



# General Assembly

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## Seventy-fifth session

Agenda item 141

**Proposed programme budget for 2021**

### **Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 31 December 2020**

[*on the report of the Fifth Committee (A/75/682, para. 63)*]

#### **75/252. Questions relating to the proposed programme budget for 2021**

*The General Assembly,*

*Reaffirming its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986, 42/211 of 21 December 1987, 45/248 B, section VI, of 21 December 1990, 55/231 of 23 December 2000, 56/253 of 24 December 2001, 58/269 and 58/270 of 23 December 2003, 59/276, section XI, of 23 December 2004, 60/283 of 7 July 2006, 61/263 of 4 April 2007, 62/236 of 22 December 2007, 63/262 of 24 December 2008, 64/243 of 24 December 2009, 65/259 of 24 December 2010, 66/246 of 24 December 2011, 68/246 of 27 December 2013, 70/247 of 23 December 2015, 71/272 A of 23 December 2016, 72/261 and 72/266 A of 24 December 2017, 72/266 B of 5 July 2018, 73/281 of 22 December 2018 and 74/262 and 74/263 of 27 December 2019,*

*Reaffirming also the respective mandates of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in the consideration of the proposed programme budget,*

*Reaffirming further the role of the General Assembly, through the Fifth Committee, in carrying out a thorough analysis and approval of posts and financial resources, as well as of human resources policies,*

*Recognizing the detrimental effect of the withholding of assessed contributions on the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations and its ability to implement mandates and programmes,*

*Recognizing also that late payments of assessed contributions, bearing in mind the special situation of certain Member States, have adversely affected the financial situation of the United Nations and resulted in liquidity challenges that have affected the delivery of mandates,*



*Having considered* the proposed programme budget for 2021,<sup>1</sup> the report of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee on internal oversight: proposed programme budget for 2021<sup>2</sup> and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,<sup>3</sup>

1. *Reaffirms* that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters, and also reaffirms the role of the Fifth Committee in carrying out a thorough analysis and approving human and financial resources and policies, with a view to ensuring the full, effective and efficient implementation of all mandated programmes and activities and the implementation of policies in this regard;
2. *Also reaffirms* rule 153 of its rules of procedure;
3. *Further reaffirms* the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation;<sup>4</sup>
4. *Reaffirms* the established budgetary procedures and methodologies, based on its resolutions [41/213](#) and [42/211](#);
5. *Also reaffirms* the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations;<sup>5</sup>
6. *Further reaffirms* its resolution [75/243](#) of 31 December 2020;
7. *Endorses* the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, subject to the provisions of the present resolution;
8. *Welcomes* the increased throughput productivity of the translation services at all duty stations, underlines that these productivity gains, enabled over the years by new working methods and technologies, justify revising the current notional workload standards approved in the pre-computer era by the General Assembly, and decides to increase the workload standards for the translation services to 5.8 pages per day;
9. *Notes with serious concern* that the exceptional measures put in place to address the liquidity crisis have led to important disparities with regard to available staff in the language services in the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management of the Secretariat, recalls its resolution [73/346](#) of 16 September 2019, in which it emphasized the paramount importance of the equality of the six official languages of the United Nations, and requests the Secretary-General to take expeditiously all action necessary to reduce those disparities and ensure equal and adequate treatment of all six official languages in this context, including by making exceptions to the aforementioned measures as needed;
10. *Recalls* paragraph XI.6 of the report of the Advisory Committee, and requests the Secretary-General to include indicative estimates for the major construction projects in the programme budget under section 33 for information purposes only;
11. *Stresses* the importance of aligning information and communications technology investment with the Secretary-General's vision of a digital United Nations and addressing the need for business continuity during the coronavirus disease

<sup>1</sup> A/75/6 (Foreword and introduction), sects. 1–36, income sects. 1–3 and corrigenda.

<sup>2</sup> [A/75/87](#).

<sup>3</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-fifth Session, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum ([A/75/7](#) and [A/75/7/Corr.1](#)).

<sup>4</sup> [ST/SGB/2018/3](#).

<sup>5</sup> [ST/SGB/2013/4](#) and [ST/SGB/2013/4/Amend.1](#).

(COVID-19) pandemic, and requests the Secretary-General to provide consolidated information regarding information and communications technology spending;

12. *Takes note* of paragraphs 30 and 31 of the report of the Advisory Committee;

13. *Stresses* that all extrabudgetary posts must be administered and managed with the same rigour as regular budget posts;

14. *Also stresses* that extrabudgetary resources shall be used in consistency with the policies, aims and activities of the Organization, and requests the Secretary-General to provide information on the financial and human resource implications of the use of extrabudgetary resources in the Organization in his next proposed programme budget;

15. *Bears in mind* the rules governing the duration and extension of special post allowances and that the granting of such benefits should be restricted to exceptional cases only, and requests the Secretary-General to comply with those rules and review the existence of posts that have been vacant or encumbered through special post allowances for more than one year and to report thereon in his next budget proposal;

16. *Notes* that organizational reforms should contribute to greater efficiency and effectiveness in delivering the Organization's mandated programmes and activities without negatively affecting their full implementation, and requests the Secretary-General to provide results and examples in this regard in the context of his next budget submission;

17. *Urges* all Member States to fulfil their financial obligations as set out in the Charter of the United Nations on time, in full and without conditions;

18. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to make every effort to facilitate Member States' payments of their assessed contributions;

19. *Expresses the need* to receive detailed and consolidated information on the management of the liquidity situation, requests the Secretary-General to brief the General Assembly periodically on the impact of the situation on the implementation of United Nations mandates and the functioning of United Nations services, and also requests the Secretary-General to provide monthly expenditure data by section;

20. *Recalls* paragraph 15 of the report of the Advisory Committee, and requests the Secretary-General to report in the next budget performance report on the impact of COVID-19 on the programme budget for 2020 and 2021, detailing the recorded budget variances and flexible working arrangements, and to factor lessons learned for the working methods of the Secretariat, without prejudice to the work of intergovernmental bodies, into the proposed programme budget for 2022;

21. *Stresses* that finance serves as a foundation of and an important element underpinning United Nations governance;

22. *Reaffirms* that no changes to the budget methodology, to established budgetary procedures and practices or to the financial regulations may be implemented without prior review and approval by the General Assembly, in accordance with established budgetary procedures;

23. *Reiterates* the need for Member States to participate fully in the budget preparation process, from its early stages and throughout the process;

24. *Emphasizes* the importance of comprehensive budgetary performance in the management of the programme budget, and requests the Secretary-General to clearly link the budget inputs to tangible results;

25. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to strengthen internal controls in programme planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting;

26. *Takes note* of paragraph 34 of the report of the Advisory Committee, notes with concern that the current overall single vacancy rate by staff category for all sections is inflated and may have an impact on mandate delivery, and requests the Secretary-General to bring the actual vacancy rate in the budget sections to the approved vacancy rate before applying it;

27. *Stresses* that results-based budgeting and results-based management are mutually supportive management tools and that improved implementation of results-based budgeting enhances both management and accountability in the Secretariat, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in this regard;

28. *Requests* the Secretary-General to review those posts that have been vacant for 24 months or longer and to propose either the retention with justification of need or the abolishment of those posts, as applicable, in his next budget proposal;

29. *Decides* that a vacancy rate of 9.1 per cent for Professional staff and 7.4 per cent for General Service staff shall be used as a basis for the calculation of the budget for 2021;

30. *Also decides* that the staffing table for 2021 shall be as set out in the annex to the present resolution;

31. *Further decides* to further reduce resources for experts by 2.8 million United States dollars;

32. *Decides* to further reduce resources for consultants by 2.6 million dollars;

33. *Also decides* to further reduce resources for travel of staff by 5.3 million dollars;

34. *Further decides* to further reduce resources for hospitality by 350,000 dollars;

35. *Decides* to further reduce resources for supplies and materials by 600,000 dollars;

36. *Also decides* to further reduce resources for furniture and equipment by 2.5 million dollars;

37. *Further decides* to further reduce the resources for overtime and night differential by 1 million dollars;

38. *Decides* to further reduce resources for licensing and software by 250,000 dollars;

39. *Also decides* to further reduce resources for general operating expenditures by 1.6 million dollars;

40. *Further decides* to further reduce resources for training by 300,000 dollars;

**Part I****Overall policymaking, direction and coordination****Section 1****Overall policymaking, direction and coordination**

41. *Takes note* of paragraphs I.10 and I.18 of the report of the Advisory Committee, and decides to retain the post of Chief of Mediation Office (D-1) until the current incumbent's mandatory retirement;

