Sixty-fifth General Assembly
Fifth Committee
37th Meeting (AM)

FIFTH COMMITTEE TAKES UP FINANCING FOR PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN HAITI, SUDAN,

HYBRID OPERATION IN DARFUR, SUPPORT FOR AFRICAN UNION MISSION IN SOMALIA

Secretariat officials today laid out their financing proposals for the 2011/12 period for four peacekeeping operations — the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and support for African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) — to the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) today at its second resumed session.

Several delegates expressed their support for MINUSTAH and the need to ensure it had adequate resources to carry out its mandate of maintaining political stability and establish the rule of law nearly 18 months after the January 2010 earthquake had devastated the Caribbean country and a day before a new President, Michel Martelly, assumed office.

Chile, speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said it was opposed to any arbitrary reduction in the resources allotted to MINUSTAH and the United Nations had to focus on security, as that contributed to the country’s social and economic development. Canada’s delegate, speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, emphasized that any decision to decrease mandated troops and police forces should be made cautiously and any withdrawal should be staggered in consultation with the Haitian Government.

Haiti’s delegate thanked the United Nations for its support of the electoral process, but remained worried about unfilled administrative posts in the Mission. Haiti backed the Secretary-General’s proposal to maintain funding for projects that combated violence in communities.

The Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) introduced the related ACABQ reports on the four peacekeeping missions. The Advisory Committee, in its report on financing of MINUSTAH, was recommending a $17 million reduction in the proposed 2011/12 budget of $810.3 million.

Jun Yamazaki, Assistant Secretary-General and Controller, introduced the Secretary-General’s reports that detailed budget numbers for the four peacekeeping missions. He said the proposed 2011/12 budget for MINUSTAH of $810.3 million represented a decline of $43.5 million, or 5.1 per cent, over 2010/11. The main factors behind the decreased budget were the use of a higher delayed deployment factor for military contingents and formed police personnel, and excluding provisions of support for the Office of the Special Envoy.

Carman Lapointe, Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, introduced her Office’s programme evaluation of the performance and achievement of results made by UNMIS. She said the national elections had exposed weaknesses in the Mission’s cooperation with the United Nations country team. It was imperative that the successor mission to UNMIS initiate a more effective partnership
with the United Nations country team and other relevant stakeholders.

Also speaking today were representatives of Argentina, Colombia, Brazil, Norway and Barbados.

The Fifth Committee will reconvene at 10 a.m. Thursday, 19 May, to discuss improving the financial situation of the United Nations.

Background

The Committee had before more than a dozen reports concerning the financing of four peacekeeping operations — the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

Regarding MINUSTAH, the Committee had before it the Secretary-General’s reports on the budget performance for the period 2009/10 (document A/65/703 and Corr.1) and the proposed budget for 2011/12 (document A/65/776), and a related ACABQ report (document A/65/743/Add.15).

Regarding UNMIS, the Committee had before it the Secretary-General’s reports on the budget performance for the period 2009/10 (document A/65/630 and Corr.1) and the proposed budget for 2011/12 (document A/65/731), a related ACABQ report (document A/65/743/Add.10), and a report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on programme evaluation of the performance and the achievement of results by UNMIS (document A/65/752).

On the topic of UNAMID, the Committee had before it the Secretary-General’s reports on the budget performance for the period 2009/10 (document A/65/631) and the proposed budget for 2011/12 (document A/65/741), and a related ACABQ report (document A/65/743/Add.13).

Regarding the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA), the Committee had before it the Secretary-General’s reports on the budget performance for the period 2009/10 (document A/65/619) and the proposed budget for 2011/12 (document A/65/809), and a related ACABQ report (document A/65/743/Add.16).

Introductions

JUN YAMAZAKI, Assistant Secretary-General and United Nations Controller, introduced the Secretary-General’s reports on the respective peacekeeping missions. Concerning the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), he said that the approved budget for the financial period 2009/10 amounted to $732.4 million, and that expenditures for the same period amounted to $713.7 million. That resulted in an unencumbered balance of $18.7 million, representing a resource utilization rate of 97.5 per cent. The main factors contributing to those variances were delays in the deployment of the additional military contingent and police personnel, including contingent-owned equipment authorized by Security Council resolution 1908 (2010), as well as deployment of contingent- and police-owned equipment by ship rather than by air, as originally envisaged. Other variances were the direct results of the earthquake.

The approved budget for 2010/11 amounted to $853.8 million. The proposed budget for 2011/12 amounted to $810.3 million, a decrease of $43.5 million. The main factors contributing to the decreased resource requirements included application of higher deployment factors for military contingent and formed police personnel, exclusion of provisions for support to the Office of the Special Envoy and less acquisition of vehicles, among others.

