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Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Budget performance for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Appropriation for 2017/18	\$81,000,000
Expenditure for 2017/18	\$80,196,200
Unencumbered balance for 2017/18	\$803,800
Appropriation for 2018/19	\$82,448,900
Projected expenditure for 2018/19 ^a	\$81,102,500
Projected underexpenditure for 2018/19	\$1,346,400
Proposal submitted by the Secretary-General for 2019/20	\$65,237,200
Adjustment recommended by the Advisory Committee for 2019/20	(\$1,155,800)
Recommendation of the Advisory Committee for 2019/20	\$64,081,400

^a Estimate as at 28 February 2019.



I. Introduction

1. During its consideration of the financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy (UNLB), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 3 April 2019. The documents reviewed and those used for background by the Advisory Committee are listed at the end of the present report. The comments and recommendations of the Committee on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations, including those pertaining to the findings and recommendations of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, can be found in its related report ([A/73/755](#)).

II. Budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018

2. In its resolution [71/294](#), the General Assembly appropriated an amount of \$81,000,000 gross (\$74,946,800 net) for the maintenance of UNLB for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018. Expenditures for the period totalled \$80,196,200 gross (\$73,906,200 net), reflecting a budget implementation rate of 99.0 per cent. The resulting unencumbered balance of \$803,800, in gross terms, represents 1.0 per cent of the appropriation, reflecting the combined effect of: (a) higher-than-budgeted expenditures under civilian personnel costs (\$3,928,800, or 10.3 per cent); and (b) lower-than-budgeted expenditures under operational costs (\$4,731,800, or 11.0 per cent). A detailed analysis of variances is provided in section IV of the report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of UNLB for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 ([A/73/636](#)).

3. In the budget performance report, the Secretary-General indicates that during the 2017/18 period, a total amount of \$3,928,400 was redeployed from group III, operational costs, to group II, civilian personnel, to cover increased requirements attributable mainly to the appreciation of the euro against the United States dollar, which had an impact on expenditures for national staff salaries and the post adjustment multiplier for international staff, as well as higher-than-budgeted common staff costs for international and national staff. The Secretary-General further indicates that the redeployments from group III were possible as a result of the reprioritization of activities and lower requirements under: (a) communications (\$2,446,400, or 34.6 per cent), attributable primarily to the non-acquisition of equipment and spare parts, lower actual costs for commercial communications and lower-than-budgeted rates for mobile phones; (b) information technology (\$1,954,700, or 7.5 per cent), attributable primarily to the non-acquisition of equipment and spare parts, as well as lower expenditures for Umoja maintenance costs owing to lower actual costs of services provided by the United Nations Office for Project Services and the International Computing Centre; (c) facilities and infrastructure (\$502,600, or 8.0 per cent), owing mainly to the scaling down of maintenance services and the postponement or cancellation of alteration and renovation services; and (d) ground transportation (\$311,900, or 44.0 per cent), attributable primarily to the non-acquisition of four special-purpose vehicles and one item of material handling equipment (*ibid.*, paras. 53, 60 and 62–64).

4. The comments of the Advisory Committee on the information presented in the performance report on individual objects of expenditure can be found, where relevant, in the discussion of the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 in section IV below.

5. In considering the reports of the Secretary-General on the financing of UNLB, the Advisory Committee also had before it the report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2018 (A/73/5 (Vol. II), chap. II).

III. Information on performance for the current period

6. With respect to current and projected expenditures for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 28 February 2019, expenditures amounted to \$53,987,100 (gross), and that at the end of the current financial period, the estimated total expenditures would amount to \$81,102,500, leaving a projected unencumbered balance of \$1,346,400, resulting in a projected budget utilization of 98.4 per cent.

