



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. IMTIAZ HUSSAIN, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 117: AFTER-SERVICE HEALTH INSURANCE, IN THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 14 March 2007)**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 117: After-service health insurance.

2. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Controller, Mr. Warren Sach, for his introduction of the Secretary-General's report on liabilities and proposed funding for after-service health insurance benefits (A/61/730), and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budget Questions, Mr. Rajat Saha, for his introduction of the report of the ACABQ (A/61/791).

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to this agenda item before the Committee. Noting that ASHI costs are in the character of common staff costs and their recognition as such is a common international practice. We also note that many of the staff members cannot benefit from the national social security schemes of Member States owing to their service with the United Nations. The Group of 77 and China is genuinely sympathetic to the issue of post-retirement health insurance benefits to all UN staff. The Group of 77 and China has participated in the discussion of the relevant issues in the past in this spirit.

4. The Group notes that the Secretary-General has submitted this report, in accordance with the request of the General Assembly, to provide updated information and clarifications with regard to relevant issues and alternative strategies to fund liabilities. Given the significance and complexity of this issue, the Group feels that many questions need to be clarified with regard to specific data and accruing methods, an appropriate funding mechanism, practices followed by other UN entities and related issues during the course of discussions and consultations of the Committee.

5. The Group also notes that the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions provides a good basis for discussion on this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Group of 77 and China considers after-service health insurance liabilities as an issue with long-term implications for both the Members States and the UN staff and would need a long-term strategy. It deserves careful consideration of the Fifth Committee as we search for a comprehensive and long-term solution.

7. The Group of 77 and China would participate in the consultations on this agenda item in a constructive manner, bearing in mind the significance of the implications and impact of the after-service health insurance, especially in the context of the introduction of International Public Sector Accounting Standards for the United Nations system with effect from 2010.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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