

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. MUHAMMAD YUSSUF,
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS, ON THE PROGRAMMATIC AND FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REFORM PROPOSALS ON THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET
1998-1999 (DOC. A/52/303)**

New York, 10 December 1997

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the G-77 and China on agenda item 116 regarding the report of the Secretary-General in document A/52/303 related to the proposed programme budget 1998-1999.

The G-77 and China would like to thank the Controller, Mr. Hallbach for the presentation of the document. We would also like to thank the vice-Chairman of the CPC, Mr. Anuson Chinvano, and the Chairman of ACABQ, Ambassador Mselle, for the presentation of the reports of their respective committees.

Mr. Chairman,

The G-77 and China has supported the reform effort to strengthen the Organization. It is of the view that the reform process cannot be accomplished without political and financial support by Member States. The Group regrets that some Member States, having the capacity to pay, especially the major contributor has not been able to fulfill its obligations under the Charter. We urge once again all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without imposing conditionalities, in order to provide the necessary resources for the implementation of all the mandated programmes and activities, including those approved in the context of the reform proposal.

The G-77 and China would like to emphasize that this statement of the Group should be read in conjunction with its previous statement dated 22 October, 1997 on the proposed programme budget 1998-1999 as contained in document A/52/6/Rev.1 (supplement No.6), vols. I and II. The G-77 and China expects, as indeed agreed during the informal consultations, that the sections in doc. A/52/303 which are affected by the reform proposals will be considered in conjunction with the main relevant sections of the proposed programme budget 1998-1999 submitted in doc. A/52/6/Rev.1.

Mr. Chairman,

The G-77 and China regrets that the CPC was unable to reach agreement on the conclusions and recommendations to be made to the General Assembly in the various sections contained in doc. 303. We recognize, however, the difficult task which faced the Committee in view of the unprecedented circumstances related to the timing of its consideration of doc. A/52/303, and the unfortunate position adopted by some of its member states as reflected in paragraph 30 of the report of the committee A/52/16/Add.1. In this context, the G-77 and China reiterates its full support to the role and mandate of the CPC. The Group also endorses the recommendation of the Committee in para. 43 of its report that the medium-term plan for 1998-2001, which is the principal policy directive of the United Nations, shall be taken into account during the consideration of the reform proposals of the Secretary-General. The G-77 and China reaffirms its commitment to the approved medium-term plan for 1998-2001 and will work during the informal consultations to ensure the full implementation of the medium-term plan for 1998-2001.

Mr. Chairman,

The G-77 and China has previously pronounced itself on the policy issues related to the proposed programme budget for 1998-1999. Having considered the second report of the ACABQ A/52/7/Add.1, the G-77 and China would like to emphasize its position on some of these issues:

With regard to personnel matters, the G-77 and China has underscored the need to examine in detail the proposed reductions in staff, especially at the lower level, to avoid any further negative impact on the implementation of all mandated programmes and activities. The G-77 and China has noted with concern the ACABQ comments on the apparent increase on the top level posts and reduction at lower levels. The Group shares the Advisory Committee's views that the trend is affecting the grade "pyramid". The G-77 and China endorses the request by ACABQ contained in para. 56 of its report (A/52/7/Add.1).

The G-77 and China regrets that so far, the Secretary-General has not submitted the reports on the expeditious phasing-out of gratis personnel in accordance with resolution 51/243. The issue of gratis personnel will have to be considered in conjunction with the proposed reduction in staff, as the two issues are correlated. We, therefore, urge that the reports be submitted without further delay.

The G-77 and China also takes note of the information provided to the ACABQ that the number of vacant posts is expected to continue to exceed the requirement to abolish posts. In this connection, the G-77 and China agrees with the ACABQ that under these circumstances, every measure shall be taken to avoid involuntary separation of staff, and reiterates its position that no involuntary separation of staff should occur solely as a result of saving measures.

Concerning the Secretary-General proposal for net budgeting, the G-77 and China shares the concerns expressed by the ACABQ in para. 54 of its report concerning this proposal. In the absence of clear responses to these concerns, the G-77 and China concurs with the ACABQ recommendation to restore the amounts "netted out".

The G-77 and China notes that some of the estimates contained in document 52/303 relate to decisions to be taken by the General Assembly.

With regard to the Development Account, the G-77 and China concurs with the ACABQ recommendation to appropriate the \$12.7 million, to be placed provisionally in the development account in a new section 34. We look forward to the General Assembly action on this matter. We also take note of the information referred to in the ACABQ report regarding the intention of the Secretary-General to issue a detailed report in the near future. The G-77 and China urges the submission of such report in early 1998 to benefit from the resources allocated to the Development Account.

Mr. Chairman,

The G-77 and China welcomes the recommendation of the ACABQ regarding the increase in the level of appropriations over the estimate proposed by the Secretary-General. In this regard, the G-77 and China will be submitting proposals which might lead to the increase of the overall level of appropriation to ensure the full implementation of all mandated programmes and activities.

Allow me now to express the G-77 and China views concerning some of the Secretary-general proposals under various sections.

Section 1B. General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services

The G-77 and China notes that the servicing of the fifth and sixth committees would not be undertaken by the new proposed department. The rationale behind such arrangements remain unclear for the group. Further information is required in this regard. The same applies for the servicing of the Security Council.

The G-77 and China shares the views of the ACABQ concerning the resources for the office of the President of the General Assembly. Therefore, we support the Committee's recommendation that starting with the biennium 1998-1999, resources for that office be presented and approved on an object of expenditure basis.

Section 2A. Political Affairs

The G-77 and China took note of the letters of the Secretary-General A/51/521 and A/52/531 dated 24 and 28 October, 1997 respectively by which the substantive activities of sub-programme 6 "Decolonization" will be maintained in DPA. In this regard, the G-77 and China believes that the resources allocated to this subprogramme should be reviewed accordingly.

Section 2B. Disarmament

The G-77 and China is of the view that the programme narrative of this section will have to be revised to bring it in conformity with the approved medium-term plan 1998-1999, taking also into account the change in the name of the Department. We are awaiting the new updated organigram reflecting the proposed branches of the Department as well as the implications of the recent change in the name of the new department.

The G-77 and China has also serious concerns about the proposal of the Secretary-General to close the three regional centers for peace and disarmament based at Katmandou, Lima and Lome.

Section 7A. Economic and Social Affairs

The G-77 and China notes the merging of the activities under sections 7,9 and 10 into only 8 subprogrammes of the new Department of Economic and Social Affairs. A revision of the narrative of these subprogrammes would thus be necessary to ensure its conformity with the medium-term plan.

The G-77 and China notes with concern the further proposed reduction in posts related to the new consolidated Department. We would like to have more information regarding this proposal with regard to the implementation of the programme of work of the three previous departments. We are also awaiting for the information related to the resource requirements of each subprogramme of the new Department which was not presented to the ACABQ.

The G-77 and China expresses deep concern for the overall decrease on the level of resources for this new budget section including those devoted to the management and implementation of technical cooperation. In this connection, we stress the need to maintain the capacity of the Organization to implement the technical cooperation programme and concurs with the ACABQ in its request for information.

The G-77 and China is also awaiting for the provision of information on the status of extrabudgetary posts assigned to the former three departments.

Section 14. Crime Control

The G-77 and China is awaiting for the organigram of the new office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention. Furthermore, the programme of this section will have to be revised to align it with the medium-term plan for 1998-2001. We would like more information and assurances regarding the implementation of both the drug control and the crime prevention work programmes. The Group of 77 and China supports the Secretary-General's proposal to strengthen the Centre's capacity, in accordance with the medium-term plan for 1998-2001.

Section 22. Human Rights

The G-77 and China does not concur with the Secretary-General's views that human rights cut across other substantive fields of the Secretariat's work programmes. It firmly believes that if any activity that cuts across the UN activities, is the right to development of the peoples around the world. Moreover, the G-77 and China is of the view that the programme narrative will have to be revised to bring this section in conformity with the medium-term plan for 1998-2001.

Section 25. Humanitarian Assistance

The G-77 and China supports the NAM position on that section. The G-77 and China is of the view that the narrative of this section should be revised to ensure its conformity with the medium-term plan for 1998-2001.

The G-77 and China is awaiting for the information requested by the ACABQ on how the humanitarian aspect of demining would be implemented by the DPKO, and the resources devoted to demining in the Department. The G-77 and China, indeed, shares the concern expressed by the ACABQ about the appropriateness of the DPKO dealing with the humanitarian aspect of demining, which, as noted by the committee, is mainly connected with capacity-building. Moreover, we note that this proposal add new responsibilities to the DPKO at a time it suffers already from lack of staffing resources.

The G-77 and China notes with concern the proposal to transfer \$2.3 million from the regular budget to UNDP as a one-time grant related to the proposed transfer of the responsibilities concerning the coordination of natural disaster mitigation activities to UNDP. We share the view of ACABQ that this proposal needs further clarification.

Section 26. Communications and Public Information

The G-77 and China is of the view that the programme narrative of this section needs to be revised to ensure its conformity with the medium-term plan. We concur with the ACABQ that the report of the Secretary-General should have contained a more complete description of those recommendations of the task force on the reorientation of United Nations public information activities which, in the view of the Secretary-General, should be implemented and by what means. We look forward for the Secretary-General's report on this issue.

The G-77 and China notes the proposal for post abolition. We note that more information is still needed to ensure that the capacity of each integrated office to carry out the public information and communications functions.

Mr. Chairman,

The G-77 and China hopes that the secretariat would be able to address the concerns expressed by the Group, and to provide the requested information in order to facilitate our deliberations during the next few days. We look forward for constructive and objective consultations on this matter.

Thank you.