7. The Advisory Committee was provided with information on the incumbency of UNLB posts, as at 28 February 2019, as follows:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Posts authorized 2018/19</i>	<i>Encumbered</i>	<i>Vacancy rate (percentage)</i>
UNLB, excluding tenant units			
Posts			
International staff	86	68	20.9
National staff	282	263	6.7
General temporary assistance			
International staff	6	5	16.7
National staff	18	18	–
Tenant units			
Posts			
International staff	46	34	26.1
National staff	6	6	–
General temporary assistance			
International staff	1	1	–
Total, UNLB, including tenant units			
Posts			
International staff	132	102	22.7
National staff	288	269	6.6
General temporary assistance			
International staff	7	6	14.3
National staff	18	18	–

IV. Proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

A. Mandate and planned results

8. In his report on the budget for UNLB for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/73/774), the Secretary-General provides an overview of the planned results for 2019/20 as well as details on the planning assumptions and priorities of UNLB

for 2019/20, including: (a) renaming the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies as the Global Technology Service; (b) resubmitting the revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks; (c) implementing the second and final phase of the civilian staffing review recommendations; (d) updating the scalability model for UNLB; (e) transforming the Field Central Review Bodies Unit into a new tenant unit at UNLB, with a reporting line to the Department of Operational Support; and (f) increasing the capacity of UNLB in the areas of environmental management and occupational safety and health. The Advisory Committee discusses the proposed changes to the names of organizational units in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations ([A/73/755](#)).

Presentation

9. At the time of the Secretary-General's proposal to unify the mirrored sections of the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies in Brindisi and Valencia (the Network Support Section, the Satellite Engineering Support Section, the Data Centre Support Section and the Technology Infrastructure Support Section) (see [A/69/733/Rev.1](#)), the Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General be requested to continue to show the location of the posts in the organization charts of UNLB and to provide in future submissions a breakdown of resource requirements and expenditures for Brindisi and Valencia, with a view to providing greater transparency and facilitating the consideration by the General Assembly of the budgetary proposals and performance reports of UNLB ([A/69/839/Add.9](#), paras. 33–34). The Committee notes that in subsequent budget documents, information on the resource requirements and organizational structure of the Service has been presented in various formats. While recognizing the improvement made in the presentation of the organizational charts in the current budget document ([A/73/774](#)), which includes a consolidated view of UNLB (annex II.A), and separate charts for Valencia and Brindisi (annexes II.B and II.C), the Advisory Committee continues to consider that the earlier presentation of the resource requirements and organizational structure of the Service provided greater transparency and showed more clearly the distribution of resources among the two locations (see, for instance, [A/68/727](#), table 4 and annex II). **Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to include, in future submissions, disaggregated information on the resource requirements and organizational structures of the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies in Brindisi and Valencia.**

Revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks

10. Background information on the revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks is provided in paragraphs 141 to 143 of the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed budget for UNLB for 2019/20 ([A/73/774](#)). As indicated in its resolution [71/294](#), the General Assembly endorsed the request of the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General provide information on progress made with respect to the recommendations emanating from the review of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on strategic deployment stocks¹ (see [A/71/836/Add.10](#)

¹ The Office of Internal Oversight Services recommended, inter alia, that to ensure rapid deployment, the strategic deployment stocks concept should be updated and revised, including its assumptions and related policies in the context of supply chain management and ongoing initiatives affecting mission start-up, and that alternative venues should be considered for the storage of strategic deployment stocks closer to the theatre of operations, including through partnerships with and by leveraging the experiences of other United Nations entities ([A/71/798](#)).

and A/71/798) and a revised concept of operations for those stocks. In response to that request, the Secretary-General presented in his report on the budget for UNLB for the period 2018/19 (A/72/783) a review of the concept of operations of strategic deployment stocks undertaken in 2017/18, which proposed five major changes (see A/73/774, annex III, summary). In its previous report, the Advisory Committee expressed its view that the Secretary-General should have presented more detailed information, as well as a thorough analysis, of the proposed revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks in order for the Committee to provide comments and recommendations on the subject to the Assembly (A/72/789/Add.10, paras. 8–10 and 39). The Assembly, in its resolution 72/287, endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee and requested a revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks and stressed the need for further analysis on enhanced effectiveness, expected efficiencies and location issues.

