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135th IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 23 – 27.10.2016

Standing Committee on
United Nations Affairs

C-IV/135/A.1
15 June 2016

Draft agenda

1. **Adoption of the agenda**
2. **Approval of the summary record of the Committee's session held during the 134th IPU Assembly in Lusaka (March 2016)**
3. **Elections to the Bureau**

The Committee will fill the existing vacancies on the Bureau based on proposals from the geopolitical groups.

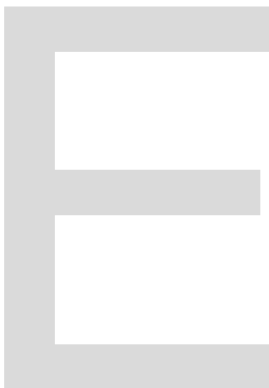
4. **Panel discussion on Funding the United Nations**

In 2014, total funding for the UN stood at US\$ 46.2 billion. Of that, 62 per cent was for development-related operational activities (including humanitarian assistance), 21 per cent for policy and advocacy work, and 17 per cent for peacekeeping. Proper and consistent funding of the UN is critical to its success, particularly because the UN must deliver on the huge agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals and because of the additional difficulties of growing conflicts and humanitarian crises. However, there is general reluctance to increase UN funding. Moreover, a growing share of the UN budget depends on non-core, extra-budgetary funding. It is usually earmarked and involves a variety of overheads and hidden costs. Partly as a result of that, the UN is increasingly under pressure to look for private-sector partners to help carry out some of its activities.

This session will review the ways in which parliaments can play a role in the oversight of UN funding, while helping to ensure that the UN has the resources it needs. That will allow the UN to be more effective in dealing with current and future challenges.

5. **Panel discussion on the UN response to allegations of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse by UN peacekeepers**

UN peacekeepers are dispatched under the authority of the Security Council, on behalf of the international community. They are charged with protecting civilians while a political solution to a brewing conflict is mediated. The overwhelming majority of peacekeepers act by the highest ethical and professional code of conduct. In 2015 the international community was shaken by reports that many women and children had been sexually exploited or abused by military, police and civilian personnel assigned to UN peacekeeping forces in the Central Africa Republic. Subsequent investigations unveiled a history of abuse that goes back many years. Nationals from some 20 countries were implicated in a total of 99 allegations in 2015, and in 80 allegations in 2014. Twenty-six new allegations have emerged to date in 2016.



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The December 2015 report of an independent review panel concluded that the UN was poorly prepared to deal with these allegations and that important reforms were needed to protect victims and to hold those responsible fully to account. Among other things, the report called on the UN to deal with allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse as a human rights violation in its own right and not as a mere disciplinary matter, regardless of whether the peacekeepers are operating under UN command.

In response to the original violations and further to the recommendations of the independent panel, the UN Secretary-General reaffirmed a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. He took steps to improve the Organization's prevention and remedial action in order to promote greater accountability. In February 2016, the UN Secretary-General appointed a Special Coordinator to help improve the UN response to this issue. In March, the Security Council adopted a resolution that, among other things, gives the UN Secretary-General greater authority to dismiss troops. It also reaffirms that troop-contributing countries have a responsibility to investigate and prosecute each allegation as appropriate.

This session will take stock of UN actions so far. It will seek to identify further steps that may be needed, both to prevent new cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, and also to strengthen the accountability framework for international peacekeepers.

6. Any other business