Regarding the financing of United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), he said that the approved budget for the financial period 2009/10 amounted to $958.4 million. Expenditures for the same period amounted to $932.5 million, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $25.9 million. The main
factors contributing to variances included lower actual cost of rations and bottled water, due to using drinking water from water treatment plants; unutilized balances for international staff and discontinuation of hazard pay for staff in Khartoum, El Obeid and Port Sudan effective February 2010; lower consumption of aviation fuel due to non-deployment for two aircraft and shorter deployment periods for five aircraft; delays in implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme; additional requirements of national staff due to new salary scales; higher within-mission travel costs due to unforeseen requirements to support the April 2010 elections in Sudan; and higher acquisition of information technology equipment for the United Nations House in Juba.

He said that the approved budget for UNMIS for the period 2010/11 amounted to $1.008 billion, including the $70 million for supporting the Southern Sudan referendum. The proposed budget for 2011/12 amounted to $947.1 million, representing a decrease of $60.9 million or 6 per cent. Excluding support for the referendum during 2010/11, the proposed budget represented a 1 per cent increase over the budget apportionment of $938 million for 2010/11. The main factors contributing to the increased resource requirements included the application of new salary scales for international staff and lower delayed recruitment factors for international and national staff, and higher rental and operational costs for helicopters.

Turning to the financing for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), he said the approved budget for financial period 2009/10 amounted to $1.599 billion, while expenditures for the same period amounted to $1.548 billion, resulting in an unencumbered balance of $51 million. This represented a resource utilization rate of 96.8 per cent. The main factors contributing to the variances were reduced rates for fresh rations and the delayed deployment of contingent-owned equipment, reduced construction requirements due to a cancelled contract, increased international staff costs due to lower than budgeted vacancy rates and higher actual costs, and increased resource requirements for the use of a third-party logistics provider to clear a backlog of United Nations-owned equipment at Port Sudan.

He further said that the approved budget for UNAMID for the 2010/11 period amounted to $1.808 billion. The proposed budget for 2011/12 amounted to $1.709 billion, representing a decrease of $99 million, or 5.5 per cent. The main factors contributing to decreased resource requirements included lower estimated resources for international staff costs, reduced requirements for construction services because of the near completion of major projects and reduced requirements for rations based on the prevailing contract terms.

Turning to the financing of support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), he said that the approved budget for the financial period 2009/10 amounted to $213.6 million, while expenditures for the same period amounted to $164.3 million. That resulted in an unencumbered balance of $49.3 million, representing a resource utilization rate of 76.9 per cent. The variances were mainly due to unutilized facilities and infrastructure balances, slower than expected project deployment of AMISOM contingents and a substantial delay in the recruitment of staff. The approved budget for the 2010/11 period amounted to $174.3 million. The proposed $303.9 million budget for the 2011/12 period represented an increase of 74.3 per cent.

That increase was due to additional requirements for military and police personnel as a result of the Security Council authorizing the increase in the African Union force strength and increased troop-rotation costs; increase in civilian personnel costs for 56 new posts and temporary positions; increased requirements for facilities and infrastructure, ground transportation, medical and other supplies and services to support increased troops; and increased facilities and infrastructure requirements for ground transportation and naval transportation based on contractual prices of the existing key fuel contract, as well as the establishment of long-term maintenance services for vehicles and acquisition of special-purpose and material-handling vehicles.

He said that pursuant to Financial Regulation 4.6 amended by General Assembly resolution 64/269, the Secretary-General sought the concurrence of ACABQ to enter into commitments in an amount not exceeding $35.9 million for the 2010/11 period for the expanded operational activities and additional logistical and personnel requirements of the United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (UNSOA), to which
ACABQ concurred, with the expectation that efforts would be made for the absorption of $4.4 million of projected over expenditures under civilian staff costs.

COLLEN KELAPILE, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), introduced related reports concerning the financing of four missions. As he introduced the report on financing of MINUSTAH, he said the Advisory Committee was recommending a $17 million reduction in the proposed budget of that Mission for the 2011/12 period. ACABQ noted that MINUSTAH, now in its second year of the post-earthquake surge capacity, was focusing its efforts on expanding the stabilization gains made since the earthquake and planned to phase out the surge capacity as security conditions improved. There was a renewed focus on the Mission's core mandate of maintaining political stability and establishing the rule of law. The support provided to the Government included, among others, the construction of offices and a temporary parliament building. The Committee's recommendations were in paragraph 51 of its report.

