



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. AHMED FAROOQ, PERMANENT MISSION OF PAKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 135: UNITED NATIONS COMMON SYSTEM, IN THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE 62ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 23 October 2007)**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 135, United Nations common system.

2. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank Mr. Kingston Rhodes, the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and Mr. Rajhat Saha, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), for introducing the reports of the Commission and Advisory Committee.

3. We also wish to thank Ms. Katrina Nowlan, Chief of Service III, of the Programme Planning and Budget Division, for presentation of the respective reports of the Secretary-General and the Chief Executives Board. The Group, would also like to thank Mr. Robert Weissel, the President of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) for his statement.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the report of the ICSC with appreciation. We further appreciate the user-friendly format of the report. It summarizes actions on the part of the General Assembly, the Heads of entities in the framework of Chief Executives Board, as well as the issues that are within the statutory jurisdictions of the Commission itself.

5. The Group of 77 and China highly values the important role of the ICSC in the UN system. Over the years, both as a regulatory and coordinating body, it has offered useful technical guidance to the General Assembly in dealing with common system issues, especially in ensuring the best possible conditions of service to the United Nations employees. Its recommendations have helped productivity and efficiency in the Organization.

6. The Group of 77 and China would like to reaffirm its support to the ICSC's mandated role. We also acknowledge the Commission's continuous effort to reform and make it relevant to the General Assembly and common system. The ICSC's action plan for the year 2008-09 as contained in the Annex-VII and its strategy on strengthening its role and functioning - Chapter VII of the report clearly represent such efforts.

7. We agree with the ACABQ's recommendation on the upward adjustment of the current base/floor salary scale for staff in the professional and higher categories by 1.97% in the recosting of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. The Group of 77 and China appreciates the ICSC input on the staffing of field, a review of the entitlements of internationally recruited staff in non-family duty stations, contractual arrangements, and awarding appropriate incentives to retain staff for the international tribunals. These would be critical to the Assembly's decisions under the relevant agenda items. The Group of 77 and China would also like to welcome the ICSC recommendations on improving transparency and accountability and geographic representation in

the human resources management of the Organization.

8. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the ICSC review of the operation of the post adjustment system and takes note of its future approach to this issue. The Group of 77 and China would like to seek assurances that the methodology used by the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions is in accordance with internationally agreed principles. The Group of 77 and China would encourage the Commission to continue its review of the education grant methodology and looks forward to its report in the 63rd session.

9. The Group of 77 and China notes the Commission's activities in monitoring the improvement of management capacity and performance among senior staff by Chief Executives Board and to make recommendations to the Assembly as appropriate. We hope that the Commission will continue to play a pivotal role in the development of the senior management network as well as the evaluation of its leadership development programme. The Group of 77 and China would like to receive more details on the activities of senior management network.

10. The Group of 77 and China awaits the report and recommendations of the Commission's pilot study on broad banding/reward for contributions in the five volunteer organizations. We would like further information on the Commission's role in modernizing and simplifying leave entitlements. We support the Commission's recommendation that all UN organizations should follow common system regulations on leave entitlements and in the consideration of work/life balance and health care issues.

11. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the Commission's recommended guidelines on the issue of language incentives, which need further clarifications. The Group supports the policy of adopting appropriate strategies to improve language skills and proficiency of all UN professional and general service staff. However, language should not be used as an additional conditionality for recruitment, placement and promotion. The recruitment in the organization should strictly be guided by Article 101.3 of the UN Charter.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.