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Chair: Mr. Burity (Vice-Chair) (Angola)
*Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions:* Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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In the absence of Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Mr. Burity (Angola), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 149: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/71/809 and A/71/836)

Cross-cutting issues

1. **Ms. Costa** (Director, Peacekeeping Financing Division), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations: budget performance for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 and budget for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/71/809), said that, in accordance with General Assembly guidance, the report focused on new developments and provided analytical information on the main cost drivers and cross-cutting initiatives. It also provided information on the implementation of decisions and requests contained in General Assembly resolution 70/286.

2. Concerning budget performance during the 2015/16 period, \$8.02 billion had been spent on peacekeeping operations, inclusive of all missions, the Global Service Centre and the support account, with an overall budget implementation rate of 96.6 per cent, compared with the approved budget of \$8.30 billion. The unencumbered balance of \$279 million mainly reflected the non-deployment of helicopters, lower-than-budgeted fuel prices and higher-than-budgeted vacancy rates for international staff in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID); the gradual drawdown of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI); higher-than-projected deductions to personnel reimbursements for absent or non-functional contingent-owned equipment in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO); the faster-than-planned drawdown of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL); and the postponement of elections and ongoing consolidation activities in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

3. A number of decisions taken by the Security Council during 2015/16 had had a significant impact on the mandates of peacekeeping operations, in particular the strengthening of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) pursuant to Security Council

resolution 2295 (2016), of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) pursuant to Security Council resolutions 2212 (2015) and 2264 (2016), and of UNMISS pursuant to Security Council resolution 2252 (2015), and the expansion of the mandate and logistical support package for the United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia, renamed the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), pursuant to Security Council resolution 2245 (2015).

4. During the 2017/18 period, peacekeeping would remain focused on Africa and the Middle East, where the regional, political, operational and security environments of missions were expected to remain difficult and volatile, requiring sustained high levels of deployment. The resources proposed for peacekeeping operations for 2017/18, inclusive of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, the Global Service Centre and the support account, amounted to \$7.97 billion, representing an increase of \$82.7 million compared with the approved resources for 2016/17. The proposed resources reflected increased requirements for military and police personnel owing to the reinforcement of UNMISS and MINUSMA and higher expected deployment levels in the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA); mandated reimbursements for self-sustainment in UNSOS; and the increase in the rate of reimbursement to troop- and police-contributing countries starting from 1 July 2017, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/281.

5. Those increases were partly offset by reductions in the requirements for operational and civilian personnel related to the planned closure of UNOCI by 30 June 2017; the drawdown and planned closure of UNMIL by 30 June 2018; the continued consolidation of MINUSTAH; and, to a lesser extent, the reconfiguration and streamlining of operations in UNAMID. Budget proposals had been formulated in accordance with legislative mandates, and the closure of MINUSTAH and establishment of a follow-on mission in Haiti by October 2017 mandated under Security Council resolution 2350 (2017) would result in further reductions to overall resource requirements.

6. In addition, resources would be required for the continued implementation of Secretariat-wide initiatives to improve the Organization's effectiveness and efficiency, including the Umoja enterprise resource planning system, the supply chain management initiative, and the global service delivery initiative.

7. **Mr. Khare** (Under-Secretary-General for Field Support) paid tribute to those who had made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of international peace and security. The General Assembly's deliberations on the annual overview report of the Secretary-General provided an opportunity to discuss critical issues that affected peacekeeping and to strengthen the partnership between Member States and the Secretariat. Drawing on the Assembly's positive feedback on the previous overview report (A/70/749), the Secretariat had striven to improve the presentation, format and quality of the information presented in the current report (A/71/809). The Department of Field Support had continued to focus on enhancing the capacities of peacekeeping operations to deliver effective, efficient and responsible support, with an emphasis on improving supply chain management; strengthening environmental management; advancing technology and innovation; strengthening administration and management; and combating misconduct.

8. During the 2015/16 period, the Department had worked to improve field support by introducing a core set of performance indicators across peacekeeping operations, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 61/276 and 55/231 on results-based budgeting for peacekeeping operations. In line with the Department's commitment to continuously measuring, reviewing and improving the performance of field support services, the indicators would enhance accountability and transparency and ensure that Member States, Headquarters and missions had a common understanding of expectations, achievements and shortcomings. The indicators would also strengthen the alignment between the strategic frameworks approved by the Assembly for the peacekeeping programme under the regular budget and under peacekeeping budgets. The Department was encouraged by the comments contained in the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/71/836).

