

STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR AMBASSADOR MUSINGA TIMOTHY BANDORA, DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MULTILATERAL COOPERATION AND LEGAL AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, ON BEHALF OF THE G-77 AND CHINA, IN THE U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON AGENDA ITEM 157: UNITED NATIONS REFORMS

New York, 8 October 1997

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Mr. President,

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to express our gratitude to you and the members of the Bureau, for your decision to bring forward consideration of agenda item 157 so as to initiate early discussions on the reform of the United Nations.

As we have had opportunity to convey to your good self during our consultations, the Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the reform proposals submitted by the Secretary General. I wish to reiterate our congratulations to the Secretary General for the timely initiative to enrich the age old dialogue on reform of the United Nations with his incisive and well considered proposals contained in his report entitled, "Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform". It is our view that the proposals are far-reaching and bear directly on existing institutional structures, programmes and future functioning of the Organization, as well as to the ongoing efforts and existing frameworks dealing with the question of reform. This is why his proposals deserve the most serious consideration of all the Member States.

Mr. President,

The 22nd Meeting of the Chairman and Coordinators of the Chapters of the Group of 77 and China held in Geneva in July, set forth the philosophy of the Group on reform of the United Nations and the principles on which that reform must be based.

The Foreign Ministers of the Group of 77 and China in their Declaration issued on 26 September, 1997, reaffirmed those principles and stressed, *inter alia*, the reform process must aim at strengthening the United Nations' ability to fulfill its role and functions, especially in the development field, with the General Assembly providing the leadership to ensure fulfillment of the social and economic goals enunciated in the United Nations Charter. In this context, the United Nations' role in policy analysis, consensus building, coordination and delivery of technical assistance to developing countries, has to be strengthened and the core economic issues must be restored to the top of the United Nations' agenda. The Ministers underlined in this regard that the United Nations, by virtue of its universal membership, remains the most credible organization for performing development tasks.

It was further stressed that all reform proposals must aim at giving greater effect to the principles of transparency, pluralism and democracy in the Organization. Apart from the Secretary General's proposals, it is also important that the reform process should be undertaken in accordance with the relevant United Nations' resolutions such as 50/227 and the recommendations of the Open-Ended High Level Working Group on the Strengthening of the United Nations System.

Mr. President,

As the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China communicated to you on 6 October 1997, the Group of 77 and China in New York was instructed by the 21st Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 and China to analyze the proposals of the Secretary General on reform and come up with a common position. In this regard, I wish to inform you that the Group of 77 and China has initiated a series of internal consultations, including discussion on the Secretary General's report, with a view to furnishing its position on all the proposals it contains. I wish to inform you, that the Group has so far made notable progress in this direction. We do, however, need more time to complete this task. It is the very strong wish of the Group that it be permitted to finalize its consultations before embarking on a substantive consideration of the reform proposals in the Assembly. In our view, this process will be completed within a week.

In view of this situation, I formally propose that the Assembly postpone the substantive discussion of this item until next week Wednesday, the 15th October, 1997.

Mr. President,

While in no way wishing to anticipate the substantive discussion on the item, I wish to mention an issue of procedure which is critical to the Group of 77 and China. As we have had opportunity to state, the members of the Group of 77 and China attach the greatest importance to this subject of reform. It is, therefore, their firm view that all the proposals on reform should be discussed in detail and transparently and in a format that will allow the widest and most effective participation of all Member States, especially those with small delegations. In this connection, the Group of 77 and China requests that the meetings of the Assembly to discuss reform should be scheduled in such a manner as not to coincide with those of the Main Committees where the attendance of delegations is also required. Avoidance of concurrent meetings on reform in the Assembly and those of the Main Committees will not only permit universal participation of all Member States, but will also give correct focus on the critical issue of reform of the Organization. The Group, therefore, requests that specific days in each week be set aside exclusively for consideration of this item and that Member States be informed in advance.

Mr. President,

I wish to assure you of the Group's cooperation and readiness to discuss all the Secretary General's reform proposals before the General Assembly.

I thank you.