11. The Secretary-General stated that, in response to that request of the General Assembly, UNLB further developed its concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks, which was summarized in section IV of and presented in annex III to the proposed budget (A/73/774). The revised concept presents, inter alia, information on planning assumptions, enabling capacity, the feasibility of timelines and the use of pre-mandate commitment authority, alternate venues and alternative sourcing models for strategic deployment stocks, and information on the governance, composition, integration into supply chain management, financing modalities and replenishment of such stocks. In addition, section IX of annex III contains supplementary information on planning parameters regarding the base case scenario for the start-up of a mission, as well as specific parameters and cost estimates for the individual categories of commodities, including engineering, information and communications technology and medical, supply and transport services.

12. The Advisory Committee notes that the proposed updated revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks does not provide a complete picture of the financial implications. For instance:

(a) With regard to enabling capacity, it is stated in the report that additional resources required for maintaining commercial enabling capability will be included in the budget of UNLB, and that UNLB will develop a comprehensive solicitation plan in collaboration with United Nations Headquarters and identify the proposed requirements to be presented to the General Assembly (ibid., annex III, para. 33);

(b) With regard to sourcing options which will also have an impact on the requirements for strategic deployment stocks, it is stated in the report that UNLB will undertake an in-depth analysis by commodity and service categories (modules) in consultation with the Logistics Division and the Procurement Division in order to determine the most appropriate sourcing option for each category of equipment and services (ibid., para. 49);

(c) With regard to the OIOS recommendation regarding the need to consider alternative venues for the storage of strategic deployment stocks closer to the theatre of operations, including through partnerships with and by leveraging the experiences of other United Nations entities, it is stated in the report that if a regional supply hub for peacekeeping is established in Africa for the ongoing storage of equipment by current missions, co-locating equipment as a regional reserve within existing United Nations facilities (missions, logistics bases) would be evaluated, and that a comprehensive study would be required to define the feasibility of regional depots for the ongoing storage of equipment by current missions (ibid., paras. 38–45).

13. In addition, the Advisory Committee is of the view that some of the specific parameters for individual categories of commodities and the related cost estimates are not adequately justified. For example, the Committee considers that the daily supply

requirements for bulk fuel for vehicles (30,000 litres per day) may be overstated (*ibid.*, para. 116), and is of the view that it could be reduced. The Committee also considers that the inclusion of unmanned aerial systems in the composition of strategic deployment stocks (*ibid.*, para. 101) may be unwarranted, given that such systems are not always authorized by the host countries, and also need to be selected on a case-by-case basis. **Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to review the specific parameters and cost estimates for individual categories of commodities and make adjustments as appropriate.**

14. The Advisory Committee is of the view that, in order to fully respond to request of the General Assembly for further analysis on enhanced effectiveness, expected efficiencies and location issues and to allow the Assembly to make a fully informed decision, a more thorough and detailed analysis is required, supported by detailed facts and figures on efficiency gains and operational effectiveness, as well as financial implications. In the Committee's view, such an analysis should seek further opportunities to enhance efficiency and effectiveness, and include comprehensive information on financial implications. In addition, a closer examination should be conducted of the composition and level of strategic deployment stocks, as well as of the processes and procedures for optimizing the utilization, maintenance, rotation and management of such stocks. The Committee is also of the view that the proposal for a revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks should include a range of options accompanied by cost-benefit analyses to support decision-making by the Assembly. The potential for cooperating with other United Nations system entities that have a logistics component, in particular with respect to storage locations, should also be further explored.

15. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, should the General Assembly take note of the revised concept of operations for strategic deployment capability as requested by the Secretary-General (A/73/774, para. 144 (c)), UNLB will proceed with actions in 2019/20 within its delegated authority. **In view of the foregoing, the Advisory Committee considers it premature to proceed with the implementation of the revised concept of operations of strategic deployment stocks at this stage. Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to present for its consideration a separate, comprehensive report on the revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks based on a thorough and detailed analysis on all aspects of the management of strategic deployment stocks, including financial implications and enhanced effectiveness and efficiency, as well as on location issues.**

Updated scalability model

16. Information on the updated scalability model of UNLB is provided in paragraphs 48 to 53 and in annex IV to the budget document (A/73/774). As indicated in paragraph 1 of annex IV, in its resolution 69/307, the General Assembly requested that the Secretary-General develop a scalability model to inform the resource requirements for the support account for peacekeeping operations, UNLB and the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda. It was also indicated in annex IV that a comprehensive civilian staffing review was begun in 2017 on personnel data for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 budget periods, which provided a basis for the requirements of the scalability model.

17. In annex IV to the budget document, it is stated that the scalability model of UNLB is underpinned by the need to ensure a core service and support capacity to provide an ongoing minimum capability which can be supplemented, as required, by contractual services and contractors as workload fluctuates and expands. It is also stated that 25 of the 26 organizational units of UNLB are scalable to different degrees

depending on the primary workforce drivers. The annex contains the scalability matrix of UNLB, which includes information on the scalability factors of each of the 26 organizational units, including: (a) the minimum requirements in terms of the number of full-time equivalent posts by category and grade; (b) the basis for the determination of the minimum requirements; (c) the number of contractors; (d) the mathematical scalability criteria; and (e) the impact on the workforce in terms of the increase/decrease in the number of posts/positions and the number of contractors if the criteria are met.

18. The Secretary-General indicates in his report on the budget that in response to the latest developments regarding the client base of the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies (the closure of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the United Nations Mission in Liberia, and the downsizing of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur), the application of the established scalability model to reflect the decreased demand for services resulted in a net reduction of 16 contractors, estimated at some \$2 million (A/73/774, para. 55).

19. The Advisory Committee assesses that the parameters of the scalability model should be refined to further clarify the relationship between the workload and full-time equivalent requirements, and that additional information should be provided in future submissions in order to understand how the scalability model is being applied. In addition, there is a need to ensure a consistent approach in applying the scalability model to estimate resource requirements, in particular staffing levels, as well as requirements for individual consultants and consulting services. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to fully justify proposed changes to staffing levels and contractual personnel in his future reports, inter alia, on the basis of the parameters of the scalability model, including information on the changes in the scope of activities and level of workload.

Environmental management

20. In his report (A/73/774), the Secretary-General indicates that UNLB will continue its role as provider of technical assistance to field missions in the three priority areas of the environmental strategy for field missions established by the Department of Operational Support, namely energy, water and wastewater and solid waste. Further details on the environmental technical assistance provided to field missions are provided in paragraphs 38 and 39 of the report.

21. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that UNLB is responsible for technical assistance to support field missions made available through the Rapid Environment and Climate Technical Assistance project, a partnership between the United Nations Environment Programme and the Department of Operational Support established to enable field missions to access environmental expertise through the supply of contract engineers and consultants in the areas of: (a) integration of environment and climate issues into supply chain management; and (b) implementation of energy, waste management, wastewater and water supply infrastructure linked to the environmental strategy for field missions. The Committee was further informed that environmental projects could also be implemented using contracting agreements known as EPC (engineering, procurement and construction) in which the engineering and construction contractor would carry out the detailed engineering design of the project, procure all the equipment and materials necessary and construct and deliver a functioning facility or asset. The Advisory Committee notes that the peacekeeping missions also receive technical support directly from the Rapid Environment and Climate Technical Assistance project or other sources, and also have their own capacities in terms of environmental management. **The Advisory**

Committee is of the view that the roles and responsibilities of the different entities responsible for implementing environmental projects and providing technical support and expertise should be clarified to ensure that there is no duplication or overlapping of functions. The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to include in his next report details on the roles and responsibilities of the different actors involved in environmental management.