9. The Department had finalized the first version of a blueprint for supply chain management and had made progress in the areas of acquisition planning; centralized warehousing; analysis of the use of international delivery terms in systems contracts; and implementation of the East Africa Corridor project for regional sourcing and delivery of key commodities. The 2017/18 budget proposals for the support account included resources for the restructuring of the Department's Logistics Support Division, in line with the requirements of an integrated, end-to-end approach to supply chain management. In 2017/18, the Department would continue to focus on implementing

Umoja Extension 2 and decommissioning the Galileo asset management system and other legacy systems. It counted on Member States' continued support for supply chain management initiatives, which were designed to improve the delivery of goods and services to peacekeeping missions.

10. The Department had launched an environmental management strategy with objectives relating to energy, water and wastewater, solid waste, wider impact and environmental management systems in order to ensure that missions utilized natural resources with optimal efficiency; operated at minimum risk to people, societies and ecosystems, contributing to a positive environmental impact wherever possible; and minimized strategic, operational and reputational risks. In 2016, the majority of peacekeeping operations had implemented projects to reduce their environmental footprint and a total of 439 wastewater treatment plants had been installed across all missions. To enhance the provision of strategic direction on environmental management, it was proposed that an environmental section should be established in the Department of Field Support through the reassignment of posts within existing resources under the support account budget for 2017/18. The support of the General Assembly would be critical for strengthening environmental management in field operations.

11. The partnership between the Department and the African Union had been strengthened through the implementation of two agreements, the first of which provided for the participation of African Union personnel in a training programme designed to foster mission support leadership and technical skills, and the second of which established a pilot staff exchange programme relating to peace support operations. The Department and the African Union had also conducted a joint review of financing and support mechanisms for African Union peace operations. The Department looked forward to continuing its work with the African Union, as well as other regional and subregional organizations, with a view to leveraging knowledge, resources and expertise in the areas of engineering, medical support, technology, environmental preservation, force protection, and conduct and discipline.

12. He welcomed the unqualified opinion of the Board of Auditors on the 2015/16 financial statements of the peacekeeping operations (A/71/5 (Vol. II)). He also welcomed the Board's conclusion that the systems and processes for the preparation of financial statements had been strengthened and that peacekeeping operations remained financially stable, with sufficient cash resources to sustain core operations. Concerted efforts were being made to

address recurring challenges identified by the Board with regard to financial reporting, asset and property management, air operations, human resources management, procurement, and environmental and waste management. The Department valued the support of Member States as it worked to improve its operations in accordance with the guidance on effective resource management contained in General Assembly resolution 70/286.

13. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/71/836), welcomed the more focused approach reflected in the Secretary-General's overview report (A/71/809) and encouraged the Secretariat to provide further analytical information in future reports.

14. On planning, budgeting and financial management practices in United Nations peacekeeping, the Advisory Committee, having reviewed budgetary redeployments between expenditure groups and classes within the 2015/16 financial period, stressed that funds should be redeployed only on the basis of mandate changes or urgent and newly arising operational circumstances. It also recommended a number of additional measures to improve budgetary control. The Advisory Committee welcomed the development of standardized indicators of achievement focusing on the delivery of support to missions and trusted that those indicators would be further refined.

15. The backstopping ratio — the percentage of aggregate peacekeeping resources allocated to backstopping support — had increased in recent years, despite the significant reductions in the uniformed and civilian components of missions and the implementation of global and regional efficiency initiatives. In that connection, the Advisory Committee noted with concern the absence of detailed information in the overview report on progress made in developing scalability models for the United Nations Logistics Base and the support account and trusted that all related reviews and analysis would be finalized prior to the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, with any resource implications reflected in the budget proposals for the 2018/19 period.

16. The Advisory Committee made a number of observations concerning specific efficiency initiatives, including the implementation of Umoja in peacekeeping operations; the consolidation of payroll functions; the decommissioning of Galileo; use of the Regional Procurement Office for peacekeeping

procurement; and the implementation of the supply chain management strategy. It noted with concern that a comprehensive description of the costs and benefits of the supply chain management strategy had still not been provided to the General Assembly, despite the significant increase in the related resource requirements for 2017/18 and extensive structural implications reflected in individual budget proposals.

