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Agenda item 168

Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Tsu Tang Terrence **Teo** (Singapore)

I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 2020, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its seventy-fifth session the item entitled “Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara” and to allocate it to the Fifth Committee.

2. During the second part of the resumed seventy-fifth session, the Fifth Committee met formally and remotely owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, during which it considered the item. The Committee formally considered the item in person at its 15th meeting, on 29 June 2021. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee’s formal consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary record.¹

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 ([A/75/805](#));

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the budget for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 ([A/75/740](#));

(c) Related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions ([A/75/822/Add.5](#)).

¹ [A/C.5/75/SR.15](#).



II. Consideration of draft resolution [A/C.5/75/L.46](#)

4. At its 15th meeting, on 29 June, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled “Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara” ([A/C.5/75/L.46](#)), submitted by the Chair of the Committee on the basis of informal consultations coordinated by the representative of Armenia.

5. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.5/75/L.46](#) without a vote (see para. 6).

III. Recommendation of the Fifth Committee

6. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

The General Assembly,

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara¹ and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,²

Recalling Security Council resolution [690 \(1991\)](#) of 29 April 1991, by which the Council established the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, and the subsequent resolutions by which the Council extended the mandate of the Mission, the latest of which was resolution [2548 \(2020\)](#) of 30 October 2020, by which the Council extended the mandate of the Mission until 31 October 2021,

Recalling also its resolution [45/266](#) of 17 May 1991 on the financing of the Mission and its subsequent resolutions thereon, the latest of which was resolution [74/294](#) of 30 June 2020, as well as its decision [74/571](#) of 3 September 2020,

Reaffirming the general principles underlying the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations, as stated in its resolutions 1874 (S-IV) of 27 June 1963, [3101 \(XXVIII\)](#) of 11 December 1973 and [55/235](#) of 23 December 2000,

Noting with appreciation that voluntary contributions have been made to the Mission,

Mindful of the fact that it is essential to provide the Mission with the financial resources necessary to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities under the relevant resolutions of the Security Council,

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to entrust the Head of Mission with the task of formulating future budget proposals in full accordance with the provisions of its resolutions [59/296](#) of 22 June 2005, [60/266](#) of 30 June 2006, [61/276](#) of 29 June 2007, [64/269](#) of 24 June 2010, [65/289](#) of 30 June 2011, [66/264](#) of 21 June 2012, [69/307](#) of 25 June 2015 and [70/286](#) of 17 June 2016, as well as other relevant resolutions;

2. *Takes note* of the status of contributions to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara as at 30 April 2021, including the contributions outstanding in the amount of 58.8 million United States dollars, representing some 4.1 per cent of the total assessed contributions, notes with concern that only 108 Member States have paid their assessed contributions in full, and urges all other Member States, in particular those in arrears, to ensure payment of their outstanding assessed contributions;

3. *Expresses its appreciation* to those Member States that have paid their assessed contributions in full, and urges all other Member States to make every possible effort to ensure payment of their assessed contributions to the Mission in full;

¹ [A/75/805](#) and [A/75/740](#).

² [A/75/822/Add.5](#).

4. *Expresses concern* at the financial situation with regard to peacekeeping activities, in particular as regards the reimbursements to troop contributors that bear additional burdens owing to overdue payments by Member States of their assessments;

5. *Emphasizes* that all future and existing peacekeeping missions shall be given equal and non-discriminatory treatment in respect of financial and administrative arrangements;

6. *Also emphasizes* that all peacekeeping missions shall be provided with adequate resources for the effective and efficient discharge of their respective mandates;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that proposed peacekeeping budgets are based on the relevant legislative mandates;

8. *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, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure their full implementation;

9. *Notes with concern* the shortcomings in partnership operations between the Mine Action Service and the United Nations Office for Project Services, and requests the Secretary-General to conduct an independent review on the use of the services of the Office and the partners selected to implement mine action activities, including an assessment of the comparative advantage of each mission in the delivery of those activities, and to submit the results of the analysis in the context of his report at the seventy-seventh session;

