

STATEMENT BY MR. GARFIELD BARNWELL, REPRESENTATIVE OF GUYANA, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA AT THE SECOND RESUMED 53RD SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT

New York, 21 May 1999

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. We would like to thank Mr. Patrizio Civili, Assistant Secretary-General for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, for presenting the report of the Secretary-General on the utilization of the development dividend (doc. A/53/374/Add.1) and the report on the modalities for operating the development account (doc. A/53/945). I would also like to thank the Chairman of the ACABQ for introducing the report A/53/7/Add.12.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The G-77 and China considered the report of the Secretary-General on the utilization of the development dividend A/53/374/Add.1, and in this regard the Group of 77 and China is of the view that the reformulated proposals should be examined in detail with a view to reaching an agreement in this resumed session.
 4. The Advisory Committee recalls resolution 53/220 about reformulation of projects in accordance with regulations and rules. However, it does not comment on whether the decision of the General Assembly has been complied with. The Group would like to state that in the operation of the development account the regulations and rules of the Organisation should be fully complied with as the Account is a part of the regular budget. In this context, we note that the projects are time-limited and we would like to seek a clarification as to whether this is in accordance with the regulations and rules.
 5. The Group would like to have a detailed breakdown of resources to be utilised for implementation of the approved projects, as it is done in the case of all other budget sections. We also look forward to the information regarding allocation of resources as pointed out by the ACABQ in paragraph 14 of its report A/53/7/Add.12.
- Mr. Chairman,
6. On issues concerning the modalities for operating the Development Account (A/53/945), the Group would like to reiterate that the transfer of resources associated with productivity gains into the Development Account is not a budget reduction exercise, and will not result in involuntary separation of staff and will not adversely affect the full implementation of all mandated programmes and activities as emphasized by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/235.
 7. The Group would also like to seek a clarification on paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's report A/53/945. The Secretariat may inform this Committee who would verify the productivity gains and what is meant by "sustainable gains".
 8. The Group would like to seek a clarification on annex Ib of the Secretary-General's report A/53/945 and paragraph 10 of the ACABQ report A/53/7/Add.12. We would like to know how the projections of \$40 million in productivity gains for the period 2002-2003 has been estimated. As regards the comments of the

ACABQ to add \$13 million to the estimate, we would like to know if the amount of the \$13 million approved for the biennium 1998-1999 is also included in the projections. Could the secretariat inform this Committee whether the attainment of this target of \$40 million will have any impact on programme delivery. Moreover, with regard to the estimated \$40 million in productivity gains, the Group would like to recall that such exercise should not in any way involve staff reduction.

9. Further, as the Group of 77 and China had indicated in its statement of 6 October 1998, "we are concerned with the proposal of the Secretariat that the productivity gains will only be submitted for the approval of the General Assembly in the context of the performance report. In other words, in a post facto basis, after the efficiency measures have already been implemented. The Group of 77 and China is of the view that the Secretariat should submit a report every six months on the impact of efficiency measures after the approval by the General Assembly in the context of the Development Account in the implementation of mandated programmes and activities."

Mr. Chairman,

10. The Group will express its views on the Secretary-General's proposal A/54/6 (Part One - (i)), paragraph 43, when the report is introduced to this Committee. The comments of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 12 of its report would require critical analysis. In this regard, the Group would like the Secretariat to inform this Committee if identification of productivity gains in the budget document is in accordance with the financial regulations and rules and the regulations and rules governing programme planning. If this is so, we would like to know the specific reference to these rules and regulations. The Group believes that the resources requested should be commensurate with the mandates for their full implementation.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The Group believes that several issues on the modalities as outlined above still need clarification before we can take positions on them. The Group of 77 and China, therefore, finds it difficult to approve the recommendation of the Secretary-General as outlined in his report A/53/945.

12. Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would like to assure you that the Group of 77 and China as consistently stated attaches great importance to the Development Account and let me stress that the Group is ready to continue actively and constructively to participate in the deliberations of the Committee on this matter.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.