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**Statement by Ambassador Patrick Kennedy  
Senior Advisor for UN Management and Reform**

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**Agenda Items 138/139. Proposed Programme Budget**

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**Main Part of the 76<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly  
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*[Prepared for Delivery]*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary-General, thank you for being with us today to present your 2022 proposed program budget. I would also like to thank the Controller, the Budget Director, and their respective teams for the numerous hours invested into the 2022 proposed budget, and for your proactive outreach to Member States during the budget process. I would also like to thank Abdullah Bachar Bong, chairman of the ACABQ, for presenting his report.

This budget is presented amidst a challenging and changing time. I hope we can seize this moment to build a better United Nations. To this end, my delegation will thoroughly review the proposed budget to make sure it enables the Organization to effectively deliver on its mandates, more efficiently use its resources, measure its performance better, and increase transparency and accountability to its member states and the people it is intended to serve.

Mr. Secretary-General, we support greater transparency in budgeting and financing. However, the current presentation of the regular budget presents an incomplete picture of the costs that factor into the budget. For example, the 2022 proposed regular budget is \$3.1 billion before re-costing, which appears to be a decrease from the 2021 budget. However, on-going construction projects and easily anticipated add-ons will increase the 2022 proposed budget to \$3.3 billion before re-costing. The budget presentation can be improved so that Member States can make well-informed decisions about how best to resource the Organization.

With respect to the ACABQ, we note with serious concern that the Advisory Committee has recommended upgrading its own Secretariat absent a proposal by the Secretary-General. The expansion of the ACABQ was achieved through a vote in the plenary rather than through a consensus resolution in the Fifth Committee, and we increased the size of the ACABQ Secretariat by 20% in our most recent budget resolution. At the very least, the qualifications and merits of staff upgrades require review before upgrades can be proposed.

We also recognize the ACABQ's weak rationale for rejecting two additional posts for the Office of Internal Oversight Services, which were supported by the Independent Audit Advisory Committee, which has particular expertise in this area. The inspection and evaluation

subprogram's purpose is to improve the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the Organization's work, and my delegation fully supports that goal.

This past year, the United States committed more than \$360 million to various programs in support to the Palestinian people and is the single largest donor to UNRWA in 2021. Last year's ACABQ recommendation regarding regular budget funding for UNRWA rested its case on GA resolution 65/272. This resolution also calls upon UNRWA to reform its management processes to efficiently utilize resources, reduce operational and administrative costs, and implement change for more effective delivery of services to its beneficiaries. We want to see more reform efforts alongside any efforts to increase the assessed financing of UNRWA.

Program planning is an essential element of the budget process. We look forward to engaging with all member states to find a consensus-based approach to address those program plans that remain open this session, and to ensure that the 2022 program budget is approved in a timely and expeditious manner. Given the breadth and complexity of issues before us, we are ready to discuss the 18 already-approved program plans now and look forward to the remainder coming to the Fifth Committee as quickly as possible. We are mindful that the review of the annual budget will take place next year, and strongly believe that is the appropriate opportunity to agree to a long-term solution, including on the essential work of the Committee for Program and Coordination.

We look forward to engaging constructively and working together to expeditiously begin reviewing the 2022 proposed budget and to conclude our work in a timely manner.

Thank you.