

72nd Session of the UN General Assembly
Fifth Committee
Agenda 136
Proposed Programme Budget for the Biennium 2018-2019
11 October 2017

INDIA STATEMENT

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

We would like to thank the Secretary General for introducing the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019. We also appreciate analysis and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) on the proposed programme budget.

2. My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. In addition, I would make following remarks in national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

3. We are meeting at a time of introspection and change. Introspection about whether the UN system is able to deliver what is expected and mandated of it on meeting a whole range of challenges. Whether it is adequately resourced to be effective and whether it is able to use the resources efficiently.

4. There are growing pressures both on the absolute availability of resources and their allocation. The Secretary General understands the scale of challenges that the organisation faces. We have welcomed his initiative in making specific reform proposals to improve the way the organisation works.

5. Some of the broader concerns have persisted and grown over the past several years. Besides the stagnation in the availability of overall resources required for the delivery of core

mandates even as the demands on the system multiply, the mismatch in the earmarked and non-earmarked funding also continues to expand. This has its own implications in terms of departure from the collective priorities of the organisation.

6. Another longstanding concern is the imbalance in the resources available for the three pillars - peace and security, development and human rights. The UN peacekeeping budget is itself of a magnitude of more than three times the UN regular budget, which also includes substantial peace and security related funding including for Special Political Missions. In contrast, the peacebuilding budget depends on voluntary contributions and is a fraction of the peacekeeping budget.

7. The wider UN development system budget remains only a small percentage of the total global development efforts. Even within the multilateral development efforts, the UN Development system is estimated to channel only a third of such development assistance. Even this assistance is primarily earmarked, with little difference in orientation from donor priorities implemented in a bilateral context while ostensibly coming under UN umbrella.

8. While the member states have collectively adopted a very ambitious 2030 Agenda for sustainable development globally, the capacity of the UN system to assist the national efforts remains marginal at best. The spirit of global partnership, reflected in SDG 17 appears to be dissipating even before materializing fully.

Mr. Chairman,

9. As member states, it is our duty to see that within the constraints of the context, there is a balanced allocation of resources within the organisation.

10. A commensurate appropriation from regular budget is necessary to strengthen the UN's development pillar in light of the very comprehensive sustainable development goals

adopted by the international community. The extra-budgetary resources may also need to be managed consistent with the mandates given by the wider membership of the Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The budget outline is not a pre-approved ceiling on resources available in the regular budget. The emphasis of the process must be on funding the core programme contents from the regular budget which is under the purview of the whole membership. In this regard, we must also bear in mind that creation of posts is not the only vehicle for programme delivery.

12. The present proposal includes total net increase of resources to the tune of US\$ 79.4 million for new and expanded mandates approved by the General Assembly. The proposed programme budget also reflects a net reduction of resource requirement to the tune of US\$ 58.9 million in the "other changes" category. In this regard, sufficient information may be provided to the Member States to support that all resource reflected under new and expanded mandates are derived from decisions of intergovernmental bodies. The distinctions between reductions in resources due to verifiable efficiency measures including adoption of Umoja, and from all other measures also need to be duly reflected. How these reductions would be achieved without affecting delivery also needs to be assessed carefully.

Mr. Chairman,

13. We welcome the inclusion of information on performance measures across four bienniums in the proposed programme budget to reflect long-term trend deserves commendation.

Mr. Chairman,

14. We are aware that the reform proposals put forward by the Secretary General will have implications on the resource allocations for various activities. We understand that any

consequent adjustments to the budget proposals will be submitted as revised estimates. We therefore look forward to pragmatic discussions on the budget proposals during this session.

15. We assure the Secretary General that my delegation will examine the budget proposals with a view that the budget reflects the priorities and conforms to the mandates accorded by Member States. Our overriding consideration will be to allocate adequate resources to the Organization for effective delivery of mandates and to safeguard its financial health. We look forward to working with other delegations for a balanced outcome of this process. We also must work together to ensure strategic oversight for result-based management of resources and to promote accountability in the functioning of the Organisation.

Mr. Chairman,

16. My delegation looks forward to open, transparent and pragmatic discussion of the budget documents and to working with other delegations for a constructive and balanced outcome of the deliberations on this agenda item.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.