10. *Reiterates its grave concern* about the continued threat to life, health, safety and security caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the importance of ensuring the safety, security and health of peacekeeping personnel, including through the use of safe and effective vaccines for civilian and uniformed personnel, maintaining the continuity of mandate delivery, including protection of civilians, minimizing the risk of mission activities causing the virus to spread and, where appropriate and within mandates, supporting national authorities, upon their request, in their response to COVID-19, in collaboration with the Resident Coordinator and other United Nations entities in the country;

11. *Notes* the measures adopted to mitigate the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on peacekeeping operations, including facilitating the continued implementation of mission mandates while ensuring the health and safety of peacekeeping personnel and local communities in the host country, and requests the Secretary-General to provide updated information on the impact of the pandemic, the lessons learned, best practices and how the mission improved its preparedness and resilience and collaborated with the host Government and regional and subregional actors in response to the pandemic in the context of the next performance report and budget submission for the Mission;

12. *Notes with concern* the mid- and long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on countries, regions and subregions in conflict, and emphasizes the importance of United Nations peacekeeping operations, where appropriate and within their respective mandates, coordinating with national authorities and other United Nations entities in promoting post-conflict reconstruction, peacebuilding and post-pandemic recovery of countries and regions in conflict, especially those in Africa;

13. *Recalls* paragraphs 16 and 18 of its resolution [69/273](#) of 2 April 2015, and in this regard reiterates its request to the Secretary-General that he continue to explore additional innovative ways to promote procurement from developing countries and

countries with economies in transition at Headquarters and field offices and to encourage interested local vendors to apply for registration on the Secretariat vendor roster, with a view to broadening its geographical base;

14. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to utilize local materials, capacity and knowledge in the implementation of construction projects for peacekeeping operations, in compliance with the United Nations Procurement Manual;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish clear frameworks and guidelines to determine the solicitation procedure, whether invitation to bid or request for proposal, to be utilized for, inter alia, acquiring different types of goods and services, including aviation services, and to update the United Nations Procurement Manual accordingly;

16. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to take measures to ensure that the Organization conforms to best practices in public procurement with respect to transparency, including by placing additional information in the public domain on the outcome of procurement exercises conducted, including in the area of aviation services, so as to further increase the transparency of the procurement operations of the Organization, and to update the United Nations Procurement Manual accordingly;

17. *Recognizes* the important role played by regional and subregional actors for peacekeeping operations, and in this regard encourages the Secretary-General to continue to deepen the partnership, cooperation and coordination of the United Nations with regional and subregional actors, in accordance with relevant mandates, and to provide information on such deepened engagement in the context of his next report;

18. *Reaffirms* the provisions of section XVIII of its resolution [61/276](#), further recognizes the important role played by quick-impact projects in supporting the implementation of mission mandates, stresses the need for the timely, responsible and accountable implementation of all such projects, and requests the Secretary-General to enhance their impact while addressing underlying challenges;

19. *Reiterates* that the use of external consultants should be kept to an absolute minimum and that the Organization should utilize its in-house capacity to perform core activities or to fulfil functions that are recurrent over the long term;

20. *Stresses* the importance of prioritizing the safety and security of United Nations personnel as well as protection of civilians activities, in the context of challenging security situations, and requests that all peacekeeping missions be provided with adequate resources for the effective and efficient discharge of their respective mandates, including the protection of civilians where mandated;

21. *Recognizes* the increasing security challenges faced by United Nations peacekeepers, re-emphasizes the importance of improving the safety and security of peacekeepers and mission personnel in an integrated manner, including enhanced training and capacity-building, force protection planning for United Nations camps and situational awareness, requests the Secretary-General and host Governments 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, and requests the Secretary-General to report thereon in his next report, and notes with appreciation the efforts of Member States in promoting the safety and security of United Nations peacekeepers in this regard;