17. On human resources issues, the Advisory Committee noted that the budget proposals for 2017/18 reflected large numbers of post redeployments and reassignments within and between mission components. In view of the destabilizing effect of repeated changes to mission structures each year and their impact on the transparency of the related resource requirements, the Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request the Secretary-General to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the practice of reassigning and redeploying posts and positions within peacekeeping missions. It also stressed that all proposed staff movements should be fully justified in terms of responsibilities and workload.

18. With regard to management of air operations, the Advisory Committee emphasized the need to establish a consistent methodology for measuring air asset utilization; complete the long-overdue assessment of the roles and activities of the offices responsible for management and oversight of air operations; optimize the number and types of unmanned aerial systems deployed, improve utilization of such systems and provide related cost comparisons in future overview reports; and finalize and apply a consistent policy on cost recovery from the use of mission air assets by third party passengers. In view of the significance of the resources allocated to air operations across peacekeeping operations and the persistent difficulties in obtaining clear and comprehensive information on their management, the Advisory Committee had requested the Board of Auditors to conduct an audit of all air operations in field missions, including on all performance- and compliance-related aspects.

19. The Advisory Committee noted the increase in programmatic activities funded from peacekeeping mission budgets. Although it did not propose any adjustments to the resources requested for such activities, it underscored the need to clearly distinguish between the different types of activities, including those that had been part of mission budgets for years, and to clarify each mission's comparative advantage in the performance of specific activities, as well those of the partners selected to implement them. The Advisory Committee considered that further information should

be provided on the management and oversight arrangements relating to the mine action components of missions. In addition, it made a number of observations regarding environmental management plans and policies, alternative energy projects and the partnership established with the United Nations Environment Programme for the provision of technical assistance to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support.

20. **Ms. Pereira Sotomayor** (Ecuador), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, paid tribute to the United Nations peacekeepers who had lost their lives in the line of duty. She said that the Committee's consideration of cross-cutting issues as a necessary element in providing policy guidance for effective and efficient mandate delivery was particularly important in the light of the Secretary-General's efforts to reform the Organization's peace and security architecture. The Group welcomed the new, streamlined format of the Secretary-General's overview report, with a focus on new developments, policy changes and management challenges, and encouraged continued efforts in that regard. It also welcomed the Secretary-General's six priorities for reforming peacekeeping operations in the 2017/18 period, while stressing that future reports should provide information on the links between proposed and existing reform initiatives in order to clarify the purpose and direction of peacekeeping reform.

21. The Group regretted the ongoing decline in the percentage of staff from troop- and police-contributing countries serving in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and called on the Secretariat to increase their representation, as well as the recruitment and representation of women, in line with the Secretary-General's expressed commitment to diversity of representation in peacekeeping missions. The Group was also concerned that some senior positions remained dominated by a small group of Member States.

22. Repeated changes to mission structures and post and position locations and functions from one year to the next, with no apparent link to changes in mandates or operational circumstances, were destabilizing, affected the clarity and continuity of lines of accountability and control, and had an impact on staff performance. In that regard, an effective "triangular" cooperation mechanism among peacekeeping stakeholders would be critical for strengthening mandate implementation.

23. The Group shared the concerns of the Board of Auditors, expressed in its report on the financial

statements of the peacekeeping missions for the 2015/16 period ([A/71/5 \(Vol. II\)](#)), that the substantial variations between appropriations and expenditure for peacekeeping missions reflected poor budget formulation and implementation with a potentially negative impact on mandate fulfilment. Formulation of peacekeeping budgets should be based on the mandate and specific circumstances on the ground in the case of each mission. While the Group concurred with the Advisory Committee on the importance of adhering to budgetary discipline and to the Financial Regulations and Rules, peacekeeping budget formulation should not be approached as an arbitrary, across-the-board cost-cutting exercise. Efforts must also be made to fill vacancies expeditiously while addressing underlying challenges on the ground.

24. In implementing the supply chain management strategy, lessons learned from the global field support strategy should be applied and comprehensive, verifiable information on project costs and benefits across all peacekeeping operations should be provided to the General Assembly. In addition, the Group looked forward to receiving verifiable information on the costs and benefits of Umoja, including in peacekeeping operations, after the completion of the updated business case initiated by the Secretariat, and trusted that future overview reports would also include details in that regard.

25. The Group would seek information on the utilization, cost-effectiveness, management and regulation of unmanned aerial systems, as well as on the related purchasing and bidding processes and policy guidelines regarding expenditure classification and reimbursement. It was regrettable that the assessment of the roles and activities of the offices responsible for management and oversight of air operations had not been completed; the Secretary-General should complete the related work before submitting his next overview report.

