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Ban presents budget proposal of nearly \$5.2 billion for next two years



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[Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon today presented a proposed budget of nearly \$5.2 billion for the United Nations to carry out the important work that Member States have entrusted to it in areas ranging from peace and security to human rights and development over the next two years.

Prepared against the backdrop of “global financial austerity and uncertainty,” the new budget is 3.2 per cent less than the current budget, Mr. Ban [told](#) the General Assembly’s Fifth Committee, which deals with administrative and budgetary matters.

Earlier this year the Secretary-General called for a 3 per cent cut in the next UN budget below the current two-year figure of \$5.16 billion, in line with the sluggish global economy as the world struggles to emerge from the worst recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

“The budget before you reflects a central challenge: how to resource this Organization at a critical time,” said Mr. Ban. “The financial crisis is crippling many countries. Governments – and especially people – are struggling. In these difficult circumstances, the world is turning more and more to the United Nations for answers and help.

“We must live up to the expectations of you, the membership, and respond to the needs of the peoples of our world. And we have a responsibility to make the best possible use of the resources which you, the Member States, provide,” he added. “This budget reflects that reality.”

He said the proposed \$5.197 billion budget is a product of a “careful exercise” in which he challenged his senior managers to “fulfil our mandates, rethink our business practices, reduce overlap, embrace innovation, encourage creativity, build synergies, and help modernize our operations so we operate better in our fast-changing and complex world.”

The proposals reflect a wide range of adjustments based on efficiencies, improvements and investments, with a net decrease of 44 posts as well as cost-cutting for travel, consultants, general operating expenses, supplies, materials and equipment, Mr. Ban said.

Detailing some aspects of the new budget, he said it includes over \$1 billion for special political missions related to peace and security that are expected to be extended or approved during the biennium – slightly above what was initially approved for the current budget.

The budget proposals also include resources to strengthen the management capacity of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East ([UNRWA](#)), and to enable the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)) to respond to new and expanded mandates.

It is now up to Member States to discuss and decide on the ultimate budget to be adopted by the General Assembly in December for the next two years.

“All I ask is that throughout this process, we never lose sight of why we are here: for the peoples of the world; so they can enjoy greater peace and security, human rights protections, development and a sustainable future,” Mr. Ban told delegates.

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