



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MRS KAREN LINGENFELDER, COUNSELLOR AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 142: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE OFFICE OF INTERNAL OVERSIGHT SERVICES AND AGENDA ITEM 132: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE MAIN PART OF SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 13 October 2015)**

Mr Chairman

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 142 entitled "Report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services" and agenda 132 entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations".

The Group of 77 and China would like to thank Mr David Kanja, Assistant- Secretary General, Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), for introducing the report of the annual activities of the OIOS, as contained in document A/70/318 (Part 1), as well as the associated Addendum. We also express our appreciation to Mr J Christopher Mihm, Chair of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee (IAAC), for introducing the report on the activities of the Committee contained in document A/70/284.

The Group of 77 and China would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the confirmation of Ms Heidi Mendoza of the Philippines as the new Under Secretary General for the OIOS and we look forward to work with her in discharging the given responsibilities.

Mr Chairman

The Group of 77 and China continues to attach great importance to the work of the OIOS in strengthening internal oversight throughout the Organization. The Office continues to have an essential role to play in improving internal controls, accountability mechanisms and organizational efficiency and effectiveness, in accordance with its given mandate in the relevant General Assembly resolutions. Our Group takes this opportunity once again to reiterate its support for the operational independence of the OIOS within the context of General Assembly resolution 48/218 B, and its role to assist the Secretary General in fulfilling his internal oversight responsibilities, in respect of the resources and staff of the Organization, through internal audit, monitoring, inspection, evaluation and investigations.

The Group remains concerned on the credibility of the Office related to operational independence in discharging its responsibilities and we look forward to some improvement in this area.

The Group also reaffirms the separate and distinct roles of internal and external oversight mechanisms. In this regard, we appreciate the continuation of the Office to have regular coordination with other UN oversight entities in particular the Board of Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit in the context of tripartite and other arrangements which has improved the delivery of the given mandate of each of the specific entities.

Mr Chairman

Turning to the annual activities of the OIOS, the Group notes the various assignments conducted and recommendations issued by the Office during the reporting period, aimed at cost savings, recovery of over-payments, efficiency gains and other improvements to ensure that risks were managed consistently and systematically through focused control processes across the Organization.

We have taken note that during the reporting period the Office issued a total of 1 031 recommendations of which 109 were classified as critical to the Organization. The Group is also pleased to note that financial implications of the recommendations issued for prior periods that were satisfactorily implemented during the period totaled approximately US\$ 90,000.

The Group would like to encourage the continued efforts of all stakeholders to ensure all issued recommendations by the Office are implemented and risks are mitigated across the organization. Our Group will examine a number of issues outlined in the report and seek specific clarification during the informal consultations.

Mr Chairman

While the Group notes the progress made in effectively managing vacancy rates in the Office, we remain concerned that there is still high vacancy rates in particular in the investigation division. The Group believes that there must be an innovative solution to address this chronic element which negatively impacts the ability of the Office to deliver its given mandate.

Turning to the specific mandated activities, the Group of 77 and China has taken note of the highlights provided on the oversight coverage of the Capital Master Plan, United Nations Compensation Commission, and construction of the additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa and Construction at the International Residual Mechanism in Arusha and we look forward to discussing these detailed findings in the context of the relevant agenda item.

Mr Chairman

Turning to the annual report of the IAAC, the Group thanks the IAAC for its work in providing expert advice and assistance to the General Assembly in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities, in accordance with the terms of reference of the IAAC in General Assembly resolution 61/275.

The Group continues to appreciate the Advisory Committee's presentation of concrete comments and recommendations aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the audit activities and other oversight functions of the OIOS in conjunction with the review of the functions and reporting procedures of the OIOS.

The Group has carefully examined a number of comments, observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee including those related to specific requests on the re-examination of the operational independence of the Office and we look forward to a comprehensive discussion on these matters during our informal consultations.

Mr Chairman

With regard to the nomination and appointment of the Under-Secretary General for the OIOS, the process as well as comments and observation of the IAAC was noted in a positive light and we look forward to deliberations on the proposal during our informal consultations. It is our expectation that

next nomination Note by the Secretary General will include brief information on the candidate's resume outlining inter alia qualification and experience in line with resolution 48/218B.

Turning to the revision of the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee, the Group would like to reaffirm the existing provisions as annexed in resolution 61/275. However we remain open to discussing new ideas.

In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China has high expectations that the new leadership of the Office will pay special attention to restore the credibility of the Office in discharging Office responsibilities and we would like to assure you of our Group's support on these matters. The Group would also be interested to have access to the end of assignment report of the outgoing Under-Secretary General for the Office in line with a spirit of openness and transparent.

Allow me to re-assure you of our readiness to open, transparent and constructive deliberation on this important agenda item.

I thank you Mr Chairman

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