



Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

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Financial and budgetary matters

Resources and expenditures for the functioning of the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto

Report of the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. At its ninth session, held in Vienna from 15 to 19 October 2018, the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime established the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto in resolution 9/1, which included in its annex the procedures and rules for the functioning of the Mechanism. After a two-year preparatory phase, the Conference of the Parties at its tenth session, held in Vienna from 12 to 16 October 2020, launched, through resolution 10/1, the review process of the Mechanism.
2. In its resolution [76/187](#) of 16 December 2021, entitled “Strengthening the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity”, the General Assembly welcomed the launch of the first review phase of the Mechanism and urged States parties to continue to actively participate in and support the review process.
3. In its resolution 9/1, on the establishment of the Review Mechanism, the Conference of the Parties stressed the importance of ensuring the efficient, continued and impartial functioning of the Mechanism, in accordance with the provisions of the procedures and rules contained in the annex to the resolution. The Conference invited Member States and other donors to provide extrabudgetary resources in accordance with the rules and procedures of the United Nations and with the procedures and rules for the functioning of the Mechanism.
4. According to paragraph 54 of the procedures and rules, the requirements of the Mechanism and its secretariat are to be funded, in their entirety, from the existing resources of the regular budget allocated to the Conference, and where necessary, additional costs are to be funded from extrabudgetary resources, including voluntary contributions, without conditions that would have an impact on the impartiality of the

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Mechanism, to be channelled through a dedicated account to be established by the secretariat, in accordance with the rules and procedures of the United Nations. Such an account was established by the secretariat through the creation, in March 2019, of the Global Programme to Support the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto.

5. In its resolution [78/229](#) of 19 December 2023, the General Assembly further urged States parties to actively participate in the review process of the Mechanism, in accordance with Conference resolution 10/1, including by ensuring that voluntary contributions were made to ensure that the secretariat could effectively support the process.

6. The present report was prepared pursuant to the procedures and rules for the functioning of the Review Mechanism, in which it is stated that the review of implementation of the Convention and the Protocols thereto and the Mechanism are under the authority of the Conference, in accordance with article 32 of the Convention, and that the Conference, without prejudice to the guiding principles and characteristics of the Mechanism, may conduct an evaluation of the organization, functioning, funding and performance of the review process, so as to amend and improve the existing Mechanism at any time.

7. This report provides an update on the financial status of the Global Programme, which was established to ensure the operation of the Mechanism through, inter alia, acceptance, management and use of extrabudgetary resources, in accordance with Conference resolution 9/1 and the procedures and rules for the functioning of the Mechanism.

II. Status of voluntary contributions made to the Global Programme to Support the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto

8. The Review Mechanism is supported by a recurrent voluntary contribution of approximately \$640,000 per annum, as well as by non-recurrent voluntary contributions.

9. As shown in tables 1 and 2 below, from the establishment of the Review Mechanism until 30 June 2024, a total of \$5,128,751 in voluntary contributions had been provided by China, the European Union, France, Germany, Italy and the United States of America.

Table 1
Extrabudgetary contributions to the Review Mechanism, by year, as at 30 June 2024

(United States dollars)

<i>Extrabudgetary contributions</i>	
2018	113 766
2019	1 362 397
2020	820 297
2021	1 063 714
2022	802 676
2023	965 901
Total pledged, all years	5 128 751
Total used	3 823 134
Total returned to donors	15 022
Total available (programmed until mid-2025)	1 290 595

Table 2
Extrabudgetary contributors to the Review Mechanism, by year, as at 30 June 2024

(United States dollars)

	<i>Extrabudgetary contributors</i>	<i>Amount pledged</i>
2018	France	113 766
2019	European Union	340 325 ^{a,b}
	Germany	225 898 ^{a,b}
	Italy	556 174
	United States	240 000 ^a
2020	China	100 000
	United States	720 297 ^a
2021	Italy	422 297
	United States	641 417 ^a
2022	France	39 063
	Italy	125 502
	United States	638 111
2023	European Union	319 829
	United States	646 072
Total pledged, all years		5 128 751

^a Expired.

^b The unused balance was returned to donors when the grants expired, including approximately \$9,136 that were returned to Germany and approximately \$5,886 that were returned to the European Union.

10. The voluntary contributions received so far have only partially covered the core staffing and operational requirements of the Review Mechanism. Expenses incurred in meeting such core requirements include staff costs of the secretariat, whose staff members support the review process by providing training and advice, mainly remotely and online, to national focal points and experts; supporting the finalization and publication of lists of observations and their summaries; analysing the overall findings of the Mechanism with a view to preparing the general reports on trends, patterns and good practices in implementation; and maintaining and managing “RevMod”, the secure electronic platform through which country reviews are conducted. Expenses relating to core operational requirements also include the initial development of RevMod and the annual fee for its maintenance.

11. As indicated above, from the date of the establishment of the Global Programme until 30 June 2024, extrabudgetary resources in the amount of \$5,128,751 had been received. A total of \$3,823,134 were used to cover the development and maintenance of RevMod; the development and maintenance of an e-learning course; the staffing requirements of the secretariat (which comprised, from 2019 to 30 June 2024, two P-3 posts, one temporary P-3 post, three co-funded P-3 posts in units and sections of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) – namely, the Civil Society Unit, the Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Section and the Firearms Trafficking Section – two temporary P-2 posts, two co-funded junior professional officer posts, two G-6 posts, one temporary G-4 post, three consultants, one individual contractor and one United Nations Volunteer); and miscellaneous operational costs and the project support costs of the Global Programme.

