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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council

Thematic cluster III: United Nations offices, peacebuilding support offices, integrated offices and commissions

Fourteenth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (thematic cluster III) ([A/70/348/Add.3](#)). During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 18 November 2015.

2. The main report of the Secretary-General ([A/70/348](#)) provides an overview of the proposed resource requirements for 2016 for 35 special political missions and related cross-cutting issues, and the five addenda to the main report cover the specific requirements for thematic clusters I to III and the two largest missions, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) ([A/70/348/Add.1-5](#)). Issues of a cross-cutting nature pertaining to all special political missions will be contained in the main report of the Advisory Committee ([A/70/7/Add.10](#)), while the budget proposals for thematic clusters I to III and UNAMA and UNAMI will be presented in its related reports ([A/70/7/Add.11-15](#)). The budget proposal of the Secretary-General for the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen



(cluster I) is contained in a separate addendum ([A/70/348/Add.6](#)) and the report of the Committee on that Office will be issued as document [A/70/7/Add.16](#).

3. The Advisory Committee recalls that a biennial provision of \$1,124.4 million for special political missions was included in section 3, Political affairs, of the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for 2016-2017 (see [A/70/6](#) (Sect. 3), paras. 3.96-3.100). The comments and recommendations of the Committee on the level of the biennial provision, in particular a proposed reduction of \$6 million attributed to "efficiencies", will be included in its main report ([A/70/7/Add.10](#)), along with other cross-cutting issues relating to the proposed resource requirements, including air operations, travel and security arrangements, as well as ratios for, inter alia, vehicles and computing devices.

II. Resource requirements for 2016

4. The proposed resources for 2016 for eight special political missions grouped under cluster III amount to \$190,112,100, or 33.6 per cent of the total resources proposed for all 35 special political missions in 2016 (see [A/70/348](#)). Table 1 below provides a breakdown, by mission, of the estimated total requirements for 2015 and the projected requirements for 2016.

Table 1

Thematic cluster III: summary of resource requirements

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Mission	2014-2015			Requirements for 2016		Total requirements for 2015	Variance 2015-2016
	Appropriations	Estimated expenditure	Variance	Total	Non-recurrent		
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)=(4)-(6)
United Nations Office for West Africa	19 751.1	19 575.7	175.4	9 651.4	35.2	10 211.0	(559.6)
United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau	39 630.5	39 193.8	436.7	20 070.7	80.5	20 676.6	(605.9)
United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia	150 809.0	150 738.0	71.0	94 181.1	8 820.2	82 329.6	11 851.5
United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia	5 792.0	5 794.9	(2.9)	3 022.7	61.6	2 910.4	112.3
United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission	10 549.6	10 535.2	14.4	4 979.8	4.3	4 953.4	26.4
Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon	16 668.3	16 926.6	(258.3)	8 553.7	9.6	8 359.6	194.1
United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa	11 179.9	11 430.5	(250.6)	8 212.8	55.5	5 727.9	2 484.9
United Nations Support Mission in Libya	102 327.7	102 327.7	—	41 439.9	36.2	47 860.1	(6 420.2)
Total	356 708.1	356 522.4	185.7	190 112.1	9 103.1	183 028.6	7 083.5

5. As indicated in the table above, expenditure for eight missions grouped in cluster III for 2014-2015 is estimated at \$356,522,400, reflecting a projected

underexpenditure of \$185,700 compared with the appropriation of \$356,708,100 for the period. The Advisory Committee notes that the projected underexpenditure relates mainly to the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) and the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), offset in part by projected overexpenditures under the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL) and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). Information on the variances for each mission listed in table 1 is provided in the report of the Secretary-General (A/70/348/Add.3).

6. For 2016, the estimated requirements of \$190,112,100 reflect an increase of \$7,083,500, or 3.9 per cent, compared with the appropriation of \$183,028,600 for 2015. The Advisory Committee notes that this reflects a significant increase under the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) (\$11,851,500) and UNOCA (\$2,484,900), with offsetting decreases mainly under the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) (\$6,420,200), UNIOGBIS (\$605,900) and UNOWA (\$559,600). The main report of the Secretary-General contains further information on the variances under this cluster (see A/70/348, table 6).

