



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MRS. AICHA AFIFI, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY, PERMANENT MISSION OF MOROCCO TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ON AGENDA ITEM 117: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS - New York, 3 March 2003

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 117, Scale of assessments for apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations, an item to which the Group 77 and China attaches great importance.
2. The Group of 77 and China reaffirms the legal obligation of Member States to bear the expenses of the Organization in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the requirements to pay their assessed contributions in full, in time and without conditions, while recognizing the need to extend sympathetic understanding to those Member States that are temporarily unable to meet their financial obligations because of genuine economic difficulties.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group of 77 and China has considered the report A/57/76 and would like to make the following preliminary remarks.
4. The Group would like to reaffirm decisions contained in res. 57/4B regarding multi-year payments as a useful tool for reducing unpaid assessed contributions and a way to demonstrate a commitment to meeting financial obligations of Members States to the United Nations, while remaining voluntary and not automatically linked to other measures.
5. On the early reimbursement of troop contributing countries current with their payments, the Group of 77 and China notes that the Committee on Contributions has not agreed on the merits of the proposal and that the Secretary-General considers that it would not be productive for the time being to consider the matter any further. We concur with his view.
6. The Group of 77 and China also notes that other measures such as ineligibility of Members States in arrears for election to certain committees or the restriction of the access of those Members States to opportunities of recruitment and procurement do not fall within the terms of reference of the Committee on Contributions and pose a variety of complex issues.
7. As for the imposition of indexation or interest on arrears, the Group is of the view that such measures, although aimed at encouraging payment of arrears to the Organization, would impose an additional burden on developing countries already facing difficulties in meeting their financial obligations. Such measures would undermine the full participation of increased number of member states in the activities of the Organization.
8. Furthermore, the Group is of the view that if interest were to be imposed on arrears due to the Organization, one may argue that it could also be expected to pay interest on amounts due to Member States, many of which are developing countries.
9. As to the retention of budgetary surpluses due to countries with outstanding contributions, the

Group is not convinced of any added value resulting from introducing changes to the current system. The occasional surpluses due to Member States by the Organization are credited against their outstanding contributions – which means that they do not benefit from them as the Organization does. It should also be noted, as stated by the Committee on Contributions in its 2001 session, that surpluses often do not reflect cash resources, and that in 2002, members of the Committee did not agree on the merits of this suggestion.

10. The Group considers that the retention of surpluses was therefore not proven to be beneficial to the Organization while it would be an administratively burdensome operation, leaving accounts open for much longer periods.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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