22. The Advisory Committee also considers that further information should be provided on expected and achieved decreases in energy consumption as well as efficiency gains through the implementation of each project. The Committee discusses environmental issues further in its report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations (A/73/755).

B. Resource requirements

23. The proposed budget for UNLB for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 amounts to \$65,237,200 gross (\$58,986,000 net), representing a decrease of \$17,211,700, or 20.9 per cent, in gross terms, compared with the appropriation of \$82,448,900 for 2018/19. This reflects proposed decreases under: (a) Umoja maintenance and support costs (\$15,795,900), which are proposed to be allocated to the support account for peacekeeping operations;² and (b) civilian personnel (\$3,531,500, or 8.1 per cent). The decreases would be offset in part by an increase under operational costs (\$2,115,700, or 9.3 per cent). Detailed information on the financial resources proposed and an analysis of variances are provided in sections II and III of the budget document (A/73/774).

1. Civilian personnel

<i>Category</i>	<i>Approved 2018/19</i>	<i>Proposed 2019/20</i>	<i>Variance</i>
International staff	132	139	7
National staff ^a	288	305	17
Temporary positions ^b	25	3	(22)

^a National General Service staff.

^b Funded under general temporary assistance.

24. The proposed resources for civilian personnel for 2019/20 amount to \$40,258,500, reflecting a decrease of \$3,531,500, or 8.1 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2018/19. The decrease is primarily attributable to: (a) a lower post adjustment multiplier and lower common staff costs for international staff, offset in part by the proposed conversion of 7 positions to posts; and (b) lower requirements for national staff owing to exchange rate fluctuations offset in part by the proposed conversion of 17 general temporary assistance positions.

Recommendations on posts and positions

25. A total of 447 civilian posts and positions are proposed for 2019/20, comprising 139 international posts, 305 national staff posts and 3 temporary positions. The 2019/20 staffing proposals for UNLB reflect a net increase of 2 posts and positions, resulting from the increase of 7 international posts and 17 national posts, offset by a net decrease of 22 temporary positions. It is indicated in the budget document that the

² A total amount of \$21,446,700 is proposed to be funded from the peacekeeping support account for the 2019/20 period (A/73/793, para. 41).

second phase of the implementation of the recommendations of the civilian staffing review includes the conversion of 24 general temporary assistance positions to posts, the redeployment of 16 posts and the reassignment and reclassification of 1 international post. In addition, UNLB proposes that one national General Service post (G-7) be reclassified as an international post (P-3), and that two general temporary assistance positions be established (*ibid.*, para. 15).

Establishment

26. A total of two general temporary assistance positions are proposed to be established as follows:

(a) One position of Environmental Engineer (P-3) is proposed in the Environmental Technical Support Unit of the Supply Chain Service to provide expertise in support of the Department of Operational Support environmental strategy for field missions (*ibid.*, para. 114);

(b) One position of Occupational Safety Officer (P-3) is proposed to be established in the Central Service on a temporary and pilot basis to enable the UNLB Occupational Safety and Health Cell to deliver on its mandated tasks (*ibid.*, paras. 110–111). **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the justification provided in support of the requirement for an additional position in the Occupational Safety and Health Cell is not sufficient, and therefore recommends against the establishment of the Occupational Safety Officer (P-3) temporary position. Any related operational costs should be adjusted as appropriate.**

Conversion

27. A total of 24 general temporary assistance positions are proposed for conversion to posts, and would comprise: (a) 1 national General Service post in the Supply Chain Service; and (b) 6 Field Service and 17 national General Service posts in the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies, as follows:

(a) One position of Engineering Assistant (national General Service) is proposed for conversion and establishment as an Environment Engineer (P-3) in the Environmental Technical Support Unit of the Supply Chain Service to support the work of the energy pillar of the environment strategy for field missions (*ibid.*, para. 114 and table 10);