Comments and recommendation on staffing requirements

7. The approved positions under cluster III for 2015, the vacancy situation as at 30 September 2015 and the staffing proposals of the Secretary-General for 2016 are summarized in table 2 below. The comments of the Advisory Committee and its recommendations on staffing proposals are set out in paragraphs 8 to 26 below.

Table 2
Thematic cluster III: staffing requirements

	Approved for 2015	Vacant positions as at 30 September 2015	Proposed for 2016	New positions	Abolitions	Reclassifications
United Nations Office for West Africa	46 (1 USG, 2 D-1, 4 P-5, 8 P-4, 4 P-3, 6 FS, 5 NPO, 16 LL)	7 (1 D-1, 1 P-4, 2 P-3, 3 LL)	47 (1 USG, 2 D-1, 4 P-5, 8 P-4, 4 P-3, 6 FS, 6 NPO, 16 LL)	1 (1 NPO)	—	—
United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau	133 (1 USG, 2 D-2, 2 D-1, 6 P-5, 13 P-4, 10 P-3, 30 FS, 22 NPO, 40 LL, 7 UNV)	10 (1 P-5, 1 P-4, 1 P-3, 4 FS, 1 LL, 2 UNV)	137 (1 USG, 2 D-2, 2 D-1, 6 P-5, 13 P-4, 9 P-3, 28 FS, 26 NPO, 40 LL, 10 UNV)	12 (2 FS, 2 LL, 4 NPO, 4 UNV)	8 (4 FS, 2 LL, 1 NPO, 1 UNV)	1 (1 P-3 to NPO)
United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia	233 (1 USG, 2 ASG, 1 D-2, 7 D-1, 29 P-5, 30 P-4, 28 P-3, 1 P-2, 36 FS, 63 NPO, 31 LL, 4 UNV)	70 (1 D-1, 8 P-5, 11 P-4, 7 P-3, 2 FS, 27 NPO, 12 LL, 2 UNV)	268 (1 USG, 2 ASG, 1 D-2, 7 D-1, 30 P-5, 37 P-4, 29 P-3, 1 P-2, 45 FS, 69 NPO, 39 LL, 7 UNV)	35 (1 P-5, 7 P-4, 1 P-3, 9 FS, 6 NPO, 8 LL, 3 UNV)	—	—

	<i>Approved for 2015</i>	<i>Vacant positions as at 30 September 2015</i>	<i>Proposed for 2016</i>	<i>New positions</i>	<i>Abolitions</i>	<i>Reclassifications</i>
United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia	30 (1 ASG, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 2 FS, 4 NPO, 18 LL)	—	30 (1 ASG, 1 P-5, 2 P-4, 2 P-3, 2 FS, 4 NPO, 18 LL)	—	—	—
United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Commission	12 (3 P-5, 6 P-4, 1 FS, 2 LL)	—	12 (3 P-5, 6 P-4, 1 FS, 2 LL)	—	—	—
Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon	81 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 D-1, 2 P-5, 5 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 P-2, 7 FS, 4 NPO, 58 LL)	5 LL	82 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 1 D-1, 2 P-5, 6 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 P-2, 7 FS, 4 NPO, 58 LL)	1 (1 P-4)	—	—
United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa	27 (1 USG, 1 D-1, 3 P-5, 3 P-4, 4 P-3, 7 FS, 2 NPO, 6 LL)	2 P-3	41 (1 USG, 2 D-1, 4 P-5, 11 P-4, 4 P-3, 7 FS, 4 NPO, 8 LL)	14 (1 D-1, 1 P-5, 8 P-4, 2 NPO, 2 LL)	—	—
United Nations Support Mission in Libya	205 (1 USG, 1 ASG, 2 D-2, 7 D-1, 10 P-5, 28 P-4, 30 P-3, 2 P-2, 83 FS, 1 GS (OL), 7 NPO, 31 LL, 2 UNV)	41 (6 P-5, 4 P-4, 9 P-3, 2 P-2, 15 FS, 2 NPO, 3 LL)	197 (1 USG, 2 ASG, 2 D-2, 7 D-1, 10 P-5, 27 P-4, 28 P-3, 2 P-2, 74 FS, 1 GS (OL), 8 NPO, 33 LL, 2 UNV)	1 (1 ASG)	9 (1 P-4, 1 P-3, 3 FS, 4 LL)	7 (1 P-3 to NPO, 6 FS to LL)

