



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

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(Check against delivery)

Statement by Hitoshi Kozaki, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations on agenda item 116

Mr. Chairman,

The General Assembly last December approved the programme budget for the biennium 2006/07 in the amount of \$3,798.9 million¹. My delegation cannot but express its surprise at receiving a budget outline with a total requirement for the biennium 2008-2009 adjusted for inflation, but not yet for exchange rate, that would amount to \$4,373.5 million². It should be recalled that the programme budget for 2004/05 appropriated in December 2003 stood at 3,160.9 million US dollars³. The new figure before us represents an increase of \$1.2 billion (38%).

My delegation is not certain that the increase in the programme budget has brought about a corresponding increase in terms of the impact and relevance of the activities of the Organization. My delegation, rather, is of the opinion that this comes as a result of a lack of redeployment of resources from low-priority activities and prioritization among its activities. Reduction in the programme budget should be pursued and achieved by redeployment of resources and discontinuation of irrelevant, marginally effective and obsolete activities, through rigorous application of Regulation 5.6 of the PPBME⁴. The Government of Japan maintains zero-nominal-growth as a basic guidance in approaching the proposed biennium budgets

¹A/RES/60/247

²A/61/576 paragraph 10

³A/RES/58/271

⁴ST/SGB/2000/8

My delegation takes note of the preliminary estimate presented by the Secretary-General for an increase in the budget for the next biennium by 0.4% before funding for special political missions. It recalls a preliminary estimate contained in the proposed budget outline for the biennium for 06/07 of \$3,621.9 million⁵, (which was supposed to be) the “equivalent of zero-real-growth⁶.” Even so, actual requirements grew significantly later on, bringing the actual budget to \$3,798.9 million¹. My delegation would like to emphasize that zero-nominal-growth or zero-real-growth is still a useful concept in enforcing efficiency through prioritization and redeployment.

It is high time to seriously consider that special political missions, which are mandated by the Security Council in the forms of Council resolutions and exchange of letters, should be financed using the peacekeeping scale of assessment, given the fact that special political missions contribute significantly to the rapid growth of the programme budget, and bearing in mind the special status and responsibility of the permanent members of the Security Council in the area of maintenance of peace and security, which means that they should bear the corresponding financial responsibilities.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is highly alarmed by the proposal of the Secretary-General to increase the level of the contingency fund from 0.75 % to 1.35%. We are deeply concerned that the Secretary-General has submitted such a proposal that would touch the integral element of the land-mark resolution 41/213. Bearing also in mind the recent growth of UN budgets and the incremental nature of the current methodology, his proposal would surely lead to further increases in the expenditures of the Organization. As such, the Government of Japan has no room to accept his proposal.

It should be recalled that the budget outline and contingency fund were established in accordance with GA resolution 41/213. These excellent mechanisms were intended to control budget growth through prioritization of UN activities within the resources available

⁵A/RES/59/278

⁶A/59/415

to the Organization.

We have seen recently numerous statements by the Secretary-General on programme budget implications, in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. We are concerned about the tendency of legislative bodies of the UN to create additional mandates without due regard for the important issue of prioritization.

My delegation recognizes that the Secretariat would make its utmost efforts to absorb new requirements within existing resources, rather than charging potential additional expenditures to the contingency fund. However, the Secretariat goes on to say that it would report additional expenditures, when necessary, to the General Assembly in the context of the financial performance reports.

My delegation appreciates the intention of the Secretary-General to absorb additional resource requirements. However, my delegation has its doubt as to whether such methods were employed by the Secretariat as a means to avoid the mechanism stipulated in paragraph 9, Annex I of resolution 41/213⁷ and paragraph 6, annex C of resolution 42/211⁸. My delegation is afraid that such methodology may lead to a situation in which insufficient effort would be made to absorb costs through redeployment of resources and prioritization of activities, and then additional resources might be reported later, asking for additional appropriation. This might constitute a departure from proper budgetary procedures, which then leads to a lack of budgetary discipline. Moreover, my delegation has its doubts about whether sufficient accountability would be exercised in such process, given the fact that

⁷If additional expenditures, as defined in paragraph 8 above, are proposed that exceed resources available within the contingency fund, such additional expenditures can be included in the budget through redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or modifications of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred until a later biennium.

⁸Should the consolidated amount exceed the balance available in the fund for that year, the Secretary-General would, in his consolidated statement, make proposals for revising the amount so that it would not exceed the available balance. In so doing, the Secretary-General would be guided by the indications of alternatives included in each statement of programme budget implication and in each proposal for revised estimates. The respective legislative bodies should take action on such alternatives at the time they adopt the decision or resolution in question (see para. 3 above). The Secretary-General would also take into account any indications of relative urgency that each legislative body might wish to make regarding its resolution and decisions. Upon consideration of the consolidated statement, the General Assembly would proceed to appropriate the funds necessary under the relevant section of the proposed budget.

financial performance reports are usually submitted to the Fifth Committee very late into the session, thus giving us less than adequate time for careful consideration of such reports. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to express its concern on the late submission of performance reports in December. While we are aware of the importance of reflecting the most up-to-date information to the performance reports, the Government of Japan is concerned that the lateness of the issuance of reports puts some Member States, including my own, quite difficult position to incorporate additional assessments required into their national budgetary process.

My delegation's position is very clear: All possible additional resource requirements shall be absorbed within existing resources through redeployment and prioritization: If additional expenditures cannot be absorbed despite all the efforts by the Secretariat, these costs should be treated as charges against the contingency fund, in accordance with the relevant provisions of GA resolutions 41/213 and 42/211.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is also aware that some of the estimated costs for the 08/09 programme budget are included in statements by the Secretary-General issued in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedures of the General Assembly. My delegation recognizes that such information serves the purpose of providing transparency to Member States. However, this should in no way prejudice the outcome of our consideration of the proposed programme budget for 08/09. My delegation would not assume that those estimates will be in addition to the current level of resource requirements. Rather, my delegation emphasizes that the Secretary-General is requested to exercise his leadership to control the budget level for 08/09, by redeployment of resources and discontinuation of obsolete, low-priority activities, through rigorous application of Regulation 5.6 of the PPBME, before he submits his proposals to the General Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.