(b) Seven positions, comprising one Geospatial Information Systems Officer (Field Service) and six Geospatial Information Systems Assistants (national General Service), are proposed for conversion in the Client Solutions Delivery Section of the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies to continue to provide support for five geospatial functions (standardization, analysis, solutions, imagery and mapping) and related products and services that were centralized and consolidated at UNLB (*ibid.*, paras. 117–118; General Assembly resolution [70/288](#), paras. 8–10);

(c) Ten positions, comprising one Information Systems Officer (Field Service), one Telecommunications Officer (Field Service), one Information Systems Assistant (Field Service), three Telecommunications Assistants (national General Service), one Telecommunications Technical Assistant (national General Service) and three Information Systems Assistants (national General Service) are proposed for conversion in the Infrastructure Operations Section of the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies to deliver enterprise-wide and core services in the areas of hosting, wide area networking and remote mission support ([A/73/774](#), paras. 119–121);

(d) Three positions, comprising one Telecommunications Assistant (Field Service), one Telecommunications Assistant (national General Service) and one Information Systems Assistant (national General Service) are proposed for conversion in the Service and Information Security Management Section of the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies to meet Organizational demands for, inter alia, the continuous monitoring of network and other critical systems for field missions and other Secretariat entities (*ibid.*, paras. 122–123);

(e) Three positions, comprising one Information Systems Officer (Field Service) and two Information Systems Assistants (national General Service) are proposed for conversion in the Technology Development, Design and Planning Section of the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies to deliver technology solutions in support of peace/field operations (*ibid.*, paras. 124–125).

Reassignment and reclassification

28. The Secretary-General is resubmitting his proposal that one post of Contracts Management Officer (P-4) in the Sourcing Support Unit in the Planning and Sourcing Support Section be reassigned and subsequently reclassified as a Senior Logistics Officer (P-5) to serve as Chief of the Planning and Sourcing Support Section (*ibid.*, para. 113). The Advisory Committee recalls that in its resolution [72/287](#) the General Assembly did not support the Secretary-General's proposal, and that in its previous report, the Committee recommended against approval of the proposal, expressing its view that the leadership of the section had been adequately provided by other UNLB senior managers ([A/72/789/Add.10](#), para. 21). **The Advisory Committee considers that the Secretary-General has not put forward any new arguments in support of his proposal and therefore recommends against both the reassignment of the P-4 Contracts Management Officer post and the subsequent reclassification of the post to the P-5 level as a Senior Logistics Officer to function as Chief of Section.**

Reclassification

29. The Secretary-General proposes the reclassification of one Senior Property Management Assistant (national General Service) to Property Management Officer (P-3) in the Property Management Cell in the Central Service of UNLB to provide adequate oversight of the Cell, including in view of the delegation of authority for property management ([A/73/774](#), paras. 107–109) **The Advisory Committee is not convinced by the need for a reclassification of the Property Management Officer post to the P-3 level, and recommends against the Secretary-General's proposal.**

Vacancy rates and vacant posts

30. The table below provides a summary of the vacancy rates for civilian personnel, including: (a) for 2017/18, the budgeted and actual average vacancy rates; (b) for 2018/19, the budgeted rate, the actual average rate for the eight-month period between 1 July 2018 and 28 February 2019 and the actual rate as at 28 February 2019; and (c) the vacancy factor applied in estimating the requirements for 2019/20. The Advisory Committee notes that the proposed 2019/20 vacancy rates are: (a) lower than both the actual average rate and the actual rate as at 28 February 2019 for international staff; (b) lower than both the actual average rate and the actual rate as at 28 February 2019 for national General Service staff; and (c) higher than both the actual average rate and the actual rate as at 28 February 2019 for general temporary assistance positions for international staff.