26. The Group had long supported quick-impact projects, which were critical for ensuring that local populations shared in the dividends of the peace process. The extension of and resources allocated to such projects should be based on the situation on the ground in the case of each mission. The Group also recognized the importance of including programmatic funds in mission budgets on a case-by-case basis to support effective mandate implementation.

27. The Group noted with concern the increase in the number of death and disability claims pending for longer than three months and recalled paragraph 25 of General Assembly resolution [66/264](#), in which the

Assembly urged the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to ensure the timely settlement of all such claims within three months from the date of their submission. The Organization must fulfil its moral obligation to the families of those who had made the ultimate sacrifice and to the populations that it sought to protect. Lastly, the Group looked forward to receiving an update on the implementation of the environmental scorecard developed for peacekeeping missions and requested that appropriate monitoring mechanisms should be established to ensure accountability and corrective action, as required.

28. **Ms. Baumann** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Liechtenstein, said that there was a need to continue achieving efficiency gains that benefited all missions, in particular by regularly reviewing missions to ensure their efficiency and effectiveness. She called on the Secretary-General to realize all possible benefits from ongoing and future management reform initiatives and optimize the use of modern technologies in the field and at Headquarters. However, reviews of peacekeeping missions should not solely be aimed at reducing costs and their outcomes must be implemented in a sustainable manner without undermining missions' operational capacities and effectiveness.

29. Prevention was the most effective — and least costly — way of addressing conflicts. In that connection, the two delegations welcomed the recommendations in the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations ([A/70/95-S/2015/446](#)) and the Secretary-General's report on the future of United Nations peace operations ([A/70/357-S/2015/682](#)) on the need for renewed focus on politics, prevention and mediation. They also supported the Secretary-General's aim of promoting close cooperation among departments and throughout the United Nations system in the interest of successful management of peacekeeping operations.

30. To enhance their effectiveness, programmatic activities should be expanded and integrated more systematically in peacekeeping operations. As recommended by the Advisory Committee, the Secretary-General should develop policy guidance for such activities to enhance their impact and improve policy coherence. The two delegations welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals to strengthen environmental management in peacekeeping operations and supported full compliance with the "do no harm" principle advocated under the long-term environmental strategy established for all field missions.

31. **Ms. Adamson** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union attached great importance to United Nations peacekeeping operations — the Organization's flagship activity. Its member States were committed to ensuring that United Nations peacekeeping was as effective as possible in the interest of maintaining peace and security, and they actively engaged in peacekeeping operations through financial contributions and the provision of troops, civilian police and other personnel. She paid tribute to those who had lost their lives in the cause of peace; their sacrifice was testament to the significance of the Committee's deliberations.

32. The States members of the European Union welcomed the Secretary-General's initiatives to improve the effectiveness of the United Nations in the area of peace and security. In advancing the objective of bolstering capacities to support effective political solutions to conflicts, the Committee must focus on results, outcomes and outputs. Indeed, the General Assembly's approach to peace and security reform must demonstrate to the Secretary-General its commitment to an effective United Nations and its willingness to facilitate, rather than impede, the vision of the Secretary-General.

33. In reviewing the Secretary-General's overview report ([A/71/809](#)), the Committee's role must be to provide strategic guidance to the Secretary-General and avoid micromanagement. Peacekeeping operations should be managed according to the highest standards, which entailed strict financial discipline and the effective, efficient and transparent use of resources. The ongoing mandated reform of peacekeeping should be reflected in the handling of the administrative and budgetary aspects of missions, which must take into account each mission's unique circumstances, in particular by ensuring the scalability of support functions. The European Union was open to using all available tools to ensure that budgets reflected the changing circumstances of peacekeeping missions.

34. Uniformed personnel were vital to peacekeeping. Her delegation commended troop-contributing countries for their commitment and attached great importance to the capabilities of troops and to the provision of fully operational equipment, as agreed in the memorandums of understanding between troop contributors and the Secretariat. In addition, the rightsizing of the civilian staff components of missions should be an ongoing

effort aimed at aligning resources to needs in a flexible way. Civilian staffing reviews should therefore be performed on a continuous basis in order to ensure that missions were strategically staffed to discharge their complex mandates. Furthermore, national rather than international staff should be hired for civilian posts wherever possible, especially in the support components of missions, and the Secretariat must give priority to nationalizing posts.

