



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY AMB. SACHA LLORENTTY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BOLIVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON ITEM 77 OF THE AGENDA RELATING TO THE PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE IN THE TEACHING, STUDY, DISSEMINATION AND WIDER APPRECIATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW (New York, 17 October 2014)

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 77 on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law. It is a pleasure to see you chairing this Committee, Mr. Chairman, and we would like to congratulate you and the members of your bureau on your election.

The Group of 77 and China would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report, which provides a detailed account of activities undertaken to implement the Programme of Assistance, and highlighted the progress made thus far and the challenges the Programme faces in ensuring its future implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

The objective for which the Programme was created has become more relevant in these times as an effective tool of strengthening international peace and security and promoting friendly relations and cooperation among States. Notwithstanding the numerous challenges, we cannot stress enough that immense benefits are derived by state officials, of both developing and developed countries who work in international law, especially members of the Group of 77 and China, from the regional courses in international law, the international fellowships, the audiovisual library and publications. At a time where the strengthening of the rule of law is so present in our agendas, the Programme of Assistance continues to be a critical tool for training of international lawyers, particularly government officials, in international law.

The Group of 77 and China commends the Codification Division, whose tireless efforts continue to sustain the Programme despite the difficulties with funding. We also recognize the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea for its efforts regarding the Amerasinghe Fellowship on the Law of the Sea.

Mr. Chairman,

It is on this premise that the G77 and China in the last years became deeply concerned over the lack of regular budgetary funding for the programme. The Group notes with concern that this year, the Regional course in International Law for Asia-Pacific, which was to be held in Thailand, had to be cancelled because there was no funding for the course. The regional course for Latin America and the Caribbean, to take place in Uruguay in 2014, has not taken place yet, even though that country is ready to finance 25% of the cost, and there are no resources for a second course in that region. Moreover, the Audiovisual Library of International Law is in such a critical situation that it could be completely discontinued. At the moment, there is funding only for the 2014 Amerasinghe fellowship.

The sustainability of this commendable Programme, which results are seen every day in the work of state lawyers and of delegates to the UN and other organizations, has clearly been affected by the fact that voluntary contributions has not succeeded in sustaining the programme. Already last year, the whole Programme was at risk, and in spite of the efforts made by my Group, Member States did not succeed in taking the necessary measures: including the Programme of Assistance in the regular budget of the organization.

This Committee and the General Assembly have to face now the situation of taking those measures before it is too late. Fortunately, although less ambitious than we expected, the Advisory Committee has made recommendations that go in the right direction. We welcome this outcome and we commend Amb. Kanda, the Chair of the Committee, as well as all its Members.

Mr Chairman, last year, the G77 and China expressed that it could not accept the inevitable outcome if adequate resources, including regular budgetary funding, were not secured for the effective implementation of the programme.

Now that the Advisory Committee adopted very clear recommendations, it is for the Sixth Committee, and then the General Assembly -including its organs dealing with the Budget and the Fifth Committee- to continue the path initiated by the Advisory Committee with its recommendations.

On 26 September, the Foreign Ministers of G77 and China reiterated in our Ministerial Declaration that there must be financing for all aspects of the Programme through the regular budget of the United Nations starting from the biennium 2014-2015, including for the regional courses of international law, the Audiovisual Library, teaching materials and publications, and the Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship on the Law of the Sea, administered by DOALOS but also part of the Programme of Assistance. The G77 and China is therefore ready to take the necessary steps to operationalize the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, both at this Committee and at the Fifth Committee, and to consider any additional measures that might be necessary.

Mr. Chairman,

The United Nations was founded with the conviction that it is international law that rules the relations among States. For a world order based on the rule of law, we need to study, understand, teach and disseminate knowledge of international law. That is the main purpose of this programme and it has trained generations of state lawyers.

We hope that Member States, like the members of the G77 and China, remain committed to these objectives and to taking the necessary measures to ensure the continuation of the Programme of Assistance. The first step is here, at this Committee. Our resolution has to be unequivocal.

The G77 and China urges all member states to join efforts in ensuring that the recommendations of the Advisory Committee are effectively implemented and that therefore regular budgetary funding is provided for the Programme of Assistance for the benefit of developing and developed countries alike. The G77 and China is ready to work with all Members both at the Sixth and at the Fifth Committees to make this happen.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, allow me to recognize Amb. Ken Kanda from Ghana, who will be leaving the Advisory Committee soon, for his clear leadership and his tireless efforts.

I thank you.