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Item 12 of the provisional agenda

Programme of work and biennial evaluation for 2018-2019 and Strategic framework for 2020-2021

Budget reform

Note by the secretariat*

1. In December 2017, the 72nd session of the General Assembly (GA) adopted resolution A/72/266 “Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations.” In this resolution, Member States approved the main elements of the Secretary-General’s budget reform proposals contained in his report “Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: improving and streamlining the programme planning and budgeting process” (A/72/492/Add.1).

2. In particular, the General Assembly approved the proposed change from a biennial to an annual budget period on a trial basis (beginning in 2020). The Proposed Programme Budget of the Organization will consist of the following three parts:

(a) Part I: the plan outline, which presents the long-term priorities and the objectives of the Organization;

(b) Part II: the programme plan for programmes and subprogrammes and programme performance information; and

(c) Part III: the post and non-post resource requirements for the programmes and subprogrammes.

3. Part I will be prepared by the secretariat at the UN Headquarters, and submitted to the General Assembly through the Committee for Programme and Coordination every 3 years. Parts II and III will be prepared by Secretariat Departments, including ECE, on an annual basis. They will be submitted to the GA through the Committee for Programme and Coordination (Part II) and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (Part III).

* This document was submitted late due to delayed inputs from other sources.

4. The first annual programme plan and budget will be prepared for 2020. The UN Headquarters is presently developing the structure, template and guidance for the new approach.

5. In October 2017, as advised by the Headquarters, the secretariat prepared the draft Strategic Framework of the Transport subprogramme for the biennium 2020-2021, which was later endorsed by the Bureau of the Committee. Given the decision of the GA, the Strategic Framework in its present form will not be finalised, however its main elements will be included in the draft ECE programme plan and budget for 2020.

6. Taking into account that the next session of the Committee will take place in 2019, the Committee is invited to review and endorse the broad areas of work as contained in the draft Strategic Framework for 2020-2021 and provide its comments to the secretariat. The broad areas will be included in the revised document, which will be further consulted with the Bureau of the Committee at the end of 2018 and submitted to the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for consideration at their sessions in 2019. Their recommendations therein will be transmitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session in 2019 when it considers the Secretary-General's proposed programme plan and budget for 2020.
