



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. KAREN LOCK,
PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 118:
PROGRAMME PLANNING, IN THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New
York, 17 October 2006)**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 118, entitled "Programme Planning".

2. The Group of 77 and China wishes to commend the Chairperson of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, Ms. Norma Elaine Taylor Roberts, and the Members of the Committee for successfully completing a large number of important items during the 46th session of the Committee. We also wish to thank the Chairperson for introducing the report of the Committee on Programme and Coordination.

3. The Group furthermore wishes to thank the Controller, Mr. Warren Sach, and the representative of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, Mr. Vladislav Guerassev, for their respective presentations of the reports of the Secretary-General and the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the work performed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination as the main subsidiary organ of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for planning, programming and coordination. The CPC performs a fundamental role in programme design by ensuring that the Secretariat accurately interprets and translates legislative mandates into programmes and sub-programmes. The Committee also identifies programmatic changes arising from decisions taken by inter-governmental bodies, which is crucial for the smooth functioning of the Organisation.

5. The CPC provides Member States with assurances that the objectives and strategies of the Organisation have been derived from the priorities and goals set by Member States. These are crucial elements of the planning and budgetary processes of the Organisation and greatly facilitate the oversight role of the General Assembly. The Group consequently welcomes the detailed evaluation carried out by the CPC of the programmes of the Organisation, which is an important element of ensuring the effective implementation of mandates. The guidance provided by the CPC to the numerous departments and entities of the United Nations system regarding their respective programmes and activities contributes to our efforts to enhance coherence and co-ordination throughout the system.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Group of 77 and China welcomes and strongly endorses the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination. We value the guidance provided by the Committee to the General Assembly on the programme performance of the United Nations in the previous biennium. We appreciate the improvements made to the format of the programme performance report, in response to the previous recommendations of the CPC for inter alia more information on the implementation challenges that the Secretariat faced during the biennium and the reasons for non-implementation of programmes. The Group trusts that programme managers will make every effort to improve programme delivery and that those that under-perform consistently will be held accountable for less than satisfactory implementation of programmes.

7. During the 46th session, the Committee successfully reviewed the proposed Strategic Framework for the biennium 2008-2009. It will be recalled that the first Plan Outline did not meet the expectations of the Assembly in 2004 and that it consequently requested the CPC to monitor this aspect of the budget and planning experiment embarked on in 2003. The Group notes that the proposed Plan Outline for the biennium 2008-2009 does not meet the provisions of resolution 58/269, as it does not accurately reflect the longer-term objectives of the Organisation based on its legislative mandates.

8. The Group concurs that it would be useful if the Secretariat revises the proposed Plan Outline (Part I) and re-submits it to Member States for consideration so as to facilitate the decision of the Assembly in 2007 on the future of the experiment. We also believe that programme managers should play a more active role in the preparations of the Plan Outline and that it may be useful if the Office of the Secretary-General oversees the drafting process. In the

meantime, the Group believes that it would be prudent to approve the priorities for the period 2008-2009 so as not to delay the preparations for the next programme budget.

9. The Group of 77 and China wishes to congratulate the CPC for completing its revision of the proposed Biennial Programme Plan for the period 2008-2009 within the time allocated for this crucial task. This is one of the most important mandates of the CPC and is crucial for the smooth functioning of the Organisation. The proposed Strategic Framework forms the basis for the next programme budget and the revision by the CPC will facilitate the preparation process for the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. We also note that the CPC was able to make recommendations on programmes that it was unable to reach consensus on during its 44th and earlier sessions due to the sensitive nature of the programmes. We appreciate the constructive approach followed by the Committee in dealing with these sensitive programmes.

Mr. Chairman,

10. Also valuable was the Committee's detailed examination of co-ordination questions in the report of the United Nations Chief Executive Board and the reports on the New Partnership for Africa's Development. It is the view of the Group of 77 and China that the United Nations System Chief Executive Board plays a vital role in improving inter-agency cooperation and enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations system. We also appreciate the central role that it plays in sharing experiences among the United Nations organizations and developing a coordinating strategy and policy aimed at enhancing the output of the organizations.

11. The Group trusts that every effort will be made by the CEB to strengthen the implementation of the Development Agenda. The Group welcomes the efforts of the CEB in the development of a system-wide approach to coordinate the actions of all agencies in the fight against hunger and poverty. We also firmly support the recommendation of the CPC that the CEB continues its work on this important issue and reports on the progresses being achieved.

12. The Group of 77 and China believes that the CEB must also continue to ensure effective coordination of the United Nations system support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). It is important to highlight that the system-wide support for the New Partnership is a priority of the Organization and that the United Nations system plays a fundamental role in the implementation of NEPAD. In this regard, the Group supports the recommendation that the Economic Commission for Africa and the Office of the Special Adviser should be strengthened in order to coordinate the contributions of United Nations agencies to NEPAD and assist in the implementation of the Partnership at the regional and global level.

Mr. Chairman,

13. The Group is appreciative of the efforts made by the Committee to respond to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 60/257 by not only ensuring that it effectively concluded important matters before it, but also by successfully addressing the request to consider measures to improve its working methods. By concluding the numerous items before it, the Committee has already shown that it was able to improve its work in a tangible manner.

14. The Group of 77 and China has always maintained that the CPC alone, as an inter-governmental body, has and reserves the right to improve its working method in any manner it deems necessary. We consequently are pleased that the Committee after a full discussion of the item was able to reach broad agreement on the Chairman's text, which the Committee for the first time ever agreed to reflect in its report. This abode well for further discussions within the CPC on this item, which we believe is not a one-time event but part of an ongoing process. We trust that all Members in future will be able to join the broad agreement. The Group is satisfied that the Committee has fully met the provision of General Assembly resolution 59/275 and 60/257 and we wish to congratulate the entire membership of the Committee, particularly its Chairperson, for their laudable efforts in this regard.

15. The Group wishes to emphasize the importance of ensuring that inter-governmental and expert bodies receive documentation in advance. While we understand the unique circumstances and developments of the 60th session, and how that may have impacted the timely issuance of reports for the work of the CPC at its 46th session, we however wish to reiterate the need for the documents to be issued in accordance with the six-week rule. We, therefore, call on the Secretariat to ensure that the documents for the next session of the CPC are issued well in advance of its meeting in June 2007.

16. Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, we wish to appeal to Member States to join us in ensuring that the informal consultations are approached in a more constructive manner than in the 60th session. We have worked very hard in this Committee over the past months to improve the atmosphere and it will not be useful to introduce divisive issues

that past experience has shown will not meet the consensus of the membership.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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