35. Programmatic activities should not overlap with the activities of United Nations country teams and all funds spent by missions must be subject to the same standards of transparency and accountability. Given the critical importance of cooperation between military and civilian personnel, missions and country teams should develop strong operational links and exchanges on the ground with a view to creating a continuum between peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development. Quick-impact projects should serve their original purpose as confidence-building tools instead of being used to replace structural initiatives.

36. The European Union would closely examine all major cost drivers, stressing that categories of expenditure such as travel, transportation, fuel, training, information and communications technology, and the use of consultants should be budgeted with utmost care. The Secretariat should also continue to seek efficiency gains through projects such as supply chain management and Umoja. In addition, procurement activities must be conducted according to the highest standards of sustainability.

37. The horizontal component of the management of peacekeeping operations was more important than ever, as Umoja and other transformation initiatives had changed the way in which Headquarters, individual missions and support centres interacted with each other. In that regard, the General Assembly should focus on ensuring scalability and avoiding micromanagement. Her delegation welcomed the Secretariat's environmental management initiatives, which were critical for ensuring the responsible and sustainable field presence of the United Nations. The latest available technology should be utilized to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping, improve the security and safety of troops and reduce the environmental footprint of missions.

38. **Mr. Feldman** (Brazil) said that, as an unwavering supporter of peacekeeping operations, Brazil welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative to reform the United Nations peace and security strategy. His delegation endorsed the six priorities outlined in the overview report (A/71/809), in particular the objective of bolstering the Organization's capacity to support

political solutions. As the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations had indicated, programmatic activities played an important role in creating the conditions for sustainable peace.

39. The Organization must ensure critical uniformed and civilian capabilities for mandate fulfilment in complex and dangerous environments, in particular by ensuring the safety and security of troops, police and civilian personnel and providing them with appropriate equipment and conditions, but also by implementing better policies, starting at Headquarters. The perspective of troop-contributing countries — whose contribution entitled them to have a greater say in the structure of peacekeeping — was still not adequately reflected in the Security Council and the Secretariat. The positive effect of quick-impact projects on mandate fulfilment in several missions attested to the benefits of enhancing those countries' participation in decision-making on issues related to peacekeeping. In addition, the persistent gender imbalance in the staffing of peacekeeping missions, in particular at the senior level, remained a matter of concern.

40. The United Nations must address all issues that could damage its credibility as a broker of peace. His delegation endorsed the "do no harm" principle articulated by the Secretary-General, and, in that regard, strongly supported combating sexual exploitation and abuse through a victim-centred approach and the use of preventive measures. It also endorsed the Secretary-General's efforts to ensure optimal efficiency in the use of natural resources by peacekeeping missions.

41. Peacekeeping missions should be assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they were fit for purpose and had clearly defined exit strategies. The formulation of peacekeeping budgets should be based on the mandate and specific circumstances of each mission; an across-the-board cost-cutting exercise would be an ill-conceived approach to attaining more efficient, effective and sustainable peacekeeping operations.

42. **Ms. Norman Chalet** (United States of America) said that her delegation attached great importance to strengthening the effectiveness, efficiency, oversight and accountability of United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Committee was responsible for ensuring that Member States' significant investments in peacekeeping were used responsibly and produced the intended results. Where peacekeeping fell short of expectations and requirements, Member States must strive to improve its performance. Peacekeeping budgets should represent actual requirements, be based on realistic planning assumptions and reflect efficiencies from ongoing management initiatives.

43. Her delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's commitment to reforming United Nations peacekeeping. In that connection, the Committee must work in a spirit of collaboration in order to enhance the flexibility of peacekeeping operations in the mission start-up, expansion and drawdown phases and their agility in responding to crises; strengthen mission leadership and environmental management; and leverage modern technology to improve mandate fulfilment and enhance safety and security. Her delegation was also committed to initiatives aimed at strengthening performance in the field by ensuring the required capabilities, improving metrics and assessment tools, and strengthening accountability for poor performance and misconduct, particularly sexual exploitation and abuse.

44. **Mr. Imada** (Japan) said that the overview reports of the Secretary-General played a vital role in ensuring consistency in the handling of the administrative and budgetary aspects of missions and provided a useful basis for Member States' overall policy discussion on the efficient, effective and accountable management of peacekeeping operations.

