

Statement by the Representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, on the issue of analysis of savings resulting from the improved overall cost-effectiveness achieved pursuant to the ninth session of the UNCTAD, including the restructuring of the intergovernmental machinery and the reform of the secretariat, before the Fifth Committee at the 53rd session of the United Nations General Assembly

New York, 7 October 1998

Mr. Chairman,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to thank the Controller for introducing the report contained in document A/52/898. We would also like to thank Ambassador Mselle for his introduction of ACABQ's report regarding the utilization of savings resulting from the improved effectiveness in UNCTAD as contained in document A/53/7/Add.2.
2. The Group of 77 and China reiterates the recognition of the role of UNCTAD as the principle forum of the United Nations for the integrated treatment of development and related issues in areas of trade, finance, investment and sustainable development. The Group further emphasizes the importance of strengthening UNCTAD's capacity in macro-economic analysis, consensus building, technical assistance and in supporting developing countries in their preparations for the ongoing and future trade-related negotiations.

Mr. Chairman,

3. We deeply regret the late issuance of the Secretary-General's report. This delay has impeded the Fifth Committee from taking action on this matter during the first part of its resumed fifty-second session, as requested in resolution A/52/220. As a further direct consequence of this delay, we note that out of the 14 expert meetings originally scheduled, only 10 will now be able to take place. In this regard we support the proposal that the number of experts should be increased as a result of the reduction in the number of meetings.
4. The Group considers that a decision should be taken, on a priority basis, for the approval of the amount of \$5,526,600 from the unspent balance of 1996-1997 budget retained by the General Assembly in its decision 52/462. A prompt decision is essential in order to avoid further adverse effects on the work of UNCTAD.

Mr. Chairman,

5. With regard to the financing of expert meetings, the Group fully concurs with the Agreed Statement by the Chairman of the Working Party that special consideration will be given to the needs of developing countries. The active participation of experts from the developing countries in UNCTAD meetings is the only way experts can bring their personal contributions and share experiences of their countries so as to enrich the outcome of these meetings with positions and viewpoints of their countries. It is only fair to point out that experts from developed countries have attended all UNCTAD meetings, the case not being so for experts from developing countries. The Group therefore attaches great importance in ensuring that experts from developing countries are the sole beneficiaries of this positive proposal, in order to redress the current imbalance in the participation of experts in the UNCTAD meetings.
6. On the other hand, the Group expresses its deep concern that out of the remainder of the resources to be utilized by UNCTAD, the greatest part seems to be directed for the financing of consultants. We question the

necessity for utilizing such a high amount of resources for this activity and would like to be informed whether UNCTAD does not possess the necessary human resources to carry out the activities which are being allocated to outside consultants.

Mr. Chairman,

7. We take note of the information provided by the Secretariat to the ACABQ in the sense that US\$ 2 million in savings could be traceable to the reduction in the conference-servicing requirements of UNCTAD undertaken as result of the ninth session in Midrand. We concur with ACABQ's view that this amount should have been reflected in the report of the Secretary-General and we deeply regret that it was not. It is unacceptable to admit that after the whole restructuring exercise gone through by UNCTAD no savings have been identified by the Secretariat. In this regard, the Group of 77 and China regrets that the report of the Secretariat did not contain the information requested by the General Assembly in paras. 52 and 54 of its resolution 52/220. The Group therefore reiterates that the amount of savings achieved as a result of the decision taken at the ninth session of UNCTAD should be identified by the Secretariat and subsequently submitted to the General Assembly, as a matter of priority. In this context, the Group notes comments of the Working Party that significant savings have been achieved by UNCTAD as a direct result of the decision of the Midrand Conference.

Thank you.