22. *Reiterates its concern* about the high number of vacancies in civilian staffing, further reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to ensure that vacant posts are filled expeditiously, and requests the Secretary-General to review the posts

that have been vacant for 24 months or longer and to propose in his next budget submission either their retention, with clear justification of need, or their abolishment;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to consider options for greater nationalization of functions when formulating budget submissions, commensurate with mission mandates and requirements;

24. *Requests* that the Secretary-General continue his ongoing efforts to ensure the attainment of equitable geographical distribution in the Secretariat and to ensure as wide a geographical distribution of staff as possible in all departments and offices and at all levels, including at the Director and higher levels, of the Secretariat, and requests him to report thereon in his next overview report;

25. *Expresses its deep concern* at the delay in the settlement of claims in respect of death and disability, and reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to settle death and disability claims as expeditiously as possible, but no later than three months from the date of submission of a claim;

26. *Notes* the ongoing development of impact-based performance indicators as part of the implementation of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment System, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General in his next report to provide information on how the indicators will measure the performance by the Mission of mandated tasks and the impact of resource allocation on that performance, as well as how the indicators will contribute to the identification of the resources required for each mandated task;

27. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide in his next report an execution plan for, and analysis of, the implementation of the new Comprehensive Performance Assessment System, including on its correlation with mission planning and budget formulation, in order to facilitate consideration by the General Assembly of resource requests for implementation of the System;

28. *Notes* the progress made in the implementation of the multi-year environmental strategy to reduce the footprint of peacekeeping operations, and requests the Secretary-General to enhance measures for the implementation of the strategy in all peacekeeping missions, in line with the five pillars of the strategy and in accordance with the legislative mandates and particular conditions on the ground and in full compliance with the relevant rules and regulations, and to report thereon in the context of his next overview report;

29. *Also notes* the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the use of virtual platforms and cost recovery of air transportation of non-United Nations personnel, and urges that their implementation should take into consideration the specific contexts for each mission without impacting mandate implementation;

30. *Emphasizes* the importance of the accountability system of the Secretariat, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to strengthen risk management, transparency and internal controls in the management of peacekeeping budgets, in order to facilitate mandate implementation, and to report thereon in his next report;

31. *Also emphasizes* the importance of overall budgetary performance in peacekeeping operations, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to improve oversight of the activities of peacekeeping missions, and implement the recommendations of the relevant oversight bodies, and in this regard to avoid deficiencies in management and related economic losses with the aim of ensuring full compliance with financial regulations and rules, while giving due regard to the guidance and recommendations of the General Assembly, and to report thereon in the context of the performance reports;

32. *Highlights* the importance of the women and peace and security agenda, and underlines that full implementation of the agenda by the mission can contribute to achieving sustainable peace and political solutions;

33. *Expresses concern* over the allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse reported in peacekeeping missions, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to implement his zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse with regard to all civilian, military and police personnel, and to report thereon in the context of his next report on cross-cutting issues;

34. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the full implementation of the relevant provisions of its resolutions [59/296](#), [60/266](#), [61/276](#), [64/269](#), [65/289](#), [66/264](#), [69/307](#) and [70/286](#);

35. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to take all action necessary to ensure that the Mission is administered with a maximum of efficiency and economy;

Budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020

36. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the budget performance of the Mission for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020;³

Budget estimates for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022

37. *Decides* to appropriate to the special account for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara the amount of 60,908,900 dollars for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022, inclusive of 56,537,800 dollars for the maintenance of the Mission, 3,344,000 dollars for the support account for peacekeeping operations, 617,200 dollars for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, and 409,900 dollars for the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda;

Financing of the appropriation for the period from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022

38. *Decides* to apportion among Member States the amount of 20,302,966 dollars for the period from 1 July to 31 October 2021 in accordance with the levels updated in its resolution [73/272](#) of 22 December 2018, taking into account the scale of assessments for 2021, as set out in its resolution [73/271](#) of 22 December 2018;