Vacancy rates

(Percentage)

	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20	
	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Actual average vacancy rate from 1 July 2018 to 28 February 2019</i>	<i>Actual vacancy rate as at 28 February 2019</i>	<i>Proposed vacancy rate</i>
International staff	16.4	19.0	16.7	22.7	22.7	17.0
National General Service staff	3.5	5.9	6.0	6.6	6.6	6.0
Temporary positions						
International staff	9.0	15.4	15.0	14.3	14.3	15.0

31. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that a total of 46 posts were vacant as at 5 April 2019, comprising 28 international posts (1 D-1, 3 P-5, 5 P-4, 11 P-3, 1 P-2 and 7 Field Service) and 18 national General Service posts. None of the posts have been vacant for more than two years.

32. **The Advisory Committee recalls the General Assembly's request, expressed consistently in its resolutions on peacekeeping budgets, that the Secretary-General ensure that vacant posts be filled expeditiously (A/71/836, para. 108). The Advisory Committee also reiterates its view that budgeted vacancy rates should be based, as much as possible, on actual vacancy rates. In cases where the proposed budgeted rates differ from the actual rates at the time of budget preparation, clear justification should be provided in related budget documents for the rates used (A/70/742, para. 45).**

33. **With regard to the implementation of the second and final phase of the recommendations of the civilian staffing review, the Advisory Committee considers that after completion of the ongoing restructuring exercises, there is a need for a period of stabilization and an assessment of the effectiveness of the reorganized structures.**

34. **Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 26 (b), 28 and 29 above, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for civilian personnel.**

2. Operational costs

(United States dollars)

	<i>Apportioned 2018/19</i>	<i>Proposed 2019/20</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Operational costs	22 863 000	24 978 700	2 115 700

35. The proposed resources for operational costs for 2019/20 amount to \$24,978,700, reflecting an increase of \$2,115,700, or 9.3 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2018/19. The increase is primarily attributable to higher requirements for communications and information technology (\$1,973,500, or 14 per cent), as well as higher requirements under facilities and infrastructure (\$61,600, or 1.0 per cent), ground transportation (\$35,700, or 8.5 per cent) and official travel (\$22,300, or 3.2 per cent).

36. The Advisory Committee was provided with supplementary information showing details by object of expenditure on: (a) the approved resources for 2017/18 and 2018/19; (b) the actual expenditures for 2017/18; (c) the actual expenditures as at 28 February 2019 and estimated requirements for the 2018/19 period; and (d) the

proposed resources for 2019/20. For several objects of expenditure, the information provided shows that even though considerable underexpenditure was recorded in 2017/18 and for the first eight months of 2018/19 (from 1 July 2018 to 28 February 2019), resources for 2019/20 continue to be proposed at the levels approved for the prior periods, or in some cases, higher than previously. **In view of the pattern of expenditure during the performance period for 2017/18, and taking into account that the Advisory Committee was not provided with sufficient justification for the proposed resources for 2019/20, the Committee is recommending adjustments as follows:**

(a) *Consultants and consulting services.* As at 28 February 2019, total expenditures for individual consultants in 2018/19 amounted to \$1,900 against an appropriation of \$303,800. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed provision of \$316,100 for individual consultants in 2019/20 be reduced by 15 per cent;**

(b) *Official travel.* As at 28 February 2019, total expenditures for official travel amounted to \$398,600 in 2018/19 against an appropriation of \$703,600. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed provision of \$725,900 for official travel in 2019/20 be reduced by 10 per cent;**

(c) *Facilities and infrastructure.* Actual expenditures for maintenance services in 2017/18 amounted to \$818,000 against an appropriation of \$1,427,600, reflecting an underexpenditure of 42.7 per cent. In the current period, actual expenditures as at 28 February amounted to \$770,600 against an appropriation of \$1,214,200, and the proposed resources for 2019/20 reflect an increase of 8.9 per cent over the appropriation for 2018/19. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed provision of \$1,333,100 for maintenance services in 2019/20 be reduced by 10 per cent;**

(d) *Ground transportation.* Actual expenditures for repairs and maintenance in the current period amounted to \$56,000 against an appropriation of \$117,600, and the proposed resources for 2019/20 reflect an increase of 4.8 per cent compared with the resources approved for 2018/19. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed provision of \$123,200 for repairs and maintenance in 2019/20 be reduced by 10 per cent;**

