



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MR. PETER THOMSON, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, ON AGENDA ITEM 80 ENTITLED "REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE IN THE TEACHING, STUDY, DISSEMINATION AND WIDER APPRECIATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW" AT THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 17 October 2013)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 80 entitled Report of the Secretary General on the 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.
2. 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,

3. The Group of 77 and China commends the Codification Division, whose tireless efforts continue to sustain the programme despite the difficulties with funding. We note that 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 fellowship programmes and the audiovisual library.

Mr. Chairman,

4. It is on this premise that the G77 and China has become 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 yet secured the resources, 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, by the end of 2013, the Audiovisual Library of International Law could be completely discontinued.
5. 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, will clearly be affected by the fact that voluntary contributions has not succeeded in sustaining the programme. This is a critical time for the Programme of Assistance. The whole programme is at risk. We need to be conscious

of that. The Report of the Secretary General is clear, the recommendations of the Advisory Committee are also clear. The G77 and China cannot accept the inevitable outcome if adequate resources, including regular budgetary funding, are not secured for the effective implementation of the programme.

6. In light of the financial situation of the programme, the Foreign Ministers of G77 and China agreed in a Ministerial Declaration adopted during their meeting on 26 September 2013 at the UN Headquarters here in New York, that there ought to be adequate financing for all aspects of the Programme through the regular budget of the United Nations for 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.

Mr. Chairman,

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. The G77 and China urges all member states to join efforts in ensuring that 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.

I thank you.