39. *Also decides* that, in accordance with the provisions of its resolution [973 \(X\)](#) of 15 December 1955, there shall be set off against the apportionment among Member States, as provided for in paragraph 38 above, their respective share in the Tax Equalization Fund of 971,767 dollars, comprising the estimated staff assessment income of 843,667 dollars approved for the Mission, the prorated share of 92,800 dollars of the estimated staff assessment income approved for the support account, the prorated share of 21,333 dollars of the estimated staff assessment income approved for the United Nations Logistics Base and the prorated share of 13,967 dollars of the estimated staff assessment income approved for the Regional Service Centre;

40. *Further decides* to apportion among Member States the amount of 10,151,484 dollars for the period from 1 November to 31 December 2021, at a monthly rate of 5,075,742 dollars, in accordance with the levels updated in its resolution [73/272](#), taking into account the scale of assessments for 2021, as set out in its resolution [73/271](#), subject to a decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of the Mission;

³ [A/75/805](#).

41. *Decides* that, in accordance with the provisions of its resolution 973 (X), there shall be set off against the apportionment among Member States, as provided for in paragraph 40 above, their respective share in the Tax Equalization Fund of 485,883 dollars, comprising the estimated staff assessment income of 421,833 dollars approved for the Mission, the prorated share of 46,400 dollars of the estimated staff assessment income approved for the support account, the prorated share of 10,667 dollars of the estimated staff assessment income approved for the United Nations Logistics Base and the prorated share of 6,983 dollars of the estimated staff assessment income approved for the Regional Service Centre;

42. *Also decides* to apportion among Member States the amount of 30,454,450 dollars for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2022, at a monthly rate of 5,075,742 dollars, in accordance with the scale of assessments for 2022 and the updated levels,⁴ subject to a decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of the Mission;

43. *Further decides* that, in accordance with the provisions of its resolution 973 (X), there shall be set off against the apportionment among Member States, as provided for in paragraph 42 above, their respective share in the Tax Equalization Fund of 1,457,650 dollars, comprising the estimated staff assessment income of 1,265,500 dollars approved for the Mission, the prorated share of 139,200 dollars of the estimated staff assessment income approved for the support account, the prorated share of 32,000 dollars of the estimated staff assessment income approved for the United Nations Logistics Base and the prorated share of 20,950 dollars of the estimated staff assessment income approved for the Regional Service Centre;

44. *Decides* that, for Member States that have fulfilled their financial obligations to the Mission, there shall be set off against their apportionment, as provided for in paragraph 38 above, their respective share of the unencumbered balance and other revenue in the amount of 1,157,600 dollars in respect of the financial period ended 30 June 2020, in accordance with the levels updated in its resolution 73/272, taking into account the scale of assessments for 2020, as set out in its resolution 73/271;

45. *Also decides* that, for Member States that have not fulfilled their financial obligations to the Mission, there shall be set off against their outstanding obligations their respective share of the unencumbered balance and other revenue in the amount of 1,157,600 dollars in respect of the financial period ended 30 June 2020, in accordance with the scheme set out in paragraph 44 above;

46. *Further decides* that the decrease of 43,500 dollars in the estimated staff assessment income in respect of the financial period ended 30 June 2020 shall be set off against the credits in the amount of 1,157,600 dollars referred to in paragraphs 44 and 45 above;

47. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to continue to take additional measures to ensure the safety and security of all personnel participating in the Mission under the auspices of the United Nations, bearing in mind paragraphs 5 and 6 of Security Council resolution 1502 (2003) of 26 August 2003;

48. *Invites* voluntary contributions to the Mission in cash and in the form of services and supplies acceptable to the Secretary-General, to be administered, as appropriate, in accordance with the procedure and practices established by the General Assembly;

49. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-sixth session the item entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara".

⁴ To be adopted by the General Assembly.