(e) *Communications and information technology.* Actual expenditures as at 28 February 2019 for the current period amounted to \$1,042,700 against an appropriation of \$4,005,600 for communications and information technology equipment, and \$68,100 compared with the approved resources of \$1,026,200 for spare parts. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed resources of \$3,919,900 for communications and information technology equipment and \$726,500 for spare parts in 2019/20 be reduced by 15 per cent;**

(f) *Other supplies, services and equipment.* Actual expenditures for freight and related costs in the current period amounted to \$40,100 against an appropriation of \$276,500. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed provision of \$262,300 for freight and related costs in 2019/20 be reduced by 15 per cent.**

Bank charges

37. Actual expenditure incurred for bank charges in 2017/18 amounted to \$4,700 (25.8 per cent) against an appropriation of \$18,200, and an underexpenditure of 64.0 per cent is expected for the current 2018/19 period. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the distribution of interest and bank charges among all accounts was centrally determined by Headquarters and that the prorated share of the charges for UNLB varied compared with actual expenditures incurred for interest and

bank charges. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to review the budget presentation of bank charges, and provide better estimates of such charges in his next report.**

Official travel

38. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that only 20.9 per cent of official travel undertaken was in compliance with the advance purchase policy. **The Advisory Committee notes the very low rate of compliance, and recalls that the General Assembly, on a number of occasions, has expressed concern at the low rate of compliance with the advance purchase policy directive. The Committee reiterates that stronger efforts are required, in particular in areas where travel can be planned (see also A/73/779, para. 16).**

39. **Subject to its recommendations in paragraphs 26 (b) and 36 above, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for operational costs.**

V. Other matters

Gender balance

40. The Advisory Committee was provided with the following table showing a breakdown of UNLB personnel by gender. **The Advisory Committee notes with concern the very low level of female representation, particularly in the senior levels (P-5 and above) of the Professional and higher category and in the Field Service category, and encourages UNLB to intensify its efforts to achieve gender balance among its civilian staff.**

Distribution of civilian personnel by gender, as at 30 June 2018

(Percentage)

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
International staff		
P-5 and above	11	89
P-1 to P-4	34	66
Field Service	18	82
National General Service	39	61
General temporary assistance		
International	40	60

VI. Conclusion

41. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNLB for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 are indicated in section VI of the budget performance report (A/73/636). **The Advisory Committee recommends that the unencumbered balance of \$803,800 for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, as well as other income/adjustments amounting to \$1,317,000 for the period ended 30 June 2018, be credited to Member States.**

42. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of UNLB for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 are indicated in section V of the proposed budget (A/73/774). **Taking into account its observations**

and recommendations above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the proposed resources be reduced by \$1,155,800 from \$65,237,200 to \$64,081,400. The Advisory Committee further recommends that the aforementioned amount be prorated among the individual active peacekeeping operation budgets to meet the financing requirements of UNLB for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

43. Taking into account its observation above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to present for its consideration a separate, comprehensive report on the revised concept of operations for strategic deployment stocks based on a thorough and detailed analysis on all aspects of the management of strategic deployment stocks, including financial implications and enhanced effectiveness and efficiency, as well as on location issues.

Documentation

- Report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 ([A/73/636](#))
- Report of the Secretary-General on the budget for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 ([A/73/774](#))
- Report of the Board of Auditors on United Nations peacekeeping operations for the 12-month period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 ([A/73/5 \(Vol. II\)](#), chap. II)
- Report of the Advisory Committee on the report of the Board of Auditors on the accounts of the United Nations peacekeeping operations and report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2017 ([A/72/850](#))
- Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2018 ([A/73/750](#))
- Report of the Secretary-General on the overview of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations: budget performance for the period from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 and budget for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 ([A/73/776](#))
- Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the budget performance for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 and proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy ([A/72/789/Add.10](#))
- General Assembly resolution [72/287](#), on the financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy