



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. SIRITHON WAIRATPANIJ, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 134: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2016 - 2017: PROPOSED UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT GROUP COST-SHARING ARRANGEMENT FOR THE RESIDENT COORDINATOR SYSTEM, AT THE FIRST PART OF THE RESUMED SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 21 March 2016)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 134: Program Budget for the biennium 2016-2017: Resident coordinator system. At the outset, the Group wishes to thank Mr. Johannes Huisman, Director of Programme Planning and Budget Division, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, for presenting the report of the Secretary-General, as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing its related report.

Mr. Chairman,

2. Before we delve into the agenda item being presented to the Committee today, I would like to make a few points regarding the delays in the preparation of documentation by the Secretariat experienced by the Committee during this first resumed session.

3. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the Fifth Committee and its exclusive competence regarding administrative and budgetary questions. The quality of the work of the Fifth Committee has direct implication on all areas of the organization, across all pillars, in as much as mandates depend on adequate resourcing for successful implementation.

4. In this context, the Group of 77 and China wishes to express its disappointment with the delay in the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on the support of the Secretariat to the Resident Coordinator System. The main reason this agenda item was deferred during the fall session was the lack of time for adequate consideration by the Fifth Committee. There was consensus in the Committee that the first resumed session would allow four weeks for comprehensive consultations and discussions between Member States on how to move forward with this issue. Now we are at the formal introduction of this agenda item, just three days before the end of our deliberations.

5. This delay has not only drastically reduced available time for discussion of this important issue, jeopardizing the final result of our deliberations, but also placed the Advisory Committee under unnecessary pressure to turn its own report around for introduction today. The Group of 77 and China appreciates the efforts of the Advisory Committee in this regard and reiterates its view for the need to strengthen its operational arrangements and conditions of service. The Group also expects the Secretary-General will undertake the necessary measures to avoid the continued recurrence of delays.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Turning to the issue before us this morning, the Group of 77 and China wishes to express its full support to the United Nations Development System in general, and to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in particular. Over the years, the Resident Coordinator system led by UNDP has provided a vital contribution to the development efforts of developing countries, with its strong expertise and presence on the ground. As we move into the implementation phase of the new universal development agenda and attempt to break out of the silos that have characterized the UN action at the national, regional and global levels up to now. The coordination of development operations will be critical to our collective efforts in leaving no one behind.

7. As reflected in the last resolution on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the UN system and in subsequent resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council and by the General Assembly, since 2012, the Group of 77 and China recognizes the need to ensure that resident coordinators have the necessary stable and predictable resources to fulfill their mandate effectively.

8. However, the Group of 77 and China has serious misgivings about the proposed cost-sharing formula for apportioning the expenses of the resident coordinator system and the way it was arrived at. The Group also notes that the proposed cost-sharing formula has not been approved by the General Assembly and further detailed information was therefore requested in this regard.

9. Despite this being the third time the Fifth Committee considers this issue, comprehensive additional information on the cost-sharing formula has not been provided by the Secretary-General. During informal consultations, the Group will seek information on the budget formulation process of the resident coordinator, as well as on the accountability mechanisms regarding the expenditure of the resources from the regular budget. The Group will also seek explanations on the points raised by the Advisory Committee in relation to the proposed cost-sharing formula, such as the lack of a clear link between the elements of entity staffing and expenditure, and the level of services provided by the resident coordinator system to each UN Development Group member organization.

10. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the comments by the Advisory Committee regarding the absence of a unified mechanism for intergovernmental consideration of all aspects of the cost-sharing arrangement, including the global budget of the resident coordinator system, and will be interested to learn more about the financial and performance reporting mechanisms proposed for the resident coordinator system.

11. Based on the information to be provided by the Secretariat and on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Group will carefully consider the resource requested by the Secretary-General.

12. Finally, Mr. Chairman, allow me to assure you of the Group's commitment to engage constructively on this agenda item despite the very limited time remaining in our session.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.