



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR LYLE DAVIDSON, COUNSELLOR AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 148: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: SUPPORT ACCOUNT, AT THE SECOND PART OF THE RESUMED SIXTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 14 May 2015)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 148: "Administrative and budgetary aspects of financing United Nations peacekeeping operations", specifically on the support account.

2. We thank Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller, as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing their respective reports.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group of 77 and China underlines that all peacekeeping operations must be provided with the necessary resources to fulfill their mandates. In this regard, we stress the importance of providing sufficient backstopping to all missions during all phases. We continue to believe that the level of the support account should broadly correspond to the given mandate, number, size and complexity of peacekeeping missions. We reiterate that the changing nature of peacekeeping operations and their new mandates and level of complexity require adequate resources, development of appropriate policies as well as support arrangements.

4. Moreover, support provided to missions by Headquarters must be furnished in the most integrated manner possible, in order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness and avoid duplication. The Group believes that all efforts in this regard should be aimed at qualitative improvements in service delivery to the civilian and uniformed personnel on the ground.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group of 77 and China further believes that the level of representation of troop-contributing countries in all relevant departments, including on the support side, both in the field and at Headquarters, particularly at Senior Management level, is critical to bring greater coherence between those who manage, direct and command operations.

6. The Group continues to believe that there is considerable room for improvement in these areas. In this context, we recall the relevant General Assembly resolutions which consistently request the Secretary-General to make concrete efforts to ensure adequate representation of troop-contributing countries in all relevant departments, particularly in DPKO and DFS, in line with their contributions to UN peacekeeping. The Group will follow up on this matter during our informal consultations.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The Group of 77 and China has taken note of the information related to the performance of the support account for the period of 2013/2014 as well as updated information for the current period. The Group will further explore the variations and rationale for the performance of the account in different expenditure lines.

8. The Group has further taken note of the proposed budget for the support account for the period of 2015/2016, in the amount of US\$ 338 million. We have also taken note of the detailed elements of the proposed resource levels including those related to budget parameters as well as vacancy rates.

9. The Group has reflected on the observations, comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee related to the budgeting for new initiatives related to information communication technology deployed in the field and additional supply chain management in the mission specific budgets instead of the support account. The Group will be interested to learn in detail the rationale for the inconsistencies in application of existing principles for budgeting of similar initiatives.

Mr. Chairman,

10. With regard to human resource management issues, the Group would like to emphasize that posts and position approved by the Assembly must be used solely for the purpose they were established for. The Group is disappointed with a continued trend of shifting resources between different areas in the context of vacancy management.

11. The Group has taken note of the information related to proposed abolishment, reclassification and redeployment of posts and functions across a number of departments, units and divisions and will be seeking further clarification from the Secretariat during our informal consultations.

12. The Group is concerned that the Office for Internal Oversight Services continue to experience high vacancy rates, particularly in the field, which impacts on their ability to deliver on their mandate. The Group will be interested to learn in detail the reasons for this negative trend in the Office. We will also be interested to learn to what extent the Office has established itself at the Regional Service Center in Entebbe as part of the implementation of the outcome of the pilot.

Mr. Chairman,

13. Turning to the restructuring of units and sections, the Group is concerned that the Secretary-General continues to implement some restructuring and reorganization in the Secretariat, particularly in the Department of Field of Field Support and Peacekeeping Operations, without the approval of Members States. We are further concerned that proposals, similar to those rejected in the past, continue to be presented to this Committee.

14. Turning to procurement in the Field, the Group will be interested to learn details of the activities planned for the outreach programme, in particular the business seminars and vendor registration workshops, as connected to support account funding.

Mr. Chairman,

15. In conclusion, the Group would like to assure you of willingness to engage constructively on this agenda item, with a view to providing United Nations peacekeeping operations with all the necessary resources to effectively deliver on their mandates.

16. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.