42. *Recalls* paragraphs I.27, I.31, I.39, I.43 and I.47 of the report of the Advisory Committee, also recalls its resolution [72/279](#) of 31 May 2018, reaffirms its request to the Secretary-General to report annually to the Economic and Social Council at its operational activities for development segment on the implementation of the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, including its funding, to ensure accountability towards Member States, and also reaffirms its request to the Secretary-General to submit for the consideration of the General Assembly, before the end of its seventy-fifth session, a review with recommendations on the functioning of the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, including its funding arrangement;

**Section 2****General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management**

43. *Decides* to establish two posts of Chinese Interpreter (P-3);

**Part II****Political affairs****Section 4****Disarmament**

44. *Decides* to abolish the post of Staff Assistant (General Service (Other level)) that has been vacant for more than two years;

**Section 5****Peacekeeping operations**

45. *Recognizes* the important role of peacekeeping and special political missions at the national, subregional, regional and international levels, as appropriate, in maintaining peace and security in fulfilment of their mandates;

46. *Re-emphasizes* the importance of improving the safety and security of peacekeepers and mission personnel, and requests the Secretary-General to fulfil the responsibilities under relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council to improve the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers and mission personnel;

**Part III****International justice and law****Section 8****Legal affairs**

47. *Decides* not to approve the establishment of one new general temporary assistance position of Legal Officer (P-3) in the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar;

48. *Takes note* of paragraph III.54 of the report of the Advisory Committee;

49. *Decides* that regular budget resources for the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 under section 8, Legal affairs, for 2021 amount to 17 million dollars before recosting;

**Part IV**  
**International cooperation for development**

**Section 10**  
**Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States**

50. *Decides* to establish one P-4 post and one P-3 post under subprogramme 2, Landlocked developing countries;

**Section 11**  
**United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development**

51. *Recalls* that the development of Africa is an established priority of the United Nations, and reaffirms its commitment to address the unique needs of Africa;

**Section 15**  
**Human settlements**

52. *Decides* to establish two posts of Programme Management Officer (P-4) in Nairobi;

**Part VI**  
**Human rights and humanitarian affairs**

**Section 24**  
**Human rights**

53. *Decides* to approve the establishment of one general temporary assistance position of Human Rights Officer (P-3);

54. *Requests* the Secretary-General to entrust the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat with the conduct of a review and evaluation of the activity, performance and results of staff support provided to the human rights treaty body system of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to ensure the effectiveness of the treaty body system, and requests the Secretary-General to report thereon in his next budget report;

**Part VIII**  
**Common support services**

**Section 29C**  
**Office of Information and Communications Technology**

55. *Takes note* of paragraph VIII.57 of the report of the Advisory Committee, and decides not to abolish the P-5 post;

56. *Decides* to abolish the long-vacant P-3 post;

**Part XI**  
**Capital expenditures**

**Section 33**  
**Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance**

57. *Decides to further reduce resources for alteration, improvement and major maintenance projects by 1,474,400 dollars;*

**Part XII**  
**Safety and security**

**Section 34**  
**Safety and security**

58. *Takes note of paragraph XII.11 of the report of the Advisory Committee, and decides to establish the posts of Chief of Physical Security Section (P-5) and Compliance, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (P-3).*

*48th (resumed) plenary meeting  
31 December 2020*

**Annex**

**Staffing table for 2021**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Number of posts</i>
<i>Expenditure sections</i>	
<b>Professional and higher</b>	
Deputy Secretary-General	1
Under-Secretary-General	36
Assistant Secretary-General	33
D-2	115
D-1	298
P-5	904
P-4	1 537
P-3	1 451
P-2/1	524
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>4 899</b>
<b>General Service and related</b>	
Principal level	270
Other level	2 288
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2 558</b>
<b>Other</b>	
Security Service	307
Local level	1 906
Field Service	107
National Professional Officer	87
Trades and Crafts	95
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2 502</b>
<b>Expenditure sections total</b>	<b>9 959</b>

<i>Category</i>	<i>Number of posts</i>
<i>Income section 3</i>	
<b>Professional and higher</b>	
P-5	2
P-4	4
P-3	4
P-2/1	3
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>General Service and related</b>	
Principal level	7
Other level	43
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Other</b>	
Security Service	2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Income section 3 total</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>10 024</b>