



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. LYLE DAVIDSON, COUNSELLOR OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA, ON AGENDA ITEM 131: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS: FOURTH PROGRESS REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT, AT THE FIRST PART OF THE RESUMED SIXTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 6 March 2015)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 131: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, on the important issue of Accountability.
2. The Group would firstly like to thank Mr. Yukio Takasu, Under-Secretary-General for Management, for introducing the Secretary-General's report and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairman of the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for introducing its related report.
3. The Group continues to be supportive of an effective and efficient accountability system across the Secretariat in order to foster and embed a culture of greater accountability in the working habits of staff and to move towards the improved management of financial and human resources.
4. We recall that the General Assembly clearly defined accountability in resolution 64/259 as, inter alia, achieving objectives and high-quality results in a timely and cost-effective manner; truthful, objective, accurate and timely reporting on performance results; and responsible stewardship of funds and resources.
5. The Group emphasises that a lack of adequate information for decision-making processes continues to hamper the Organisation's ability to achieve enhanced accountability and transparency as well as the ability to improve the functioning of the Organisation. Nevertheless, we are pleased to note progress in areas such as the enterprise risk management system, results-based management, personal accountability and the strengthening of accountability in field missions.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Group would like to take this opportunity to make a few remarks in this regard.
7. We welcome the establishment of a risk register; the identification of critical risks; the formalisation of a governance structure for enterprise risk management; the designation of a corporate risk owner for each of the six critical risks identified; as well as the proactive steps taken to address all 23 identified risks. The Group concurs with the Advisory Committee that enterprise risk management should not be conducted as a simple exercise, but should effectively lead towards strengthening organisational accountability in a concrete manner.
8. The Group will seek further information on how the Organisation is responding to risk five, which is the possibility that the inability to obtain extra-budgetary funding may impact on the ability of

certain departments to deliver on their mandates.

9. The Group stresses the importance of staff training as one of the key elements for effective programme monitoring and reporting, in order to strengthen personal and institutional accountability.

10. We share the view of the Advisory Committee that the implementation of recommendations of oversight bodies is an essential part of the system of accountability and the Group urges the Secretary-General to redouble its efforts in this area.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The Group is disappointed by continued weaknesses in the performance of senior managers with regard to compliance with the recruitment timeline and calls on the Secretary-General to take decisive actions to speed up the recruitment process, while bearing in mind the under-representation of many developing countries.

12. The Group will seek further information on the results of the pilot project for strengthening self-evaluation capacity in the Department of Management; as well as clarity on the reasons for the removal in 2013 of the performance indicator related to the timely submission of reports for processing to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management.

13. With regards to personal accountability, the Group continues to underscore the importance of strengthening the link between performance appraisals and rewards or sanctions for all United Nations staff. The Group further emphasises the need for full implementation of the zero-tolerance policy against sexual exploitation or abuse.

Mr. Chairman,

14. The Group will be seeking further information during the informal consultations on the pilot implementation of ERM in MONUSCO and the steps taken to advance accountability in field missions. In addition, we will seek information on measures put in place to ensure full compliance with the financial disclosure programme as well as to strengthen accountability in procurement.

15. Given that the process of implementing an effective accountability system in the United Nations is a continuous and ongoing exercise, the Group confirms its initial position of requesting the submission of an annual report on progress made towards the implementation of the accountability framework for the consideration of the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

16. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China remains strongly committed to seeing the implementation of a comprehensive accountability system in the United Nations. The Group would like to assure you of its readiness to engage constructively in the upcoming discussions with the aim of concluding this agenda item in a timely fashion.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.