



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY
AMBASSADOR MOHAMED YOUSIF ABDELMANNAN, PERMANENT
MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON
AGENDA ITEM 118: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2008-2009,
UNDER THE SECTION RELATED TO THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED
NATIONS INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH, DURING THE FIRST
PART OF THE RESUMED 63RD SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 9 March 2009)**

Mr Chairman,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 118, Programme Budget for the Biennium 2008-2009 under the section related to the Financing of United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

2. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Brook Boyer, Manager, Multilateral Diplomacy Programme of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, for introducing the Report of the Secretary-General, entitled "Financing of the core diplomatic training activities of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research". I would also like to thank Ms Susan McLurg, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing the related ACABQ report.

Mr Chairman,

3. The Group of 77 and China attaches importance to the issue of the Financing of United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). UNITAR plays an indispensable role in promoting international cooperation and multilateral diplomacy through the provision of core diplomatic training. UNITAR's research and training activities benefit all UN Member States and provide a forum for diplomats to interact and strengthen skills relevant to negotiations in the multilateral arena.

Mr Chairman,

4. We note that over the past two decades, UNITAR has experienced chronic underfunding for its core diplomatic training activities, because of the decline in voluntary, non-earmarked contributions. This trend of under-funding is happening against the backdrop of increased demand for this critical training.

5. The Group is concerned that the lack of a reliable, predictable and sustainable source of funding could lead to the cessation of UNITAR's core diplomatic training activities. Termination of UNITAR's critical service to Member States should not happen on our watch. All efforts need to be taken to avert this possibility. We believe that the Secretary General's report provides useful proposals to address UNITAR's funding needs.

Mr Chairman,

6. The Group notes that ECOSOC resolution E/2008/35 states that "training and capacity development activities should be accorded a more visible and larger role in support of the management of international affairs". In addition, General Assembly resolution 62/210, affirms "the

relevance of the Institute, in view of the growing importance of training and capacity development within the United Nations". Indeed, 97 per cent of countries have benefited from UNITAR's core diplomatic training in recent years.

7 We note that the Secretary-General, in responding to ECOSOC Resolution E/2008/35 and General Assembly Resolution 62/210, requests an annual subvention of \$600,000 in the context of the programme budget 2010-2011, to supplement UNITAR's core diplomatic training budget. This proposal could provide a possible basis for addressing UNITAR's core diplomatic training needs.

Mr Chairman,

8 In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China reiterates its long-standing support for UNITAR and its critical activities, which benefit all Member States. We intend to obtain more information during the informal sessions, with a view towards finding a sustainable solution for UNITAR's funding needs. We look forward to constructive discussions during the informal meetings.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.