45. His delegation looked forward to the discussions on issues related to the financing of peacekeeping operations, including the support ratio, scalability, budgetary redeployments and programmatic activities, in particular the request contained in paragraph 69 of General Assembly resolution [70/286](#), and the relationship between peacekeeping missions and United Nations country teams. The structures of peacekeeping missions must meet and not exceed the requirements for effective mandate implementation. His delegation noted with particular interest the Advisory Committee's observation, in paragraph 181 of its report ([A/71/836](#)), that further analysis of issues relating to programmatic activities was required and that it intended to keep the matter under review.

46. The internal review team established by the Secretary-General to examine existing recommendations for change in the peace and security architecture should focus not only on the progress made thus far but also on issues that had not been agreed upon by Member States and intergovernmental bodies. The comments made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph 13 of its report ([A/71/836](#)) should also be taken into account in that regard. He reiterated that assessed contributions should be used only for appropriate purposes and that the resource requirements proposed by the Secretary-General must precisely reflect the intentions of intergovernmental bodies. The Fifth Committee had a critical role to play in that regard.

47. **Mr. Sætre** (Norway) said that the Organization must improve its ability to prevent and resolve conflicts and sustain peace through effective mandate implementation. While important steps had been taken to implement the proposals of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, including the establishment of the Strategic Force Generation and Capability Planning Cell, much remained to be done to complete the four essential shifts to improve the response of peace operations called for in the Panel's report ([A/70/95-S/2015/446](#)). In that regard, Norway strongly supported the Secretary-General's initiative to review the United Nations peace and security architecture and management procedures.

48. The Committee must support the Secretary-General in making the United Nations more field-oriented, flexible and capable of engaging with local communities by simplifying and decentralizing management of peacekeeping missions. That would entail implementing policies and procedures that delegated authority for human resources, finance and procurement to the field while also ensuring accountability and transparency.

49. In order to direct their operations effectively and respond to crises in a timely manner, Force Commanders must have full tasking authority, including with regard to the use of key capabilities such as helicopters, as required by missions' concepts of operations. Capacities for joint strategic analysis and assessment, including through the use of intelligence, should be strengthened in order to enhance understanding of conflict environments and identify opportunities for intervention and engagement. The Secretariat should also further develop the strategic guidelines and modalities for operation in dangerous security environments. In that regard, the Organization must strengthen its capacities to map and assess the threats posed by non-State armed groups, which had become a common feature of contemporary conflicts.

50. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's commitment to gender parity in leadership positions and encouraged Member States to increase the representation of women in all positions, including in the field. In that regard, he welcomed the inclusion of gender targets as an indicator of achievement in the compacts between the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretaries-General for Peacekeeping and Field Support and looked forward to reports on the impact of that measure.

51. Norway supported the recommendation of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations that

the Secretary-General should make more strategic use of programmatic funding, which was in line with his aim of reducing fragmentation and coordinating efforts across the United Nations system. In addition, peace operations with a peacebuilding mandate should include experts on peacebuilding in order to facilitate transitions and foster cooperation with United Nations country teams.

52. Efforts must be made to strengthen the capabilities and performance of peacekeepers through the development of standards and strategic force generation capacity, in particular through the finalization of the Strategic Guidance Framework for International Police Peacekeeping. The deployment of specialized police teams had improved the quality and effectiveness of policing. There was also a need to complete the performance framework and standards for United Nations medical facilities in the field. In advancing peacekeeping reform, the Committee must avoid micromanagement and support the Secretary-General in reducing administrative barriers to effective mandate fulfilment.

Agenda item 154: Financing of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (A/71/674, A/71/832 and A/71/836/Add.11)

Agenda item 158: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (A/71/645, A/71/836/Add.16 and A/71/847)

53. **Ms. Costa** (Director, Peacekeeping Financing Division), introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 (A/71/674) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/71/832) for MONUSCO, said that the proposed budget of \$1,234.6 million for 2017/18 represented a decrease of 0.1 per cent compared with the approved resources for 2016/17. Since the publication of the report on the proposed budget and its consideration by the Advisory Committee, the Security Council, in its resolution 2348 (2017), had decided to reduce the Mission's authorized troop ceiling by 3,700 military personnel. It had also decided that MONUSCO should provide support for the implementation of the political agreement of 31 December 2016, as well as technical assistance and logistical support for the electoral process and assistance for the provision of training to the Congolese National Police in the area of elections security. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2348 (2017), a detailed needs assessment was being undertaken by the Secretariat to determine the operational requirements of the Mission, after which

further action would be considered following the established procedure.

