



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. MISHAL MOHAMMED AL-ANSARI, STATE OF QATAR, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON STRENGTHENING THE SECURITY AND SAFETY OF UNITED NATIONS OPERATIONS, STAFF AND PREMISES (New York, 12 May 2004)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to thank Mrs. Catherine Bertini for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the security and safety of the United Nations operations, staff and premises, as contained in document A/58/756.

2. I wish to also convey the Group's appreciation to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, Mr. Vladimir Kusnetsov, for introducing the report of the Committee, in document A/58/758.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the issue of safety and security of the United Nations staff and its premises around the globe. We believe that such an important issue requires a comprehensive approach that should result in lasting solutions. The issue of safety and security cannot be effectively addressed in a vacuum - a clear framework of safety and security standards is of absolute necessity if the Organization is to succeed in this regard.

4. It is worth reminding ourselves that the General Assembly has repeatedly stated in its resolutions on human resources management that the staff of the United Nations are an invaluable asset of the Organization. However, much more remains to be done to ensure their maximum possible safety.

5. Developments around the globe also continue to demonstrate that the United Nations premises are vulnerable. There is no doubt that the physical security and protection of all United Nations premises needs to be further enhanced. This requires long-term, rather than piece-meal approaches.

Mr. Chairman,

6. A properly functioning system of security requires sound leadership from those entrusted with the task of security management and coordination of effort. As rightly pointed out by the Advisory Committee, a well defined hierarchical security structure, accompanied by clearly identified lines of responsibility and accountability are essential.

7. The Group notes that the report of the Advisory Committee points out a number of persistent deficiencies that remain to be conclusively addressed. We particularly note with concern that the implementation of some projects, previously approved on an urgent basis, has been delayed and some are even proposed for deferral by the Secretariat. Furthermore, we underscore the importance of host governments to fully discharge their responsibilities in accordance with the host country agreements.

8. Organizations of the United Nations system need to further harmonize their efforts on safety and security matters, in order to ensure coordination and unity of purpose. We believe that the cost-sharing arrangement decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/255 was a step in the direction of ensuring a proper security arrangements system, and should continue to be pursued.

9. Finally, the Group expects that the Phase II report of the Secretary-General, to be submitted at the 59th Session, will be comprehensive to enable further consideration by the General Assembly of this important matter. Similarly, the Group understands that the Secretariat was not able to fully elaborate on many of the security measures in a public document. We expect that Member States will receive the necessary information during the informal consultations, as it will facilitate the decision-making process.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.