Abbreviations: ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; FS, Field Service; GS (OL), General Service (Other level); LL, Local level; NPO, National Professional Officer; UNV, United Nations Volunteer; USG, Under-Secretary-General.

Vacancy rates

8. The Advisory Committee notes that the application of a single vacancy rate for all new and continuing posts and positions is consistent with the approach proposed by the Secretary-General across all sections of the programme budget. In its report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, the Committee recommended a return to the previous practice of applying a different budgetary treatment for new and continuing posts and, therefore, that the General Assembly apply the vacancy rate of 50 per cent for new Professional posts and 35 per cent for new General Service posts (see [A/70/7](#), para. 57). **The Committee recommends, therefore, that the 2016 resource requirements in respect of the new positions proposed (see para. 9 below) be reduced accordingly to reflect the application of vacancy rates of 50 per cent for new positions at the Professional and higher levels and 35 per cent for new General Service positions.**

9. The staffing changes proposed for 2016 under cluster III include the following:

(a) UNOWA: establishment of one new position of Administrative Officer (National Professional Officer) under the supervision of the Chief of Staff (A/70/348/Add.3, para. 24);

(b) UNIOGBIS: a shift in staffing resources as follows:

(i) Abolishment of two positions of Security Officer (Field Service) and one position of Security Assistant (Local level) in the Security Section; one position of Driver (Local level) in Mission Support; one position of Public Information Officer (National Professional Officer) in the Public Information Unit; and one position (United Nations Volunteer) in the Rule of Law and Security Institutions Service (ibid., para. 52 (a));

(ii) Establishment of one position of Personal Assistant (Field Service) and one position of Translator (Local level) in the Office of the Special Representative; one position of Administrative Assistant (Local level) in the Rule of Law and Security Institutions Service; one position of Procurement Assistant (Field Support), one engineering position (National Professional Officer) and one Finance and Budget Assistant position (United Nations Volunteer) in Mission Support (ibid., para. 52 (b)). In the supplementary information provided to the Advisory Committee it was indicated that the staffing changes proposed in paragraph 52 of the report of the Secretary-General would have no net impact on resource requirements;

(iii) Abolishment of two positions of Security Officers (Field Service) in the Security Section on long-term loan to other sections (ibid., para. 53);

(iv) Nationalization and reclassification of one position of Gender Police Officer (P-3) to a Security Sector Reform Officer (National Professional Officer) position and establishment of two additional positions of Security Sector Reform Officers (National Professional Officer) in the Police Reforms Section of the Rule of Law and Security Institutions Service; establishment of one National Professional Officer position in the Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator; establishment of three United Nations Volunteer positions in the Public Information Unit; and abolishment of three United Nations police positions to be replaced by three Government-provided personnel positions for the Corrections Component in the Rule of Law and Security Institutions Service (ibid., para. 54);

(c) UNSOM: establishment of 38 new positions, comprising 35 civilian positions (1 P-5, 7 P-4, 1 P-3, 9 Field Service, 6 National Professional Officer, 8 Local level and 3 United Nations Volunteer) and three Government-provided personnel positions, as follows (ibid., paras. 131 to 138):

(i) In the Office of the Chief of Staff, one Field Coordination Officer (P-4) and one Information Analyst (P-3);

(ii) In the Political Affairs and Mediation Group, one Administrative Assistant (Field Service);

(iii) In the Interim South-West Administration regional office in Baidoa: one Planning Officer (P-4); one Administrative Officer (Field Service); two Security Officer (1 Field Service and 1 National Professional Officer); one

