

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY AMBASSADOR DAUDI N. MWAKAWAGO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77, IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM: 157: UNITED NATIONS REFORM

New York, 19 November 1997

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I should like to thank you for convening this informal meeting of the General Assembly to continue the consultations on United Nations reforms under agenda item 157. Following the commencement of the second phase of the discussions on the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report - A/51/950, the Group of 77 and China has discussed in detail the Secretary General's proposals for the establishment of the post of Deputy Secretary General on the one hand, and creating dividend for development, on the other. You will recall the Group had presented its preliminary position on these issues on October 14.

With regard to the appointment of a Deputy Secretary General, the Group of 77 and China reiterates its acceptance, in principle, to the creation of this post. In this regard, the Group expresses its appreciation for the additional information and clarifications provided by the Secretariat as contained in document A/51/950/Add.1 of 7 October 1997.

Before implementing this recommendation, the Group requests that the following concerns should be fully addressed:

1. Even though the Secretary General will appoint the Deputy Secretary General, given the importance of this post to the Organization, it is necessary that before making such a key appointment, the Secretary General should consult widely so as to take into account the interests of Member States.
2. The term of Office of the Deputy Secretary General should coincide with that of the serving Secretary General.
3. Although the responsibilities of the Deputy Secretary General will be determined by the Secretary General, it is necessary to have general terms of reference governing the parameters of his functions. Apart from the general duties, the Group still feels the Deputy Secretary-General should work closely with the Secretary General to elevate the profile and leadership of the United Nations in development issues such as international development cooperation and the mobilization of resources for development activities.
4. The Office of the Deputy Secretary General should not form another layer of decision-making in the Secretary-General's Office.
5. The Deputy Secretary General should not interfere with the mandate of the Secretary General as provided by the Charter of the United Nations.
6. The financial implications related to the establishment of the Office of the Deputy Secretary General be fully considered by the Fifth Committee.

Concerning the recommendation to create a development account to serve as a dividend for development, the Group of 77 and China reiterates its support, in principle, for this idea. Our appreciation to the Secretariat for the clarifications on this issue as provided in document A/51/950/Add.5. However, the Group reiterates its submission of 14 October 1997 on this matter stressing:

- a. That reduction in administrative costs should not affect the full implementation of mandated programmes and activities.

b. The General Assembly should be apprised of the means to achieve overhead administrative reductions as well as the areas where savings are being achieved for its consideration and appropriate action. To this end, the Secretary General is invited to present a detailed report for consideration and appropriate action by the General Assembly by which, among other things, he should provide a sound and technical justification of his conclusion that the regular budget of the Organization comprises 38% non-programme costs and demonstrate how he intends to reduce it to 25%.

c. The sustainability of this initiative which is being proposed to be effected by 2002 needs further examination.

d. In this context, administrative cost reductions should not be used as a pretext for an eventual reduction in the budget of the Organization.

Furthermore, the relevant Committees of the General Assembly should be involved in the discussions of this issue. In our submission on actions as contained in the Group's document of 29 October 1997, we intimated that the Development Dividend Fund should be sizeable and it should be used to finance development activities in developing countries. Moreover, the Group of 77 would like to be assured that the resources envisaged to be raised within the specific context of this proposal would be linked to the mobilization of financial resources for long-term development objectives.

Thank you, Mr. President.