He then introduced the related report on financing of UNMIS and referred to Security Council resolution 1978 (2011) of 27 April, which extended the mandate of UNMIS until 9 July 2011. ACABQ was recommending that the Assembly appropriate $473.54 million for the maintenance of UNMIS for the six-month period from 1 July to 31 December 2011. Regarding the performance report for the 2010/11 period, the Committee's recommendation was in paragraph 31 of its report.

Introducing the report on financing of UNAMID, he said the Advisory Committee was recommending a cut of $14.1 million in the Operation's proposed budget for the 2011/12 period. The cut resulted from the Committee's recommendation to increase the delayed deployment factor of United Nations police to 17 per cent, rather than the 10 per cent proposed by the Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee's detailed observations and recommendations on the Secretary General's proposed budget were set out in section IV.B of the report.

Regarding the Operation's civilian staffing component, he said ACABQ was concerned about its ongoing recruitment and retention problems and believed that additional measures to retain staff needed to be explored. Those measures would include better social amenities, the availability of adequate accommodations and the provision of welfare and support services.

The Advisory Committee's recommendation on the performance report for UNAMID was contained in paragraph 66 of its report.

Turning to his last report, on the financing of UNSOA, Mr. Kelapile said the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of $4.99 million in the Office's proposed budget for 2011/12 and recommended against the creation of 10 of the 50 posts proposed by the Secretariat.

He said that, given the uncertainty of the full deployment of the remaining additional AMISON military contingent personnel and considering previous and current deployment trends, ACABQ recommended that the delayed deployment factor for the military contingent personnel be adjusted to 15 per cent for 2011/12, rather than the proposed 10 per cent.

CARMAN LAPOINTE, Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, said the support by UNMIS in implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement had contributed to the sustained ceasefire between North and South Sudan. Most of the governmental bodies and laws stipulated in the Agreement were in place, and a wealth-sharing arrangement had been established. The Mission's achievements were also notable in other areas, among which were the successful support of elections, advancement in mine action and ensuring the safety and security of personnel. While those were significant achievements, the initial emphasis of the Mission's activities on Darfur demonstrated the impact of clear focus on the achievability of key mandates.

Even so, she said, the national elections had exposed weaknesses in cooperation with the United Nations country team, partially due to the absence of a strategic planning cell, which, had it been established at mission inception, might have provided the framework for integrated programme planning
and implementation. While cooperation had increased among many of the components of the Integrated United Nations Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Unit during the time of the Southern Sudan referendum, a closer partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) would have been beneficial. It was imperative that the successor mission to UNMIS initiate a more effective partnership with the United Nations country team and other relevant stakeholder to enable "serving as one".

Thanking the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support, she expressed appreciation for the cooperation extended to her Office by UNMIS staff at all levels, during a time when conditions on the ground were especially uncertain and volatile.

**Statements**

MANAHI PAKARATI (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said the Group fully supported giving MINUSTAH the necessary resources to remain in Haiti as long as necessary and desired by the Haitian Government and people. The Rio Group was opposed to any arbitrary reduction in the resources allocated to the Stabilization Mission. She noted that the Rio Group countries continued to contribute most of the Mission's military personnel and police.

The Rio Group was convinced that the United Nations had to focus on security, as that contributed to the country's social and economic development and helped build its institutions. The Group welcomed the implementation of rapid-response projects and supported the expanded community violence-reduction programme. Those projects played an important role in mitigating conflict in violence-affected neighbourhoods and camps for internally displaced persons. The Mission planned to implement 46 projects in the 2011/12 period, including 30 labour-intensive and revenue-generating projects for 42,000 young men and women at risk.

PHILIPPE LAFORTUNE (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, said that nearly 18 months after the January 2010 earthquake, Haiti still needed international support both in the short term to meet humanitarian needs, and in the long term to help the country rebuild its infrastructure and institutions. In the meantime, Haitians were faced with ongoing problems related to removal of debris, housing, employment and access to basic services.

Still, advances that had been made should not be overlooked, he said. Thanks to the evolution of its mandate, MINUSTAH had done remarkable work in strengthening security institutions, which had allowed for the guarantee of a more stable and secure environment in Haiti. He noted with interest that the United Nations intended to increase the importance placed on strengthening governance and the rule of law in Haiti, as that would be a determining factor in long-term success. The post-earthquake phase, which had required a temporary increase in MINUSTAH personnel, would soon come to an end, but he emphasized that a decision to decrease mandated troops and police forces should be made with great caution and in the context of staggered planning, in consultation with Haiti's Government. The importance of reassessing the composition of the Mission's mandate in the context of maintaining the country's political and social stability could not be overemphasized.

