

*** CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY ***



Agenda Item 141

Proposed programme budget for 2021

**Request for a subvention to the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of
Cambodia (ECCC) (A/75/242)**

FIFTH COMMITTEE

Statement by

**Mr. Chandramouli Ramanathan
Controller**

7 December 2020

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. I have the honour to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on the request for a subvention to the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) (A/75/242). The report outlines the substantive progress and results achieved by the ECCC under each of the judicial cases. It underlines the continuing financial challenges faced by the ECCC in 2020 and presents the 2021 requirements for both national and international components of the ECCC.

2. Despite the ongoing fundraising efforts undertaken by the United Nations Secretariat, the negative trend of voluntary contributions continued in 2020 and was further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The ECCC has therefore continued implementing measures to address the funding shortfall, while maintaining its most critical functions in the effort to avoid any impact to the judicial proceedings. These measures include freezing recruitment against vacant posts, where possible. In combination with the subvention from the regular budget of \$7 million for 2020, these measures have resulted in

ensuring that the funds cover the minimum operations of the international component of the ECCC through the end of 2020; however, these have also affected the staff morale, as this impacted the duration of personnel contracts. With insufficient funds available at the beginning of the year, contract extensions had to be implemented in four steps during 2020. The ability of the Organization to commit to longer-term contract extensions that cover more than a few months is critical to ensure staff morale and focus on the timely delivery of the ECCC's programme of work.

3. Following the outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic, the ECCC instituted alternate working arrangements between March and November 2020. During this time, judicial work continued unimpeded. Some programmatic activities, such as public outreach and awareness campaigns, both on-site and outside the ECCC premises were, however, affected.

4. The commitment authorities approved by the General Assembly over the past 6 years have been crucial in allowing the United Nations to continue to provide the support to the ECCC to ensure, within the scope of their mandate, accountability for the crimes committed during the former Khmer Rouge regime. While intensive outreach and fundraising efforts will continue, the Secretary-General seeks the approval of the General Assembly, in light of the above, of an appropriation for a subvention for the international component of the ECCC in the amount of \$8.5 million for 2021, taking into account the projected voluntary contributions of about \$4.4 million. Such support would enable the United Nations to meet its obligations in accordance with the Agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Cambodia.

5. Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, I thank you for your consideration of the proposal and we look forward to supporting you in addressing any questions you may have.

Thank you.