



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY  
AMBASSADOR CONROD HUNTE, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON THE  
ORGANISATION OF WORK OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE AT THE MAIN PART  
OF THE SIXTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 3  
October 2008)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the organisation of work of the Fifth Committee for the main part of the 63rd session of the General Assembly.
2. The Group of 77 and China wishes to congratulate you (H.E. Mr. Babor Brodi) and the other Members of the Bureau on your election. The Group of 77 and China would like to thank the Bureau and the Secretariat for programme of work. We also appreciate the designation of the Coordinators to facilitate negotiations on the related items.
- 3 Mr. Chairman, I take this opportunity also to thank the Secretariat for the preparations for the meetings of the Committee, and for the relevant documentation - A/C.5/63/1, AC.5/63/L1.
4. Likewise, Mr. Chairman, I would like to express our appreciation to Ambassador Hamidon Ali, the previous Chairman, as well as to the other members of the his bureau, for their tireless efforts during the 62nd session.
5. The Fifth Committee in the coming weeks will face the challenge of dealing with a workload that is becoming increasingly heavier from one session to the next. Member States have to consider 200 reports, in the next three months, which, we have been told, amount to nearly half of the workload before the General Assembly. It is, therefore, becoming crucial for the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee alike to ensure that Member States receive the reports well in advance and, in accordance, with the guidelines set by the Assembly for the Secretariat.
6. We appreciate the improvements this session, as well as the efforts by the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee to deal with the numerous demands before it, However, we wish to stress that the ability of Member States to consider the reports and prepare for the negotiations is being undermined still by the late issuance of reports. It is important to clarify that our readiness to consider any item on the programme of work would be contingent upon the availability of all relevant documents in six official languages, with sufficient time for the Group to coordinate its position. Thus the Group looks forward to reaching a stage where the programme of work is determined by the importance accorded to an item by Member States and not by the date on which reports are issued and made available for introduction to Member States.
7. Turning to the provisional programme of work, the Group of 77 and China appreciates the efforts of the Bureau to prepare a programme aimed at balancing the numerous items before the Committee. We recognise that the Bureau, as in previous sessions, will amend the programme throughout the session to mirror the progress made by the Committee in the negotiations. Nonetheless, the Group is not in a position to accept the programme of work as presented beyond the first week at this stage. In this context, the Group wishes to reiterate its standing position that it is imperative to ensure that adequate time and conference services are provided to the Committee

to consider the reports.

8. The Group notes that the concerns of the JCC on the strengthening of DPA, contained in document A/C.5/62/24 dated 10 March 2008, have not been taken into account in the documentation before us.

9. The Group of 77 and China at the outset wishes to state that we stand ready to consider and conclude the items agreed to before us. We trust that sufficient time will be allocated for the effective consideration of important items. We wish to caution against a preoccupation with items that are considered "time-bound" at the expense of other important items that are not budgetary in nature but, in our view, are important for the effective functioning of the Organisation. We believe that as Member States, we have a collective responsibility to take decisions that are beneficial to the Organisation and enable it to perform its mandates effectively and efficiently.

10. The Group of 77 and China is ready to play its part towards ensuring a successful outcome of the session. The heavy agenda that we have to dispense with, calls for flexibility, compromise and understanding of the concerns on various issues. We stand ready to work with you, your bureau and the secretariat, and look forward to the flexibility and support of our partners, and to a successful completion of the programme of work during this session.

I thank you.