STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. KARIM ISMAIL, FIRST SECRETARY AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF EGYPT TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 136: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2018-2019: STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY FOR THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE SECOND RESUMED PART OF THE SEVENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 20 June 2018)

Mr Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 136: programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019: Status of implementation of the information and communications technology strategy for the United Nations. The Group thanks Ms. Jan Beagle, Under-Secretary General for Management, and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing their respective reports.

Mr Chairman,

2. The Group of 77 and China has always supported initiatives to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, credibility, and accountability of the Organisation. The implementation of the ICT strategy endorsed by the General Assembly is a key step towards these objectives.

3. To this end, the Group recalls Section II of resolution 69/262, and our repeated calls for all Secretariat entities to implement the ICT strategy as endorsed by this Assembly. Progress has been uneven at best. We hope that the Secretary-General will take immediate corrective action, and provide a detailed update in his next report on steps taken toward achieving Secretariat-wide compliance. 4. In addition, the Group looks forward to our informal consultations on this agenda item, where we will seek to understand the following:

First, why policies for the delegation of authority and designation of staff members performing significant ICT functions have not been issued;

Second, why performance measures in senior managers' compacts related to the implementation of the ICT strategy are not specific, especially since this is an area where clear and objective performance measures can be articulated to improve assessment and the achievement of benchmarks;

Third, why annual ICT workplans by Secretariat entities have not been prepared in a consistent way across the Organisation. The Group fails to understand why the Secretariat appears to find it difficult to establish targets and monitoring mechanisms that would allow the Organisation to ensure that departmental business plans are aligned with the ICT strategy, and that implementation is in compliance with the relevant resolutions.

5. The Group notes the first annual progress report of the Board of Auditors on the implementation of the ICT strategy, which provides an independent assessment of implementation. We thank the Board of Auditors for their valuable insights on areas where progress is being made and areas where further change and improvement are needed. The Group urges the Secretary-General to

address the low implementation rate of the Board's recommendations, and expects that outstanding recommendations will be implemented without further delay.

Mr. Chairman,

6. On substantive issues, the Group acknowledges that in a previous report, the Board of Auditors had identified certain limitations of the ICT strategy, which included a lack of emphasis on the enterprise resource planning system, insufficient prioritisation of information on security issues, and insufficient recognition for peacekeeping activities. This last area accounts for some 75% of overall ICT expenditure. We look forward to a discussion of how to address these gaps.

7. The Group also notes with concern the continuing high number of legacy applications systems and websites that present risks in information security. We anticipate that the Secretary-General will provide a detailed update on the status of remaining legacy systems, as well as outline a plan for accelerating standardisation across the Organisation, and the consolidation of legacy systems and websites.

8. Turning to Umoja, we note that the management of the core infrastructure of the enterprise resource planning system has been outsourced to a commercial vendor. We look forward to further information on measures taken to ensure protection and confidentiality of the data uploaded to Umoja.

9. On procurement, the Group looks forward to further analysis and comparisons on the cost savings and economies of scale that can be achieved for equipment and services procured through systems contracts.

Mr. Chairman,

10. Finally, while the Group stands ready as always to engage constructively, we reiterate once again our serious concern with the late introduction and consideration of agenda items, during a session traditionally devoted to the complex subject of United Nations peacekeeping. The Group has exercised flexibility yet again, but we stress that this should be the exception, not the norm. Timely submission of reports to the General Assembly is a basic benchmark of performance and accountability by the Secretariat and related stakeholders to Member States. We cannot continue to only pay lip service to improving accountability, while failing to live up to this most basic performance indicator.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.