

*** CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY ***



Agenda Item 138

Proposed programme budget for 2022

**Report on the use of the commitment authority and request for a subvention to the
Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) (A/76/331)**

FIFTH COMMITTEE

Statement by

**Mr. Chandramouli Ramanathan
Controller**

23 November 2021

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. I have the honour to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on the use of the commitment authority and request for a subvention to the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) (A/76/331). The report outlines the substantive progress and results achieved by the ECCC under each of the judicial cases, and provides an update on the establishment of the legal framework for the completion of the work and residual functions of the ECCC. The report also underlines the continuing financial challenges faced by the ECCC in 2021 and presents the 2022 requirements for both the national and international components of the ECCC.

2. Despite the ongoing fundraising efforts undertaken by the United Nations Secretariat, the declining trend of voluntary contributions continues in 2021 and is further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The ECCC has continued to implement measures to address the funding shortfall, while maintaining its most critical functions, in an effort to avoid any impact on the judicial proceedings. These measures include the freezing of recruitment against vacant posts, unless hiring is absolutely necessary for the uninterrupted

continuation of judicial proceedings. In combination with the subvention from the regular budget of \$7 million for 2021, these measures have resulted in ensuring that the funds cover the minimum operations of the international component of the ECCC through the end of 2021. With limited funds available at the beginning of the year, contract extensions had to be implemented in four steps during 2021 which impacted staff morale. 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, and again from 23 January 2021 to date. 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 7 years have been crucial in allowing the United Nations to continue to provide support to the ECCC to ensure, within the scope of its mandate, accountability for the crimes committed during the former Khmer Rouge regime.

5. In light of the foregoing, the Secretary-General seeks the approval of the General Assembly, of an appropriation for a subvention for the international component of the ECCC in the amount of \$7.5 million for 2022, taking into account the projected voluntary contributions of about \$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. At the same time, the Secretary-General will continue to carry out intensive outreach and fundraising efforts.

6. 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.