



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. MOHAMED FOUAD, COUNSELOR AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF EGYPT TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 149: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF FINANCING UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE SECOND PART OF THE RESUMED SEVENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 15 May 2018)

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 149: Administrative and budgetary aspects of financing United Nations peacekeeping operations, particularly on crosscutting issues.

2. The Group thanks Mr. David Kanja, Assistant Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services; Ms. Lisa Bottenheim, Assistant Secretary-General for Field Support; and Ms. Jane Holl Lute, Special Coordinator on improving the United Nations' response to sexual exploitation and abuse, for introducing the various reports on this agenda item. The Group would also like to thank Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, the Chair of the ACABQ, for introducing the related reports of the Committee.

Mr. Chair,

3. The Group welcomes the report of the Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment, which contains the 2017 edition of the Manual on Policies and Procedures concerning the Reimbursement and Control of Contingent-Owned Equipment of Troop/Police Contributors Participating in Peacekeeping Missions.

4. Although some important issues were left unresolved, the Group of 77 and China recognizes that the final report of the Working Group was the result of extensive, drawn-out negotiations at the level of military advisers. We therefore welcome the consensus achieved by the COE Working Group and fully support the recommendations contained in its report.

Mr. Chair,

5. The Group would like to pay tribute to all United Nations peacekeepers who have been wounded in the line of duty or who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the pursuit of peace. In this regard, the Group highlights once again the need to review the rates of compensation for death and disability, taking into consideration that the General Assembly has repeatedly in successive resolutions emphasized the need for a timely review of the rates of death and disability compensation, which were last updated nearly a decade ago. It is past time to have a meaningful conversation on this subject, with a view towards rectifying this longstanding issue.

6. On a separate issue, the Group holds a longstanding position on the crucial role of Quick Impact Projects and Programmatic Activities for successful mandate implementation.

7. The Group underscores the importance of QIPs in building confidence in missions, their mandate and political and peace processes. These projects also contribute to force protection by generating support for the military and police components of missions - a growing concern for all troop and police contributing countries.

8. Although constituting a small share of the peacekeeping missions' budget, programmatic activities are used by peacekeeping missions as a tool to more effectively pursue political processes and wider mandate delivery. The Security Council has in recent years expanded the number of programmatic activities it tasks peacekeeping missions with, with a view to preventing and resolving conflicts and building a lasting peace.

9. The Group is of the view that the Secretariat must continue to work to increase the effectiveness of programmatic activities. In this regard, the Group rejects imposing artificial criteria for the governance of these activities, such as discrimination between so-called "types" of Programmatic Activities.

Mr. Chair,

10. On the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse, the Group reaffirms its strong commitment to the United Nations' zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse. Zero-tolerance must apply equally to all, whether they are uniformed personnel or civilians, and regardless of the color of their helmet.

11. In this regard, the Group welcomes the strong resolve of the Secretary-General towards ensuring that the Organization will not remain silent or passive in the face of reported incidents, as well as towards protecting and supporting victims of SEA through adopting a victim-centered approach addressing this problem and putting in place effective preventive policies that address the root causes of this plague.

12. The Group looks forward to examining progress towards adopting a more unified, system-wide approach to SEA. In particular, the Group will seek further information on mechanisms that aim to address SEA cases involving civilians and UN personnel both at Headquarters and in the field, and will also be interested to examine how existing mechanisms can ensure accountability for personnel found guilty of sexual exploitation and abuse.

13. The Group notes that the report before us addresses measures needed to deal with cases of sexual exploitation and abuse. However, the Group believes that more could have been done, especially in taking concrete action to identify and mitigate the risk factors identified by the Secretary General in his previous reports.

14. The General Assembly, through paragraph 80 of resolution 70/286 and paragraph 23 of resolution 71/297, has repeatedly urged the Secretariat to present concrete proposals to mitigate risk factors including the rehatting of troops, the absence of predeployment training on standards of conduct, the excessive length of deployment for certain contingents, the living conditions of contingents, including lack of welfare and communication facilities to stay in contact with home, camps being situated in proximity to and not properly separated from the local population.

15. We look forward to further discussion on how the Secretariat intends to address these risk factors. The Group commends measures taken by numerous TCCs and PCCs to address different aspects of the problem of SEA and encourages the Secretariat to facilitate cooperation among these countries on exchanging best practices as well as to foster a greater role for the UN in enhancing national capacities in this regard.

16. The Group is pleased to know that the Secretary-General is actively enforcing whistle-blower protection policies on the protection of staff who report misconduct or cooperate with an investigation. Strict and full implementation of this policy is essential for empowering staff and

encouraging them to report misconduct, including in cases involving senior officials.

Finally, Mr. Chair,

17. The Group of 77 and China reiterates that the cross-cutting resolution is intended to provide overarching policy guidelines on issues relating to peacekeeping operations. The cross-cutting resolution should by no means be used as a channel for delegations to pursue arbitrary overarching cuts in the budgets of peacekeeping operations.

18. In conclusion, the Group assures you, Mr. Chair, of our constructive engagement on these issues in the ensuing discussions during informal consultations, with a view to conclude this important agenda item in a timely manner.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.