54. In a letter of 20 April 2017, the Controller had informed the Advisory Committee of the Secretariat's intention to absorb the costs arising from Security Council resolution 2348 (2017) within the approved budget for MONUSCO for the 2016/17 period and to report thereon in the context of the related budget performance report for the Mission. In addition, efforts would be made to accommodate the costs associated with the electoral process within the resources to be approved by the General Assembly for the Mission for the 2017/18 period. The reduction in the authorized troop ceiling was expected to result in reduced requirements of approximately \$26.7 million. However, should the Secretariat conclude, on the basis of the needs assessment, that additional resources would be required for 2017/18, it would submit a proposal for the required resources.

55. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 (A/71/645) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 (A/71/847) for UNMIL, she said that the proposed budget of \$122.1 million for the 2017/18 period, which provided for the withdrawal and liquidation of the Mission by 30 June 2018 in line with Security Council resolution 2333 (2016), represented a decrease of 34.7 per cent compared with the approved resources for 2016/17. UNMIL would support the presidential and legislative elections in 2017 and the transition to a new Government. It would also cooperate with the United Nations country team in addressing gaps in the team's capabilities and transferring the Mission's tasks to the country team. Before the closure of the Mission, an environmental clean-up of all sites would be carried out and all assets would be disposed of in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations of the Organization.

56. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report on MONUSCO (A/71/836/Add.11), said that the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of \$36.9 million to the proposed budget for 2017/18, which included a reduction of \$26.7 million related to the decrease in the authorized troop ceiling pursuant to Security Council resolution 2348 (2017). In addition to the requirements under the military personnel class of expenditure, the reduction in the number of military contingent personnel deployed could have an impact on related support structures, as well as civilian personnel and operational costs. The Advisory Committee trusted that the Secretary-General would

provide the General Assembly with a detailed update on all adjustments to be made, pursuant to Security Council resolution [2348 \(2017\)](#), to the estimated requirements for MONUSCO for 2017/18.

57. The Advisory Committee recommended a number of adjustments to the vacancy rates proposed under various categories of civilian personnel. Under operational costs, it recommended reductions in the requirements for consultants, official travel, facilities and infrastructure, and air operations. Specifically, it recommended that the overall proposed resources under facilities and infrastructure should be reduced by approximately \$2 million and maintained at the level of the apportionment for 2016/17. With regard to official travel, the Advisory Committee stressed that further efforts could be made to reduce the number and duration of trips, in particular outside-mission travel and training-related travel, and recommended a reduction of 20 per cent in the resources proposed under the related expenditure category for 2017/18. Under air operations, based on the usage of the unmanned aerial system, the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of \$5 million to the proposed requirements of \$15.1 million for a new unmanned aerial system. With regard to the 2016/17 period, the Advisory Committee requested the Secretary-General to provide the most up-to-date information on current and projected expenditures related to the 150 temporary assistance positions established to provide technical assistance and logistical support for the voter registration process, pursuant to Security Council resolution [2277 \(2016\)](#).

58. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on UNMIL ([A/71/836/Add.16](#)), he said that the Advisory Committee trusted that the drawdown of personnel and equipment of UNMIL would proceed as swiftly as possible and as planned, in accordance with Security Council resolution [2333 \(2016\)](#) and in compliance with all applicable United Nations regulations, rules and policies. It also expected that the Mission would draw on the experience gained from the drawdown and liquidation of other peacekeeping missions, including UNOCI.

59. The Advisory Committee recommended an overall reduction of approximately \$7.7 million in the proposed budget for UNMIL for 2017/18. That amount reflected a number of reductions related to the continued downsizing of the Mission over the next few months, including a 30 per cent reduction under official travel; a 10 per cent reduction under facilities and infrastructure; a 20 per cent reduction under communications; and a 20 per cent reduction under information technology. The Advisory Committee

noted with concern that the environmental efforts of UNMIL had not been satisfactory throughout the life of the Mission and expected that the environmental clean-up of UNMIL sites would comply with established environmental and waste management policies. It also expected that the Mission would reduce its long-term overall environmental footprint, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolutions [69/307](#) and [70/286](#).

60. UNMIL continued to support the return of national staff to the national labour market, including through annual job fairs and a certification programme in vocational skills. The Advisory Committee welcomed the continued implementation of national staff capacity-building programmes.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.