



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. LUKE DAUNIVALU, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 134: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2014-2015, ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING (ERP/UMOJA), AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 2 December 2013)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 134: Proposed Programme Budget for the Biennium 2014-2015 - Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)/ UMOJA.
2. We thank the Under-Secretary-General for Management, Mr. Yukio Takasu, for introducing the Secretary General's Reports on the Fifth progress report on ERP/UMOJA (A/68/375). We also thank the Director of External Audit (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Board of Auditors, Mr. Hugh O'Farrell, for introducing the Second annual progress report of the Board of Auditors on the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning System- UMOJA (A/68/151), as well as the Chairman of the ACABQ, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, for introducing the related report of the Committee (A/68/7/Add.7).

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group of 77 and China has always been supportive of management reform initiatives aimed at increasing the efficiency and capacity of the Secretariat in delivering better results for the Organization.
4. In July 2006, the General Assembly in its Resolution 60/283 endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to implement an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) - The UMOJA project across the United Nations, in recognition of the fact that the UN has multiple bespoke information and communications technology systems that cannot easily interact, are costly to maintain and have not kept pace with technological advancements. The aim of the project was to simplify a wide range of administrative practices and to provide the UN with updated and accurate data that will enable quicker decision making and better service delivery through improved planning of programmes and measurements of results.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group of 77 and China welcomes the progress achieved with the implementation of Umoja Foundation at the pilot sites, on July 2013, and at peacekeeping operations and the Regional Service Center at Entebbe on November 2013. These achievements are particularly noticeable in view of the difficult situation the project faced since its inception. Furthermore, the Group notes actions taken to strengthen the governance arrangements for the project in response to General Assembly resolution 66 246.

6. In spite of the good progress, the Group remains concerned by the significant challenges and risks faced by the project, as pointed out by both the Board of Auditors and the ACABQ.

Organizational readiness, handling of procurement contracts, possible delays in the implementation of project schedule, building the necessary in-house expertise, adequacy of ICT structure and resources in the Organization. The Group intends to receive more information from the Secretariat during the informal sessions regarding these and other issues.

7. We also look forward to receiving detailed information on the roll-out of Umoja Foundation at all peacekeeping missions and an update on the status of preparatory activities for implementation at special political missions on February 2014. Lessons learned from these initial steps are fundamental for strengthening the implementation of the project.

Mr. Chairman,

8. The Group concurs with ACABQ and the BoA on the importance of a detailed benefits realization plan. More clarity on how data from ERP will be used to deliver benefits and on the potential impacts of more efficient and effective administration processes is necessary for a better understanding of implications of the implementation of ERP.

9. As recommended by the ACABQ, the Group stresses the importance of providing Member States with comprehensive, high-quality, accurate and timely information to facilitate consideration and decision-making on administrative and budgetary proposals.

Mr. Chairman,

10. The Group takes note of the information presented by the Board of Auditors on the review of the execution of the design phase. The Group is concerned by the considerable weaknesses detected in the initial phases of the project, which led to ineffective and inefficient use of resources. Management failures that caused delays in the implementation of the project and contributed to its cost overruns. The Group will follow this issue closely and will look for assurances that similar problems do not reoccur in the project or in other initiatives.

11. The Group reiterates that a strong leadership is key to successfully manage and deliver of such a complex organization-wide business transformation. In that regard, we welcome the information provided on the future Umoja support team, but we share ACABQ's concern on the risks of dismantling the project team prematurely.

Mr. Chairman,

12. The Group of 77 and China will constructively participate in the discussion of this very important agenda item in the coming days.

Thank you.