



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. AHMED FAROOQ, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 131: PATTERN OF CONFERENCES, AT THE MAIN PART OF THE 62ND SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 15 October 2007)

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 131 "Pattern of Conferences".

2. The G77 and China would like to thank Mr. Yury G. Yaroshevich, Chairperson of the Committee on Conferences for introducing the report (A/62/32). We also wish to thank the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management, Mr Shaaban M. Shaaban for introducing the Report of the Secretary General on Pattern of Conferences (A/62/161) and the Chairman of the ACABQ, Mr. Rajat Saha, for introducing the report of the Advisory Committee contained in the document (A/62/473).

3. We would like to express our appreciation for the useful work of the Committee on Conferences. The recommendations contained in the report of the CoC would greatly facilitate the Fifth Committee's Consideration of the item. Similarly the draft resolution on this item submitted by the CoC for the Fifth Committee provides a good basis for our work.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Efficient conference management provides the necessary tools through which this Organization works. Issues like the Utilization of the conference servicing resources, Documentation and the publication related matters, Translation and interpretation related matters and the calendar of Conferences all form key elements of the this endeavor. Apart from these issues we will also have to consider the impact of the capital master plan on the conference services to be provided at the Headquarters during the project duration.

5. The Groups notes with concern that the Utilization of the Conference Services although above the benchmark of 80% but has registered a decrease to 83% for 2006 from 85% in 2005. The negative trend in the utilization of the conferences services is reflected in all but one duty station. We hope that in the coming year the over all utilization factor would raise once again through better coordination between the planning officers and the technical secretariats. In this regard, the Group notes with satisfaction the 100% utilization of the conference services in Nairobi and the marked increase in the utilization of conference services by the Conference Center at ECA (Addis Ababa) of 60.13% in 2006 as compared to the 42.23% utilization in 2005. The Conference Centre at Addis Ababa needs to continue to explore the means to further enhance its conference utilization bearing in mind the minimum operating security standards.

6. We would also like to highlight the importance of checking the wastage of the conference service resources by being punctual in the conduct of the meetings. Each hour of fully serviced conference time costs the Organization thousands of Dollars. The Fifth Committee at times has to meet for long hours to complete its work. Adequate budgetary resources have to be ensured to facilitate the consideration of important issues by this Committee. Here we would also like to mention that for the

reports and summary records of the meetings of various intergovernmental bodies the primary aim needs be the effective and efficient communication and preservation of the information rather than cost cutting which may adversely affect the quality of those documents.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Resolution 61/236 recognizes the importance of the meetings of the regional groups and that interpretation is necessary for their smooth functioning. However, the Group is deeply concerned that only 77% of the meetings of the regional groups were provided with interpretation as compared to 87% of the similar meetings last year. The Group believes that there is a wide scope of improvement in this area through adequate allocation of resources to achieve the level of May 2001 to April 2002 when 98% meetings of regional groupings were provided with this facility.

8. The Group believes in equitable treatment to all the duty stations and all the languages of the United Nations. In this regard, G77 takes note of the information provided in A/62/161 that around 25% of the total UN language staff would retire in next five years. While the course of action mentioned in the report for the future planning in this regard is step in the right direction the Group would like to have more detailed information as to the number of vacancies at each duty station and in each language along with the strategy to deal with this issue in the long run.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Consideration of issues by the intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations depends heavily on the quality and accuracy of the translation and the interpretation provided. The Group would like to point out that the outsourcing of the translation services should not affect its quality. Para 91 of the SG's report points out that at present this capacity of quality control for the services hired from outside is missing at all duty stations. Without such a capacity of quality control we may not be able to fully utilize this option.

10. The perennial problem of late issuance of the documentation adversely affects the intergovernmental consideration of the related items. It particularly impairs the consideration of the reports by the smaller delegations. The SG's report on the Pattern of Conferences cites the lack of proper planning and timing as one of the main reasons for the delay in the issuance of the documents where as only 8% of the slotted documents are beyond the control of the Secretariat. With regard to para 77 of the A/62/161, the Group would like to reiterate prerogative of the Member States and the intergovernmental bodies with regards the length and timing for the provision of the inputs to the UN as they deem necessary. Regarding the Integrated Global Management, the Group would like to take note of the outcome of the work of the Integrated Global Management task forces and requests the Secretary-general to ensure that administrative policies, practices and procedures of conferences services developed on the basis of the recommendations of the task forces shall be in full compliance with relevant General Assembly resolutions.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The General Assembly has agreed to the strategy for the renovation of the UN premises and the actual work on the Capital Master Plan is set to start shortly. The bodies holding meetings during the duration of the construction work will have to be cognizant of the scarcity of conference space. We encourage all the requestors of meetings at the HQ to liaise with the Department of the Conference Management to facilitate better conference management during the period of the project. The Group would also like to know any likely impact of the "Accelerated Strategy IV" of the CMP on the conference management in New York.

12. To conclude the G77 would once again like to highlight the crucial role that conference management plays in the smooth functioning of the United Nations and that the Group stands ready to work for its continued improvement. We look forward to a fruitful discussion on this item in the Committee.

Thank You Mr. Chairman.

G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77

G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77

G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77

G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77

G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77

G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77

G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77 G-77