



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MR. PETER THOMSON, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, ON AGENDA ITEM 146: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES, AT THE SECOND RESUMED PART OF THE SIXTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY-FIFTH COMMITTEE (New York, 14 May 2013)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 146, "Administrative and budgetary aspects of financing United Nations peacekeeping operations".

2. At the outset, Mr. Chairman, the Group wishes to pay tribute to the men and women who serve in the peacekeeping missions with such a high level of commitment, professionalism and courage. We also remember at this time the peacekeepers who have lost their lives in the service of humanity.

3. The Group would like to thank Ms. Ameera Haq, Under-Secretary-General for Department for Field Support, Ms. Carman L. Lapointe, Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, and Ms. Mariana Eugenia Casar, Assistant-Secretary-General/Controller for introducing various reports on this agenda. The Group would also like to thank Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, the Chair of the ACABQ, and through you Chair Mr. Christopher Mihm, the Chair of Independent Audit Advisory Committee, for the related reports.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The Group of 77 and China would like to remind that each peacekeeping mission has its own mandate and functions, faces its own challenges, and operates in a unique environment. The agenda item on cross-cutting issues serves as an important policy tool in providing comprehensive guidance to the Secretary-General on the effective and efficient management of United Nations flagship activity of peacekeeping operations. In this regard, our Group attaches great importance to the consideration of policy matters pertaining to the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the UN peacekeeping operations.

5. During the consideration of this agenda item, the Group of 77 and China will therefore be focusing on examining the following key elements:-

First, ensuring the provision of adequate resources and required guidance for the effective and efficient management of UN peacekeeping operations, based on the real situation on ground, without undermining the operational capacities, safety and security of peacekeepers, and the implementation of mandates, rather than arbitrary and across-the-board cuts in the name of efficiency;

Secondly, monitoring and assessing the progress in implementation of major business transformation projects related to peacekeeping operations including IPSAS, ERP/Umoja and Global Field Support Strategy as connected to qualitative and quantitative impact and intended

benefits;

Thirdly, address comprehensively the systemic and unresolved issues and difficulties faced by the Troop-Contributing Countries including their under-representation, matters related to timely settlement of death and disability compensation claims as well as settlement of dues owed to troop-contributing countries for Contingent Owned Equipment;

Fourthly, monitor the progress in the implementation of the relevant provision of the General Assembly's resolutions and the recommendations of the oversight bodies namely the Board of Auditors and OIOS on the cross-cutting related elements.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Group of 77 and China is deeply concerned on the application of so-called "resource reduction targets" in formulating budgets for peacekeeping operations. We are concerned that this approach has undermined the basic principle in the preparation for budget that resource proposals for each mission must be based on the needs on the ground, and not on an arbitrary overall level for peacekeeping operations set at Headquarters. The Group does not agree with this approach which undermines mandate implementation. The Group will ask specific clarifications on a number of issues in this regard during informal consultations.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Troop-contributing countries make an invaluable contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security while making great sacrifice under difficult, harsh, complex and often dangerous situations. In this regard, our Group would like to emphasize the importance of the Secretary-General continuing to closely consult with the troop-contributing countries on all matters related to the peacekeeping operations including on the Global peacekeeping needs assessment as well as implementation of various provisions of the General Assembly resolutions including the recently adopted resolution on the report of Senior Advisory Group.

8. The Group notes the conclusion reached during the Committee's first resumed session, on the long-pending issue of review of rates of reimbursement on account of troop cost, in the context of report of the Senior Advisory Group. We, however, must understand that the approval of a small amount of increase would provide only an interim relief to the difficulties faced by TCCs on account of troop-cost. It is our understanding that, the adoption of the said resolution is just the beginning of the process for finding suitable solutions for a fair troop reimbursement mechanism. The Group would like to again caution against the linkage between troop reimbursement and contingent owned equipment.

Mr. Chairman,

9. We are concerned on the lack of improvement in the representation of TCCs particularly at senior management level in the Secretariat, despite repeated calls by General Assembly that Secretary-General makes further concrete efforts to ensure adequate representation of troop-contributing countries in all relevant departments, particularly in DPKO and DFS, in line with their contributions to UN peacekeeping. Our Group will be interested to hear about steps taken in this regard.

10. While the continued downward trend notably in 2012, in the number of allegations reported related to sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions is encouraging, it is important that the efforts be made to reduce the length of time taken to investigate such allegations in

particular cases involving most egregious forms. It should be also noted that this is the first year in which the number of cases involving military is lower than that of civilian personnel. We emphasize the need for further efforts on the latter category personnel in order to ensure overall progress on this issue. The Group encourages the collaborative efforts between the Organization and its Member States, in terms of preventive measures, awareness raising and training to ensure effective implementation of the zero-tolerance policy. The Group also emphasizes the need to prevent unsubstantiated allegations of misconduct from damaging the credibility of United Nations peacekeeping missions, personnel and/or any troop-contributing country.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The Group of 77 and China notes with concern the proposed staffing reductions in the peacekeeping missions in a net decrease of 2,552 posts. We stress the need for the Secretary-General to fully respect the terms of resolution 66/264, including its paragraph 23, and to ensure that the civilian staffing structure of each mission is appropriate to effectively implement its mandate. The Group will seek further clarification on this matter during informal consultations.

12. The Group reaffirms the critical role of the Quick Impact Projects in strengthening the link between missions and local populations. We stress the need to ensure that funds for implementation of QUIPS are readily available during all phases of the mission. We hope that the revised QUIPS policy document being finalized by the Secretary-General will further strengthen this important tool. We will follow up and seek further updates on this issue during the informal consultations.

13. In summary, on the subject of cross-cutting issues, the Group of 77 and China would like to assure you of its constructive approach during the informal consultations aimed at enhancing the ability of the United Nations peacekeeping operations to effectively deliver on their mandates.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.