Security Assistant (Local level); one Driver/Language Assistant (Local level); and one Medical Officer (United Nations Volunteer);

(iv) In the Hiraan and Middle Shabelle regional office in Beletweyne: one Planning Officer (P-4); two Security Officer (1 Field Service and 1 National Professional Officer); one Security Assistant (Local level); one Driver/Language Assistant (Local level) and one Medical Officer (United Nations Volunteer);

(v) In the Galmudug Interim Administration regional office in Dhussamarreeb: one Senior Political Affairs Officer/Head of Office (P-5); one Planning Officer (P-4); three Security Officer (2 Field Service and 1 National Professional Officer); one Political Affairs Officer (National Professional Officer); one Security Assistant (Local level); one Driver/Language Assistant (Local level); and one Medical Officer (United Nations Volunteer);

(vi) In the Puntland Regional Office in Garowe: one Political Affairs Officer/Deputy Head of Office (P-4); one Planning Officer (P-4); one Administrative Officer (Field Service); two Security Officer (1 Field Service and 1 National Professional Officer); and one Security Assistant (Local level);

(vii) In the Interim Jubba Administration regional office in Kismayo: one Planning Officer (P-4); two Security Officer (1 Field Service and 1 National Professional Officer); and one Security Assistant (Local level);

(viii) In the Rule of Law and Security Institutions Group: three Government-provided personnel positions of Military Adviser, Military Justice Officer and Security Sector Reform Officer;

(d) UNSCOL: establishment of one new position of Coordination Officer (P-4) (ibid., para. 221);

(e) UNOCA: establishment of 14 new positions, as follows (ibid., para. 248):

(i) In the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General: one Military Adviser (P-4);

(ii) In the Office of the Chief of Staff: one Senior Police Adviser (P-5) and one Project Management/Resource Mobilization Officer (P-4);

(iii) In the Political Affairs Office: one Chief Political Affairs Officer (D-1); five Political Affairs Officer (P-4), each specializing in one of the following areas: the Lord's Resistance Army; security trends; electoral matters; women, peace and security; and human rights;

(iv) In the Public Information Office: one Associate Public Information Officer (National Professional Officer);

(v) At Headquarters, in the Department of Political Affairs, for the provision of backstopping support: one Political Affairs Officer (P-4);

(vi) In Mission Support: one Protocol/Conference Services Officer (National Professional Officer) in the Office of the Chief of Mission Support; one Finance Assistant (Local level) in the Finance and Budget Unit; and one Travel Assistant (Local level) in the Human Resources Unit;

(f) UNSMIL: a net reduction of eight positions, as follows (ibid., paras. 282-284):

(i) Establishment of one new position of Senior Adviser (Assistant Secretary-General);

(ii) In the Personnel Section (embedded in the United Nations Global Service Centre at Brindisi, Italy): abolishment of one position of Human Resources Officer (P-3); two positions of Human Resource Assistant (Field Service) and one position of Travel Officer (Field Service); and the establishment of four national staff positions (1 National Professional Officer and 3 Local level) to carry out the same functions;

(iii) In the Finance Section (embedded in the United Nations Global Service Centre at Brindisi): abolishment of one position of Finance Officer (Field Service) and one position of Finance Assistant (Field Service); and establishment of two Local level positions to carry out the same functions;

(iv) In the Procurement Section (embedded in the United Nations Global Service Centre at Brindisi): abolishment of one position of Procurement Officer (Field Service) and establishment of one Local level position to carry out the same functions;

(v) Abolishment of seven positions embedded in the United Nations Global Service Centre at Brindisi, as follows: one Administrative Officer (regional) (P-3) in the Office of the Chief of Mission Support and one Engineering Assistant (Field Service) in the Engineering and Facilities Management Section; one Procurement Assistant (Field Service) in the Procurement Section; one Supply Assistant (Local level) and one Logistics Assistant (Local level) in the Central Warehouse and Distribution Section; one Billing Assistant (Local level) in the Communications and Information Technology Section; and one Claims Assistant (Local level) in the Property Management Service;

(vi) Abolishment of one position of Chief Medical Officer (P-4) and one of Head Nurse (Field Service) in the Medical Service in Tunis.

