

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR DAUDI N. MWAKAWAGO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON AGENDA ITEM 157: UNITED NATIONS REFORMS

New York, 15 October 1997

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Mr. President,

At the outset, let me congratulate you, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, for convening this informal session of the General Assembly to continue the discussions on agenda item 157 on the reform of the United Nations.

The Group is especially grateful to you for having accorded us more time to enable us to evolve a common position on this important issue. In this regard, I am pleased to inform you that the consultations within the Group have resulted in a preliminary common position on a number of actions and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary General in document A/51/950. We shall put forward this preliminary position as the negotiation process unfolds.

Mr. President,

With respect to how to proceed with our discussion on this issue, I should like to reiterate the Group's firm view that all the proposals on reform should be discussed in detail and in a transparent manner by all delegations. With respect to methodology, the Group of 77 and China is favourable to the adoption of a thematic approach to all the actions and recommendations as presented in the Secretary General's report. The Group of 77 is convinced that this method would permit a systematic and coherent examination of all the issues raised. Furthermore, this approach would enable the General Assembly to identify, in an integrated manner, those areas where agreement could be reached as soon as possible and those which will require more time to resolve.

In our statement of Wednesday last week we started that in order to facilitate the widest and more effective participation of all Member States, especially those with small delegations, the meetings of the Assembly to discuss reform should be scheduled in such a manner so as not to coincide with those of the Main Committees. I should like to reiterate this appeal here today.

Mr. President,

As some of the proposed actions and recommendations are bound to have financial implications, it will be necessary that we move speedily to consider, and hopefully reach agreement on them so that the Fifth Committee may subsequently proceed with its work on them. Yet there are other actions and recommendations, for example, in the areas of human rights, peace and security, that require a coordinated position with the Non-Aligned Movement. Discussions are in earnest between the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and at the appropriate time you will be informed accordingly.

Mr. President,

The Group of 77 and China attaches the greatest importance to the task ahead of us. Reforming and renewing the United Nations is a challenge which the Member States and the Secretary-General must meet jointly. It is a task which we must approach realistically and with all the flexibility required - the overriding objective being to do a thorough job. In this respect, the Group of 77 strongly believes that the progress we shall make

in this process will send a clear political message regarding our determination and resolve to work expeditiously and conclude the task of reforming the Organisation. The Group of 77 is prepared to enter into detailed consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on reform proposals before us, along the lines I have stated.

I thank you.