12. At the time of writing the present report, the staffing component of the secretariat funded by extrabudgetary resources comprised two P-3 posts, one temporary P-3 post, one temporary P-2 post, one G-6 post, one consultant and one co-funded consultant, as well as two co-funded P-3 posts in the Civil Society Unit and the Firearms Trafficking Section of UNODC. The staffing component of the secretariat is also supported by gratis personnel, one junior professional officer whose

post is funded by China (the third year of which is currently co-funded by UNODC at a rate of 50 per cent) and one junior professional officer whose post is co-funded by France and Germany and who works part-time (50 per cent) on the Review Mechanism.

13. According to the current budget plan generated by the secretariat, voluntary contributions received as at 30 June 2024, including contributions from previous years, will be sufficient to cover the existing staffing and operational expenses for only 12 more months, until mid-2025.

III. Use of existing regular budget resources to support the functioning of the Review Mechanism

14. In accordance with the procedures and rules for the functioning of the Review Mechanism, the requirements of the Mechanism and its secretariat are to be funded, in their entirety, from the existing resources of the regular budget allocated to the Conference of the Parties. Where necessary, additional costs are to be funded from extrabudgetary resources, including voluntary contributions.

15. The functional unit of UNODC responsible for the provision of secretariat services to the Conference and the Review Mechanism has two regular budget posts at the P-4 level which have been unencumbered since the beginning of 2024 owing to the freeze on the use of regular budget resources in response to the liquidity crisis affecting the United Nations Secretariat. Thus, regular budget resources which, pursuant to the procedures and rules, should cover the requirements of the Mechanism and its secretariat in their entirety, have only marginally covered costs related to such requirements.

IV. Additional requirements until the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and beyond

16. The secretariat has made considerable efforts to maximize the use of existing regular budget resources and to raise the extrabudgetary resources needed to perform the tasks assigned to it in accordance with section VI, entitled “Secretariat”, of the procedures and rules for the functioning of the Mechanism. The secretariat has also resorted to creative approaches in order to perform its tasks and respond to States parties’ requests for support and assistance. Those approaches include the use of cost-free automated machine translation to support multilingualism and country reviews conducted in multiple languages, and the establishment of synergies with other UNODC global programmes and field offices with a view to responding to in-country requests for assistance and support, as such requests have been received, even though country visits are not referred to in the procedures and rules and, consequently, there is no travel budget under the Global Programme to support them. The secretariat has seized every opportunity, such as the meetings in Vienna of the five working groups established by the Conference, to organize in-person training sessions for national focal points and experts and tripartite meetings of officials of reviewing States parties and of States parties under review.

17. The above-mentioned efforts notwithstanding, the extrabudgetary resources currently available to the secretariat are not sufficient to cover existing core activities beyond mid-2025. The secretariat estimates that approximately \$1.55 million per year are required for it to continue to perform existing core tasks for the biennium 2025–2026.

18. The extrabudgetary resources referred to above would cover the following requirements:

(a) The maintenance of current essential human resources in the amount of approximately \$1.4 million per year. This would ensure the continuation of the

following posts: two P-3 posts, one temporary P-3 post, one temporary P-2 post, one G-6 post, one co-funded junior professional officer post, one consultant and one co-funded consultant, as well as two co-funded P-3 posts in the Civil Society Unit and the Firearms Trafficking Section of UNODC;

(b) The maintenance of the RevMod platform in the amount of \$104,525 per year;

(c) The promotion of fruitful engagement with relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, and constructive dialogues on the review process, in accordance with paragraph 53 of the procedures and rules for the functioning of the Mechanism, in the amount of \$56,500 per year.

19. The above-mentioned extrabudgetary resources are not sufficient to cover additional, minimal yet necessary staffing requirements and other needs that have emerged since the launch of the Review Mechanism, namely, the need to facilitate in-person meetings among reviewing States parties and States parties under review, the need to respond to requests for assistance and support by developing and least developed countries, and the need to ensure the engagement of a more representative range of relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations. It is envisaged that, as active country reviews advance and new reviews become active following the nomination of national focal points, further resources will be needed to enable the secretariat to perform its tasks and facilitate successful country reviews.

20. At the time of writing the present report, the resources required to cover such needs for the biennium 2025–2026 and beyond had not been quantified exactly because they relate to aspects that, while deemed by the majority of States parties to be important for ensuring successful and participatory reviews, are neither mandatory nor foreseen under the procedures and rules for the functioning of the Review Mechanism. The requirements for the current biennium and those for the period following the thirteenth session of the Conference will be estimated and communicated by the secretariat in the course of the biennium 2025–2026.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

21. As stated in the procedures and rules for the functioning of the Review Mechanism, the requirements of the Mechanism are to be funded entirely from existing regular budget resources, and, where necessary, additional requirements are to be funded from extrabudgetary resources, including voluntary contributions. In view of the lack of adequate resources available from the regular budget, there has been and still is no guarantee that a sufficient level of voluntary contributions will be received to ensure that the requirements of the Mechanism are met. As the experience to date in trying to raise funds for the Mechanism has demonstrated, voluntary contributions are largely unpredictable, and without the provision of a minimum level of funding, it might not be possible to ensure successful reviews. The Conference of the Parties may thus wish to encourage States parties to take urgent action in this regard, and may also wish to consider ways of ensuring adequate and predictable funding, while allowing for the necessary flexibility in implementation.

22. The Conference may further wish to make recommendations on how to ensure that States parties' requests for support and assistance in the conduct of the Mechanism are, in accordance with paragraph 48 of the procedures and rules, met by the secretariat. Experience has shown that such requests are made in relation to, inter alia, the provision of national and regional in-person training on the review process, on the requirements of the instruments under review and on how to fill in the self-assessment questionnaires, and the provision to national experts of in-person assistance in the preparation of written outputs of country reviews.