United Nations Office for West Africa

10. The Secretary-General proposes the establishment of one position of Administrative Officer (National Professional Officer) in the Office of the Chief of Staff in connection with the related proposal to separate that Office from the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The functions of the proposed new position would include the provision of capacity to ensure: (a) the effective coordination and management of all activities of UNOWA and the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission; and (b) alignment of the substantive activities with the mandate and resources of UNOWA.

11. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the supervisory workload of the Chief of Staff was expected to increase significantly with the oversight responsibilities related to the addition of the recently established Research Analysis Section. The Committee was also informed that the proposal for the new position was based on the increased workload of the Chief of Staff, who had management, planning and budgeting, policy, reporting and communication, and

protocol responsibilities, in addition to serving as an interface between the Office of the Special Representative and the support component of the Office.

12. The Advisory Committee is of the view that the reasons provided are inadequate to justify the separation of the Office of the Chief of Staff from that of the Special Representative. Furthermore, the Committee is of the view that, in the light of the need for the Chief of Staff to ensure the overall cohesion of UNOWA and to interface effectively with all mission components, the proposed separation could be detrimental to these core responsibilities. As for the Research and Analysis Unit, the Committee recalls that the Secretary-General's recommendation was for the Unit to be established within the Political Affairs Section of UNOWA to better inform good offices efforts and to support timely preventive action (A/69/363/Add.3, para. 16), and not under the supervision of the Chief of Staff, as was indicated to the Committee during its consideration of the Secretary-General's proposals. The Committee therefore recommends against the proposed separation of the Office of the Chief of Staff and against the proposed new position of Administrative Officer (National Professional Officer) in that Office. The Committee also recommends that the related non-post resources be adjusted accordingly.

United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau

13. The Secretary-General's staffing proposals for UNIOGBIS include the establishment of three United Nations Volunteer positions to strengthen the Public Information Unit. According to the supplementary information provided to the Advisory Committee, the three positions would extend the presence of the Public Information Unit to the regional offices, and the responsibilities of the positions would comprise drafting articles, reports and press releases; taking photographs; recording radio pieces; and reporting on the activities of the United Nations system in the various regions of the country. It was also indicated in the supplementary information that the Public Information Officers would be able to organize community meetings in areas where regular media did not reach the population, which would enhance the mission's support to the peace and reconciliation process. It was further indicated that it was intended that one of the proposed positions would be for a photographer, whose main task would be to cover meetings and activities of the mission leadership. The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that in addition to photography, the incumbent would undertake functions similar to those of the other two United Nations Volunteer positions and would also create dynamic audio and visual products. The Committee was also informed that it had been proposed to staff the regional offices with national United Nations Volunteers from the same regions in order to develop national capacity and because they would have the necessary situational knowledge and language skills to manage community radio/outreach programmes. **The Committee recommends approval of the three proposed United Nations Volunteer positions, on the understanding that they will all be assigned similar public information responsibilities.**

14. The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the staffing proposals for UNIOGBIS subject to its recommendations in paragraph 8 above.

United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia

15. As indicated in paragraph 9 above, the Secretary-General's staffing proposals for UNSOM reflect the addition of 35 new civilian positions, including the establishment of 3 positions of Medical Officers (United Nations Volunteer) for six months in a sector/regional medical support team of the United Nations Support Office for African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOA)¹ in Baidoa, Beletweyne and Dhussamarreeb to support the regional UNSOM offices. In the supplementary information provided to the Committee, it was indicated that the three positions were to provide medical support to the expanding UNSOM presence across Somalia. It was also indicated that the intention was for the positions to be transferred to UNSOA on 1 July 2016 as part of that mission's proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017, given that UNSOA was mandated to provide logistics support to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and UNSOM, including medical support. The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that for the six-month period from 1 January to 30 June 2016, the three positions would ensure the availability of critically needed medical services to UNSOM staff at those newly established mission locations that lacked civilian medical infrastructure and that this need could not wait until the beginning of the UNSOA budget cycle on 1 July 2016.

16. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its view that, while the two missions are co-located in Nairobi and Mogadishu and cover the same operational area, there is a clear separation of the mandates of UNSOM and UNSOA, which should continue to be reflected in their respective budget proposals. Any request for staffing resources to enable UNSOA to carry out its mandate of providing administrative, technical and logistical support to UNSOM, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2093 (2013), should be included in the budget proposal for UNSOA and not that of UNSOM (see A/69/628, para. 132). The Committee therefore recommends against the establishment of three positions of Medical Officer and recommends that the related non-post resources be adjusted accordingly. The Committee acknowledges, however, that there is a need to ensure appropriate medical support for UNSOM staff at the new mission locations and, in that regard, is of the view that the Secretary-General could use his exceptional authority to approve general temporary assistance positions to undertake this function during the six-month period from 1 January to 30 June 2016, in accordance with existing rules and regulations.**

17. **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's staffing proposals for UNSOM, subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 8 and 16 above.**

United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa

18. As for UNOCA, the Secretary-General's staffing proposals reflect the addition of 14 new positions, which include 2 positions in the mission support component — 1 Finance Assistant (Local level) in the Finance and Budget Unit and 1 Travel Assistant (Local level) in the Human Resources Unit. In the supplementary information provided to the Advisory Committee, it was indicated that the Finance

¹ Following the adoption of Security Council resolution 2245 (2015), UNSOA, which had been established in 2009, was replaced by the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS).

Assistant would serve as a link between the Service Delivery Unit and the Umoja enterprise resource planning system, while the Travel Assistant would process official travel requests and the payment of travel claims in Umoja. **The Committee is of the view that the implementation of Umoja in field missions should create efficiencies in existing work processes rather than a requirement for additional staffing resources, especially in the provision of support services. The Committee expects that applications such as the Umoja employee self-service portal, which enables staff to enter their own travel information into the system, will reduce the volume of transactional tasks which were required of finance and travel assistants in the legacy environment.**

19. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of 12 of the new positions proposed for UNOCA, subject to its recommendation in paragraph 8 above, and recommends against the establishment of the proposed positions of Finance Assistant (Local level) and Travel Assistant (Local level). The Committee also recommends that the related non-post resources be adjusted accordingly.

United Nations Support Mission in Libya

20. The Secretary-General's staffing proposals for UNSMIL include the establishment of one position of Senior Adviser at the Assistant Secretary-General level to support the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on all security sector-related matters. The Secretary-General indicates that, as a result of the progress made in the current period in the political dialogue, it was determined that high-level support was required on these matters, leading to the deployment of the Deputy Military Adviser to the Mission for a one-month period in August 2015. In order to maintain the momentum generated subsequent to that deployment, the Secretary-General decided to appoint, on a temporary basis, a Senior Adviser at the Assistant Secretary-General level, funded through extrabudgetary resources until the end of 2015, to continue the engagement with both Libyan and international interlocutors. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the position was funded from the Trust Fund in support of the Department of Political Affairs for the months of November and December 2015 only. In order to sustain these efforts beyond 2015, the Secretary-General proposes to transfer the funding for the position from extrabudgetary sources to the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017.

21. Upon further enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that because the temporary position was to be created for a period of less than one year, the Secretary-General had not sought the concurrence of the Committee as required under the established procedure for the creation of extrabudgetary posts and positions at the D-1 level and above, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 35/217. The Committee was further informed that the Controller would report ex post facto to the Committee in the first quarter of 2016 with respect to the creation of this and other posts and positions funded from extrabudgetary resources for a period of less than a year.

22. While noting the requirement for a Senior Adviser with security-related expertise, the Advisory Committee questions the procedure that was followed in establishing the temporary position. The Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General should have sought the Committee's concurrence prior to its

creation, based on the understanding at that time that the requirement for the position might continue beyond the current period.

23. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee questions the basis on which the level of the position (Assistant Secretary-General) was determined. In that regard, the Committee recommends that the position of Senior Adviser be established at the D-2 level, which is consistent with the divisional heads located in other UNSMIL field offices. The Committee also recommends that the related non-post resources be adjusted accordingly.

