



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR LYLE DAVIDSON, COUNSELLOR AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 137: PATTERN OF CONFERENCES, AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 21 October 2015)

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 137: Pattern of Conferences.

At the outset, the Group of 77 and China would like to thank Mr. Marcelo Eliseo Scappini Ricciardi, the Chairperson of the Committee on Conferences for 2015, for introducing the Committee's report as contained in document A/70/32. We would also like to thank Mr. Getu, the Under Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management for introducing the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/70/122 as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for introducing the related report contained in document A/70/432.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China appreciates the good work of the Committee on Conferences and wishes to commend the Committee for the continued high quality of their report on the substantive session for the year 2015. The Group believes that the Fifth Committee's consideration of this agenda item will benefit from the extensive deliberation of the Committee on Conferences during the consideration of this important agenda item.

In this regard, the proposed draft resolution on Pattern of Conferences submitted by the Committee, as part of their report, provides an excellent basis for our negotiation on this agenda item.

The Group of 77 and China continues to attach great importance to the effective delivery of quality conference services, in line with the equal treatment of the six official languages of the United Nations, especially in support of the work of the intergovernmental, as well as expert, bodies of the United Nations. In this regard, the Group believes that issues such as the utilization of conferences services, documentation and publication related matters, translation and interpretation related matters, as well as the calendar of conferences and meetings are crucial to the effective and efficient functioning of the Organization, in particular the deliberations of the intergovernmental bodies.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group notes with appreciation that the overall utilization factor for meetings with interpretation of a core sample of bodies in the four duty stations increased by 4 per cent to 86 per cent, which is above the benchmark of 80 per cent. This represents an improvement in the overall utilization factor.

The Group also welcomes the steps taken by those bodies that have adjusted their programmes of

work in order to achieve the optimum utilization of conference - servicing resources and we would like to encourage continued efforts in this regard.

The Group has taken note of the near-completion of the capital master plan project and would like to stress the need for completion of the remaining work including the rectification of the errors and omission on the key elements identified by the Member States including physical and technological accessibilities, power sockets and video-conferencing infrastructure.

We would also like to encourage the continued improvement of the remaining facilities including the printing unit in the basement of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to Integrated Global Management, the Group of 77 and China welcomes the cooperation among the main duty stations namely New York, Geneva, Vienna, and Nairobi in the delineation of their responsibilities concerning conference management policies, operations and resource utilization. In this regard, the Group would like to encourage the Secretary-General to expedite the process of revising the related bulletins that define the organization of the Department and of the Offices.

Turning to documentation and publications, the Group of 77 and China would like to stress the need for the timely issuance of documents, as well as improving the quality of documentation, to facilitate effective and efficient deliberations of the intergovernmental bodies, in particular, the Fifth Committee. In this regard, the Group notes with satisfaction that 98.5 percent of the documents submitted on time and within the word limit were processed within four weeks by DGACM and stresses the importance of all other duty stations taking measures to reach their targets.

The Group continues to reiterate the importance of multilingualism and in this regard would like to stress the importance of ensuring the quality translation and interpretation in the six official languages so as to ensure smooth deliberations of Member States in the intergovernmental process. The Group encourages continued efforts aimed at improving the quality of translation and interpretation services.

The Group has also taken note of the re-introduction of the document assistance center to provide, amongst others, documents to delegates, printing, scanning and loanable IT equipment and encourages continued efforts in this regard. The Group would like to stress the need to ensure that all Member States are provided with documents without any delays and conditions

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China would like to underscore that the United Nations facilities must be used consistent with the principles and purposes of the Organization that promotes multilateralism. The Group is concerned about the use of United Nations facilities contrary to the principles of the Organization as outlined in the Charter. The Group urges all Member States and the United Nations departments and bodies to refrain from sponsoring activities and events that undermine the principles and objectives of the Organization. The Group, therefore, requests the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to ensure that the nature and content of events, especially those conducted by non-governmental organization, are approved prior to the use of the venue to ensure compliance with the principles of the organization. The Group will follow-up in this regard during the informal consultations.

In closing, the Group of 77 and China would like to reassure you of our readiness to engage in

constructive deliberation on this important agenda item.

I thank you.

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