



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. SAED KATKHUDA, ADVISOR, MISSION OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE, ON AGENDA ITEM 150. ADMINISTRATIVE & BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF FINANCING UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS - SUPPORT ACCOUNT, AT THE SECOND RESUMED SESSION OF THE SEVENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 13 May 2019)

Madam Chair,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 150: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations, specifically on the Support Account.

2. At the outset, the Group thanks Mr. Chandru Ramanathan, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller, as well as Mr. Cihan Terzi, Chair of the ACABQ, for introducing their respective reports.

Madam Chair,

3. The Group of 77 and China remains a dependable supporter of peacekeeping operations. In addition to contributing financially to the budgets of peacekeeping missions and being the largest troop and police contributors to their operations, most of the currently active operations are hosted by members of this Group. As such, we continue to emphasize the importance of providing sufficient backstopping to all missions during all phases, so as to enable them to effectively and efficiently execute their mandates.

4. With the constantly evolving nature of peacekeeping operations, the Group has recognized the additional challenges that this has led to the support components. Consequently, there is the reality of the new requirements placed on personnel, both in the field and Headquarters. Nevertheless, the Group reiterates that the level of the support account should broadly correspond to the given mandate, number, size and complexity of peacekeeping missions.

5. Simply put, support functions should be scalable to the size and scope of peacekeeping operations and in this regard, we recall General Assembly resolutions 69/308 ad 70/287.

6. Moreover, support provided by Headquarters to peacekeeping missions must be well-appointed in the most integrated manner in order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness and avoidance of duplication. The Group remains convinced that all efforts in this regard should be aimed at qualitative improvements in service delivery to all in the field.

Madam Chair,

7. With respect to resource requirements of the support account, the Group of 77 and China has taken note of the information related to the budget performance of the support account for the 2019/2020 period which indicates that there will be an increase in post and non-post resources to \$314.4 million from \$289.8 million from the 2018/2019 period, besides the corporate costs that are the provisions for enterprise resource planning, information and systems security, the global service delivery model project, peacekeeping capability readiness, global shared services centers and the maintenance and support cost for the enterprise resource planning project (UMOJA).

8. The Group further notes that this increase in resource requirements is despite an expected decrease in the number of authorized uniformed personnel, given the reductions in UNAMID, MONUSCO, MINUJUSTH and the closure of UNMIL and MINUSTAH.

9. The Group has reflected on the observations, comments and recommendations of the ACABQ regarding budget parameters, and is interested in learning in detail about the discrepancies found the Advisory Committee in the application of budget methodology across the different departments and offices under the support account.

10. With respect to the after-service health insurance, the Group noted that the Secretary-General's report forecasted a deficit of approximately \$6.0 million for salary payments by June 2019, and also a proposal to delay payments of the peacekeeping share of after-service health insurance (ASHI) for the period 2018/19 to 2019/20 to July 2019, to allow for payment of salaries. Based on the justification provided in this report, the Group will seek, during the negotiations, a more in-depth understanding on the rationale behind the increase of funds, amounting to \$6 million, requested by the Secretary-General.

11. Turning to post resources, the Group emphasizes that posts and positions approved by the General Assembly must be used solely for the purpose of their establishment. The Group will carefully assess the proposed abolishment, restructuring, redeployment, reassignment and reclassification of posts and will seek further clarity from the Secretariat during informal consultations, on the relations between these proposed posts, particularly in the context of the first year of implementation of the peace and security and management reforms, and the impact on the support of the needs of UN staff, and troop, civilian and police contingents in the field.

12. In the same vein, the Group looks forward to receiving the relevant information on the approach that will be taken to financing the new departments of DOS and DMSPC from the support account; and the degree of effectiveness of backstopping support for peacekeeping operations under the restructured Secretariat, as anticipated from the reform initiatives.

Madam Chair,

13. The Group maintains its position in underscoring the importance of the broad representation of troop and police contributing countries, particularly at senior levels, within the peacekeeping support structure, both in the field and at Headquarters, to enabling greater coherence in fulfilling mandates.

14. The Group reiterates that there is a persistent need for significant improvement in this regard and recalls that General Assembly has consistently given the Secretary-General the mandate to make concrete efforts to improve this situation. We will therefore seek updates on the measures taken by the Secretariat on this matter.

Madam Chair,

15. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China reiterates its support for United Nations peacekeeping operations, and adequate backstopping capabilities at Headquarters. We reassure you of our determination to engage constructively on this agenda item, with our firm view to providing peacekeeping operations with the necessary, predictable and sufficient resources to effectively deliver their mandates, even within the context of UN reforms.

Thank you, Madam Chair.