24. The staffing proposals for UNSMIL also reflect the conversion of seven international positions (1 P-3 and 6 Field Service) to seven national positions (1 National Professional Officer and 6 Local level) to carry out the same functions. The Advisory Committee reiterates its support for the nationalization of posts and positions, whenever possible, in particular in terms of building local capacity within mission areas (A/68/782, para. 91). The Committee acknowledges, however, that this should be undertaken with due regard to the local labour markets and to the implementation of the Mission's mandate.

25. Subject to its comments and recommendations in paragraphs 8 and 23 above, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's staffing proposals for UNSMIL.

26. Subject to its comments and recommendations in paragraphs 8, 12, 16, 19 and 23 above, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's staffing proposals for the eight special political missions under cluster III.

Comments and recommendations on operational costs

27. The Advisory Committee was provided with information on the operational costs for cluster III, which is shown in table 3 below, including the appropriation and estimated expenditure for 2014-2015 and the projected requirements for 2016.

Table 3
Thematic cluster III: operational costs
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Category	2014-2015			Requirements for 2016		Total requirements for 2015	Variance 2015-2016
	Appropriation	Estimated expenditure	Variance	Total	Non-recurrent		
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)=(4)-(6)
Consultants	5 277.7	4 733.5	544.2	3 193.2	—	3 142.6	50.6
Official travel	17 115.1	15 994.1	1 121.0	7 193.4	—	10 018.6	(2 825.2)
Facilities and infrastructure	60 834.6	57 853.4	2 981.2	27 561.4	2 220.9	28 453.9	(892.5)
Ground transportation	13 521.7	13 444.8	76.9	5 075.1	1 787.8	6 727.7	(1 652.6)
Air transportation	26 843.2	29 473.2	(2 630.0)	19 145.8	10.9	18 072.8	1 073.0
Naval transportation	51.4	56.8	(5.4)	27.4	—	30.9	(3.5)
Communications	17 548.2	17 339.4	208.8	11 089.9	1 583.0	9 749.2	1 340.7
Information technology	8 592.2	9 771.9	(1 179.7)	4 249.7	1 902.7	3 725.7	524.0

Category	2014-2015			Requirements for 2016		Total requirements for 2015	Variance 2015-2016
	Appropriation	Estimated expenditure	Variance	Total	Non-recurrent		
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)=(4)-(6)
Medical	5 572.4	5 387.3	185.1	4 132.5	369.3	3 184.3	948.2
Other supplies, services and equipment	16 014.5	15 536.7	477.8	8 382.4	1 228.5	6 778.4	1 604.0
Total	171 371.0	169 591.1	1 779.9	90 050.8	9 103.1	89 884.1	166.7

Consultants

28. According to the supplementary information provided to the Advisory Committee, the proposed requirements under consultants for UNOCA amount to \$120,000, which would provide for two consultants for six months each and one for three months in the areas of: the role of women in support of peace and security; political analysis, including on democratic transition and the impact of defence and security forces in the strengthening of democracy; and poaching and the financing of armed and terrorist groups. Upon enquiry as to why those areas could not be covered in-house, given the proposed increase in staffing, the Committee was informed that specific expertise was required that was not expected from the additional staffing. The Committee was further informed that, through the consultancies, UNOCA was seeking to increase its understanding of the impact on regional security of piracy and armed robbery at sea and the links between illicit trafficking in wildlife and the financing of armed groups in order to better assist the Economic Community of Central African States and other regional and national stakeholders to address these issues.

29. The Advisory Committee notes that the 2016 staffing proposals for UNOCA include the establishment of a dedicated political reporting and analysis unit, with strengthened backstopping support from the Department of Political Affairs, which would entail the addition of a Chief Political Affairs Officer (D-1) and six Political Affairs Officers (P-4) to the mission's Political Affairs Section. The Committee considers that this added capacity should provide UNOCA with the necessary in-house expertise to fulfil its mandated activities with minimal reliance on external consultants. Consequently, the Committee recommends a 50 per cent reduction (\$60,000) in the level of resources proposed for 2016 under consultants for UNOCA.