SEBASTIÁN DI LUCA (Argentina) reiterated his support for MINUSTAH and said the Assembly must ensure it had the necessary resources to carry out its mandate. Argentina was fully committed to helping Haiti. Its troops deployed to MINUSTAH accounted for 70 per cent of all Argentine troops deployed in United Nations peacekeeping missions. MINUSTAH's budget must be enough to allow it to help strengthen the rule of law and rebuild Haitian institutions. He underscored the need for the United Nations to better coordinate international support for Haiti based on national priorities. He also underscored the need to liquidate missions and reimburse troop-contributing countries on time. It was critically important to increase reimbursement. He expressed concern over the length of time that had elapsed since the last review of reimbursement in 1992, and the subsequent ad hoc increase in 2002. That situation placed a difficult financial burden on troop-contributing countries and threatened their ability to sustain participation peacekeeping operations.
STEPHAN DÉJOIE (Haiti) said the newly elected President of Haiti, Michel Martelly, would be inaugurated on Saturday, 14 May. He thanked the United Nations for its support of the electoral process. His delegation remained worried about the fact that many months after the creation of the intervention team, 36 per cent of the administrative posts were still vacant. The delegation asked the Secretary-General to use all necessary mechanisms to fill the posts as quickly as possible.

He was happy that the Secretary-General proposed to maintain the funding for projects to fight violence in the communities. The delegation encouraged MINUSTAH to intensify the coordination of its activities with those of the Government and various actors involved in the country and to avoid the duplication of projects. He also reiterated the importance of involving local contractors in the procurement process, which was key to the country’s sustainable development and to producing a safe and stable environment.

MARÍA PAULA GUERRA (Colombia) associated her statement with that made on behalf of the Rio Group and stressed the importance of establishing a future for sound security and development strategies for Haiti, as emphasized by the Security Council. In the long term, Haiti needed a framework that would be effective and coherent, which would require cooperation between MINUSTAH and the Provisional Commission for the Reconstruction of Haiti to bring about sustainable results over time.

SÉRGIO RODRIGUES DOS SANTOS (Brazil) said he welcomed the progress Haiti had achieved so far with the support of MINUSTAH and the improved humanitarian situation. When assessing the security situation, the international community would have to ensure that the persistent risk of resurging gang violence, rising criminality and violence in camps were duly addressed. MINUSTAH would continue to need all the necessary resources to support the Haitian Government tackle those challenges. Brazil insisted that security gains be accompanied by social-economic opportunities and concrete reconstruction.

The experience of MINUSTAH over the last several years had revealed some important lessons for peacekeeping, including the importance of a good relationship between the blue helmets and local population. The use of quick impact projects was a key contribution to the development of that close relationship, which was key to implementing the Mission’s mandate and maintaining a secure and stable environment. Brazil was concerned with the reductions proposed by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee and would seek additional clarification during the informal consultations, he said.

JULIE JACOBSSEN TAKAHASHI (Norway) said peacekeeping missions could not be seen in isolation, as they operated in a regional context and, in many cases, in close proximity to other missions. She welcomed the increased focus on the environmental impact of peacekeeping missions and the measures taken overall to reduce the United Nations footprint in mission areas. However, she expressed concern over the high vacancy rates in peacekeeping operations, which, as in the case of UNAMID, were seen to seriously impede the mission’s ability to implement its mandate. The improvement of conditions of service approved by the General Assembly in December 2010 may help the situation, but the recruitment process in itself was also a problem.

She said Sudan was facing many challenges with the approach of 9 July and the secession of the South. Many issues remained to be resolved and the structure of a new peacekeeping operation, including its area of operation, was yet to be decided. It was essential that the mission be allowed flexibility in its use of funds in the transition period and start-up phase of the new mission, so that it could restructure according to its new mandate. In general, missions needed to be able to shift priorities and use personnel when needed, as had been the case in Haiti after the earthquake and now after the elections. Increased flexibility should go hand-in-hand with improved results-based management and oversight.

JOYCE BOURNE (Barbados) expressed strong support for MINUSTAH and the government of Haiti. At a recent Caribbean Community (CARICOM) meeting, Foreign Ministers had called for a renewed mandate for MINUSTAH, so it could play a greater role in Haiti’s reconstruction process. The Ministers had also reiterated the call for the international community to provide resources to empower the
Haitian Government's institutional structure and capacity.

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