



REMARKS BY MR PETER LE ROUX, COUNCELLOR, SOUTH AFRICAN PERMANENT MISSION ON BEHALF OF THE G77 AND CHINA TO THE INFORMAL SESSION OF ECOSOC ON MANDATE REVIEW (New York, 6 June 2006)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the process guiding mandate review in the ECOSOC.

The Group of 77 and China wishes to reiterate that the consensus shared on the process of review of mandates in the General Assembly, ECOSOC as well as the Security Council should be inclusive of the entire membership of the United Nations. The Group believes that the review of mandates must be undertaken in a manner that is open, transparent and inclusive in all the principal organs, with a view to enable the United Nations to serve the interests of the collective membership.

The Group also wishes to reiterate that it is within the purview of the General Assembly, as the most representative body, to undertake the review of cross cutting mandates that may exist between the principal organs.

Mr. President,

The Group of 77 and China wishes to reiterate that the review of mandates must be aimed at strengthening the United Nations in order to ensure that the United Nations becomes better equipped to deliver on the mandates.

The G77 and China Special Ministerial Meeting held in Putrajaya, Malaysia on 29 May 2006 reaffirmed that the one time review is limited to mandates originating from decisions adopted by the Principal Organs of the United Nations that are older than five years and have not been renewed since, according to our calculations this will entail 175 ECOSOC mandates. Mandates that are older than five years and have been reaffirmed in the past five years do not fall within the scope of the exercise. The review process should also fully respect the politically sensitive mandates. We are concerned by the attempts of some Member States to expand the scope of the exercise. The mandate review exercise is not intended to renegotiate existing resolutions and decisions of the Principal Organs. We caution against such attempts.

In the G77 and China statement to the General Assembly on 8 May 2006 we stressed that of primary importance in the review of mandates will be to assess the current status of implementation of mandates and to analyse the reasons as to why some mandates have not been fully implemented. Therefore, the challenge of addressing the gap between mandates and resources needs to be prioritised. This information will be critical for Member States, before any decisions are taken.

In this regard, the Group will in due course submit methodology recommendations for determining the status of implementation to the ECOSOC Bureau.

The Group wishes to reiterate that the process of review of mandates is an exercise by States, but we also remain cognizant of the role played by the Secretariat in facilitating our work by providing us with the information necessary to carry out the exercise. Consequently, the Group believes that the Secretariat should be provided with the requisite time and resources to better enable our exercise of reviewing mandates. We also wish to stress that any requests for additional resources arising from the review process have to follow the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and be submitted to the Fifth Committee for consideration.

Of concern to the Group Mr. President is that the Mandate registry is only available in the English language and the Group in the spirit of openness and transparency and inclusiveness, the Secretariat should consider ways as to how to make the Mandate Registry available to Member States in the other five official languages, so as to assist Member States to further expedite the process.

Mr. President,

The Group stresses that setting the priorities of the Organization, as reflected in legislative decisions, remains the prerogative of Member States. We emphasize that the exercise should not change the inter-governmental nature of the decision-making, oversight and monitoring processes, or re-define the roles and responsibilities of various

Organs of the United Nations as identified by the Charter. We further stress that such an exercise is not aimed at cutting the costs of the Organization or to reduce the budget levels approved by the Assembly and fund more activities from within the existing resources. Any savings that may result from the outcome of the exercise should be redirected to the activities of the Organization in the development area.

On development the Group wishes to reaffirm the important role played by the General Assembly and ECOSOC on issues related to the three pillars of sustainable development. The mandate given to ECOSOC for the promotion of the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, in accordance with GA Resolution 57/270B should be preserved and strengthened.

Mr. President,

It will be important to discuss the parameters we are going to follow in the review of mandates and in this regard the review of mandates as it relates to ECOSOC should be by means of a cross-sectoral approach, reviewing the progress made in implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits and their follow-up processes, and assess its impact on the achievement of the goals and targets of the conferences and summits.

The mandate given to ECOSOC for the promotion of the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, in accordance with GA Resolution 57/270B should be preserved and strengthened. Therefore, the role of ECOSOC in providing overall oversight, coordination and guidance for the UN operational activities should be reinforced, as well as its role as the central mechanism for system-wide coordination.

In conclusion, Mr. President, the G77 and China wishes to reiterate its assurance to you that it is approaching this process positively, pragmatically and with an open mind in an effort to strengthen the United Nations, and the group looks forward to further discussions so as to clarify the way forward on mandate review in ECOSOC.

Thank you.