Official travel

30. According to the supplementary information provided to the Advisory Committee, proposed provisions of \$13,400 for UNOWA and \$13,400 for United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission would cover the cost of travel for the staff of the United Nations Global Service Centre to provide procurement support to the two missions. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that since UNOWA, United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel had no delegation of procurement authority, all procurement activities for those missions were carried out by the Centre. Accordingly, procurement staff needed to travel from Brindisi to Dakar for procurement-related matters, as well as to provide related

training to requisitioners and briefings to local companies. In 2014, no costs had been incurred by any of those missions for that purpose, while in 2015, only UNOWA incurred related costs of \$3,946. **The Committee notes that the proposed amount of \$40,100 (which includes \$13,300 for the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel) is significantly higher than the expenditures incurred in the current biennium. Recognizing the need for procurement-related support from the Global Service Centre and taking into account current expenditure patterns, the Committee recommends a total provision of \$10,000 for 2016, to be apportioned among UNOWA (\$4,000), United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission (\$3,000) and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel (\$3,000). The Committee therefore recommends a reduction of \$19,800 (\$9,400 for UNOWA and \$10,400 for United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission) in the resources proposed under official travel for the two missions.** The Committee will make recommendations concerning the related proposals for the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel in its report on cluster I ([A/70/7/Add.11](#)).

Other supplies, services and equipment

31. The Advisory Committee notes from the supplementary information provided to it that the proposed requirements under other supplies, services and equipment include a provision of \$30,000 (\$18,800 for UNOWA and \$11,200 for United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission) for a retreat to promote cohesion and harmonize objectives and priorities in order to ensure a unified approach when accomplishing the mandates of the two missions. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the overall cost of the two-day retreat in Mbour, Senegal, would comprise: a facilitator's fee (\$1,200); the rental of a conference room (\$5,100); transportation costs (\$2,200); and two days of daily subsistence allowance for participating staff (\$21,500). The Committee was also informed that similar retreats had been undertaken by other special political missions, such as UNOCA, UNSOM, as well as UNOWA, UNOCA and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Sahel jointly. **The Committee is of the view that every effort should be made to undertake activities of this kind at minimal additional cost and encourages UNOWA and the Commission to utilize existing mission facilities for their retreat. In that regard, the Committee recommends reductions of \$18,800 for UNOWA and \$11,200 for United Nations support for the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission in the resources proposed under other supplies, services and equipment.** The Committee has made similar recommendations for the Office of Internal Oversight Services ([A/69/860](#), para. 64), the Department of Field Support (*ibid.*, para. 80) and the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services ([A/70/7](#), para. I.30).

32. Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 29 to 31 above, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the resources proposed under operational costs for the eight special political missions under cluster III and further recommends that the non-post resources related to the proposed new positions referred to in paragraphs 12, 16, 19 and 23 above be reduced accordingly.

Other matters

33. In paragraph 143 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia promotes dialogue on joint water management among the countries of Central Asia and seeks to build support for initiatives addressing environmental and other problems affecting the Aral Sea Basin. The Advisory Committee enquired about the current situation in the region, with particular regard to the issues pertaining to joint water management. The Committee was informed that, although progress had been made, some divergences remained, particularly over large-scale hydropower plans, and that a comprehensive political agreement among all countries concerned, which would eventually include Afghanistan, was crucial in the long term. The Committee was also informed that the Centre continued to build support for its proposal on modernizing the legal framework for transboundary water management in the Aral Sea Basin.

III. Recommendation

34. The Secretary-General's budgetary proposals for the 35 special political missions for 2016, which require action to be taken by the General Assembly, are set out in paragraph 74 of his main report on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the Assembly and/or the Security Council ([A/70/348](#)). The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposal for the resource requirements for 2016 for the eight special political missions under thematic cluster III, subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 26 and 32 above, as well as the recommendations in the main report of the Advisory Committee on special political missions ([A/70/7/Add.10](#)).
