

Fifth Committee, concluding session, recommends \$5.15 billion budget for 2012-2013 Sixty-sixth General Assembly Fifth Committee

25th Meeting (AM)

Department of Public Information

24 December 2011 After protracted, all-night negotiations, the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) wrapped up the main part of its sixty-sixth session Saturday morning by recommending a \$5.152 billion budget for the Organization for 2012-2013. (...)

(...) In a text approved today on “special subjects relating the proposed 2012–2013 programme budget”, the Committee recommended the Assembly approve a \$583.38 million budget for those missions for 2012. But, before that action, Cuba’s representative, also speaking on behalf of Venezuela, Nicaragua and Iran, called for a vote on deleting all references concerning the principle of the “responsibility to protect” in that text, arguing that the principle had no place in a budget document and was best left to other bodies, perhaps the Legal Committee.

Delegates, however, by a recorded vote of 71 against to 11 in favour, with 42 abstentions, voted to reject that amendment, and proceeded to vote in favour of financing the special political missions by a recorded vote of 119 in favour to 7 against (Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Sudan, Syria and Venezuela), with 8 abstentions (Comoros, Djibouti, Grenada, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, Yemen and Zambia). (...)

(...) Part XVII would have the Assembly approve the gross jointly financed budget for the Department of Safety and Security for the 2010-2011 biennium in the amount of \$244.54 million, with \$215.03 million going to Field Security Operations and \$29.5 million going to the Security and Safety Services at the United Nations Office at Vienna.

Before action, the representative of Cuba, also speaking on behalf of Venezuela, Nicaragua and Iran, proposed an oral amendment to part IX of that text, concerning special political missions. The amendment would call for deleting all references related to the responsibility to protect, including as it concerned the role of the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide. Accordingly, he asked the Secretary-General to issue a corrigendum to his report A/66/354/Add.1.

The representative of the Netherlands said she did not agree with the proposed amendment, whose function went beyond the responsibility of the Committee. For that reason, she requested a recorded vote on it, and she called on delegates to vote against it.

The representative of Poland, speaking on behalf of the European Union, said the Committee

was responsible for administrative and budgetary matters only, and therefore should refrain from political discussions that belonged in different United Nations forums. It was the Committee's responsibility to ensure that the Office of the Special Adviser was adequately funded in order to be able to implement its mandate. He would vote against the amendment and called on other delegations to follow suit.

The representative of Sudan supported the proposed amendment. The nature of the Committee did not in any way prevent Member States from voicing their concerns. The representative of Cuba, taking the floor again, noted the lack of satisfaction in the way it had been forced to consider and approve resources for the special political missions. He did not understand where the interpretation came from that Secretariat reports were legislative mandates. It was unacceptable that concepts being discussed in the Assembly were incorporated into strategic frameworks as if they had been mandated or adopted by Member States. It had not been decided that the responsibility to protect was a central part of the Office of the Special Adviser. The responsibility to protect was being manipulated by hidden interventionists that sought to justify the use of force. The principle of state sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected. There was no clear definition yet of the responsibility to protect. Therefore, it was unacceptable that decisions were made in a budget document, when such matters should be taken up and made in the Assembly.

In a recorded vote of 71 against to 11 in favour, with 42 abstentions, the Committee rejected the amendment.

Speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, the representative of Tunisia said her country had abstained. The principle of the responsibility to protect was noble, but to avoid abuse of it, there must be advanced discussions on it to reach consensus. Clearly, the concept was still being worked on and no case could replace the fundamental principles on which the Charter was based. It would have been better to consider the responsibility to protect in the Sixth Committee (Legal).

The representative of Venezuela, also speaking on behalf of Cuba, Nicaragua and Iran, requested a recorded vote on part IX as a whole.

The representative of Sudan took to floor to say it had voted in favour of the amendment. The principle of the responsibility to protect had been used loosely, without taking into account the stance of the vast majority of Member States. In a recorded vote of 119 in favour to 7 against (Bolivia, Cuba, Iran, Nicaragua, Sudan, Syria and Venezuela), with 8 abstentions (Comoros, Djibouti, Grenada, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, Yemen and Zambia), the Committee approved part IX of the draft.

The Committee then approved the draft as a whole. (...) **See full [press release](#) .
See [budget document](#).**