



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. DAYANA RIOS REQUENA, MINISTER COUNSELLOR IN THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 135: PATTERN OF CONFERENCES, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE SIXTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 20 October 2014)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 135: Pattern of Conferences.
2. The Group would like to thank Mr. Yotam Goren, the Chairperson of the Committee on Conferences, for introducing the Committee's report as contained in document A/69/32.
3. The Group of 77 and China also wishes to thank Mr. Tegegnework Gettu, Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management, for introducing the Secretary-General's report on Pattern of Conferences as contained in document A/69/122.
4. Furthermore, the Group wishes to thank Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing the Advisory Committee's report contained in document A/69/527.
5. The Group would like to congratulate Ms. Catherine Pollard for her appointment as Assistant-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management. We wish her best of success in her new position.

Mr. Chairman,

6. We highly appreciate the work of the Committee on Conferences and wish to commend the Committee for the high quality of their report on their most recent substantive session. The Group welcomes the recommendations contained in the report for 2014 and believes that it will greatly facilitate the Fifth Committee's consideration of this agenda item. Similarly, the draft resolution on Pattern of Conferences submitted by the Committee, as part of their report, provides a good basis for our negotiations on this item.
7. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the effective delivery of quality conference services in accordance with the equal treatment of the six official languages of the United Nations, particularly in support of the work of the intergovernmental and expert bodies of the United Nations. In this context, issues such as the utilization of conference services, documentation and publication related matters, translation and interpretation related matters and the calendar of conferences and meetings are all critical to the functioning of this Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

8. As we have consistently done in previous years, the Group would like to once again express its concern over the big decrease in the utilization rate of the conference centre at the Economic Commission for Africa from 80.5% in 2012 to 67.4% in 2013. The Group is conscious of the fact that this decrease is due to the renovation exercise performed in 2013. The Group expects that

these renovations, paired with the comprehensive marketing and pricing strategy will significantly improve the conference centre's utilization rate.

9. On issues related to Integrated Global Management, the Group welcomes the introduction of the term "IGM rule", or integrated global management rule to replace the term "proximity rule." We believe this new term, better reflects the intention of this rule. The Group looks forward for the clear delineation of responsibilities between the USG for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Directors General of the different United Nations Offices, as we believe this issue has been unresolved for quite some time now.

10. Regarding the issue of Flextime, the Group recalls that in paragraph 52 of resolution 68/251, the GA requested the Secretary General to report on the evaluation of the pilot project, including a recommendation on whether the project should be continued at the UN Office at Vienna and further implemented at other duty stations. The Group is disappointed that this request from the GA was not included in the SG's report.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the timely issuance of documents and the quality of documentation to facilitate effective consideration by the intergovernmental bodies, in particular, the Fifth Committee. We note that the report of the Secretary General highlights two challenges as being prominent in this area, overlapping between the Fifth Committee session and the one of the ACABQ, and the lack of predictability of the Committee's programme of work.

12. The Group disagrees with the assessment of these two issues as being the most prominent when talking about the lateness of documents. It is the opinion of the Group that more attention needs to be placed in what the Group considers the most prominent challenge, the issue of author departments submitting their reports late. The Group believes that an accountability mechanism needs to be in place to properly monitor and deal with the late submission of documents from author departments. This would allow for a better understanding of all the different factors that affect the issuance of documentation.

Mr. Chairman,

13. The Group welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Department of Public Information and DGACM in the efforts of digitalizing important United Nations documents. We hope that this single team of staff will have the capacity to digitalize the 3 million documents that have been deemed as particularly important and are in urgent need of digitalization.

14. The Group would like to reiterate the importance of multilingualism. Quality translation and interpretation in the six official languages allows for the smooth deliberations of Member States in the intergovernmental process. The Group welcomes any actions aimed at improving the quality of translation and interpretation. We reiterate that any efficiencies should not come at the expense of quality of services.

Mr. Chairman,

15. With regard to any requests from Member States to approve new additional UN official holidays, the Group asserts that all proposals from Member States should be equally considered based on clear and well defined criteria and modalities, while not affecting the already approved UN official holidays.

16. Finally Mr. Chairman, I would like to reiterate the critical role that conference management plays in the smooth functioning of the United Nations. In this regard, the Group stands ready to work for its continued improvement. We look forward to fruitful discussions and assure you of the Group's constructive engagement during the discussions on this agenda item.

I thank you.

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