



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. AMBASSADOR PETER THOMSON, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, ON THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 3 October 2013)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the organization of work of the Fifth Committee for the main part of the 68th session of the General Assembly.
2. The Group of 77 and China wishes to congratulate you Mr. Chairman and the other members of the Bureau on your election. We thank the Bureau for preparing the programme of work and appreciate the designation of Coordinators to facilitate on behalf of the Committee for the negotiations on the various items during the main part of the 68th session of the General Assembly.
3. The Group expresses its deep appreciation to H.E. Mr. Miguel Berger, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany, as well as to the other distinguished members of the previous Bureau, for their work during the 67th session.

Mr. Chairman,

4. In reviewing the list of items in the proposed programme of work and the documentation available, the Group reiterates the importance of their thorough consideration and trusts that adequate time will be allocated to the various items for their effective consideration to ensure their successful conclusion. During this session, the Committee has a particularly important agenda item to deliberate upon, the Proposed Programme Budget for the Biennium 2014-2015. As expressed in our Ministerial Declaration, the Group of 77 and China is seriously concerned with the budget cuts proposed for the next biennium which could impact the implementation of mandates approved by intergovernmental bodies, particularly in the development pillar. The Group is also concerned with the interpretation that the proposed cuts were a request of Member States through the outline resolution.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group of 77 and China continues to be concerned over the status of the documentation for the session. Important reports have yet to be issued. The Group in this regard would like to stress the necessity of the timely issuance of all documents, in all official languages, according to the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly. This would contribute to the effective work of the Committee and well informed decision making. The failure of the Secretariat to present these reports in accordance with the rules of procedures of the General Assembly often puts the Member States and the ACABQ in a difficult position to work under time pressure. Therefore, the deliberations are seriously affected.

6. Given the heavy agenda to deliberate upon during the main session, the Group appreciates the efforts of the Bureau in preparing a balanced programme of work which will be adjusted throughout the session based on the progress made by the Committee in the negotiations. In accordance with

past practice, the Group is in a position to accept the programme of work as presented on the understanding that it will be reviewed and amended after the first week, as needed.

7. The Group of 77 and China has always stressed the principle of conducting the negotiations in an open, inclusive and transparent manner, rather than decision-making based on small group configurations. In this regard, the Group wishes to emphasize that the negotiation process is a Member States driven one and that consensus is a confidence building exercise that must be allowed to run its course.

8. In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the Group of 77 and China wishes to state that we stand ready to consider and conclude the items before us within the timeframe of the allocated Programme of Work. We believe that as Member States, we have a collective responsibility to take decisions that are beneficial to the Organization and enable it to fulfill its mandates effectively and efficiently. The Group of 77 and China reiterates its assurances of full cooperation and constructive engagement with our partners for a successful outcome for this session.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.