESCWA revised estimates, the members of the regional commission were not presented with an estimate of the programme budget implications of implementing the proposal under their consideration, as the Programme Planning and Budget Division provided only general information stating that the resolution would most likely have programme budget implications. There is no justification for such a clear breach of UN rules and regulations, such

as rule 28 of the rules of procedure of functional commissions, rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and regulation 2.10 of the UN financial rules and regulations, as well as OPs 4 and 5 of GA resolution 69/262.

With regard to the Resolution on ESCAP, the Secretariat issued a clear statement to the effect that none of the commission's resolutions had any programme budget implications. This statement, which is included in the report of ESCAP and is available to all Member States, was the basis for the adoption of the said resolution. As the oral statement has been drastically altered by the Secretariat between the adoption of the resolution by ESCAP and its consideration by ECOSOC in July, we could no longer support the text as adopted in Bangkok earlier this year.

With regard to the Revised Estimates for the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, we note with satisfaction that informal consultations have been conducted in New York, in a very transparent manner. We need to stress however that in the course of the consultation process we were led to believe by the ECLAC Secretariat that any costs arising from the resolution for the period 2016 – 2017 would be covered from extra-budgetary sources mobilized by the said Secretariat. We were, thus, surprised to learn that despite the assurance from the ECLAC Secretariat this would not, in fact, be the case, and the PBI statement would be issued to this end.

In general, we note that the revised estimates presented to us are only agreed and negotiated by a limited amount of member states but we are all being asked to adopt resolutions that carry heavy budgetary implications, and bear consequences of a limited number of countries.

We therefore also believe that future draft resolutions of the ECOSOC should speak to the adoption, and not endorsement, by the Council of decisions/resolutions made by the regional commissions. The ECOSOC is a higher, oversight body of the regional commissions, and – as is the case of functional commissions and expert committees – has the right to adopt or reject, and not merely endorse, the regional commissions' decisions.

I thank you, Madam Chair.