



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. NADA TARBUS, FIRST SECRETARY, MISSION OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 149: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: UNITED NATIONS LOGISTICS BASE (UNLB), AT THE SECOND RESUMED PART OF THE SEVENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 8 May 2019)

Madam Chair,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 149: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations - United Nations Logistics Base (UNLB).

The Group would like to thank Mr. Chandramouli Ramanathan, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller, and Mr. Cihan Terzi, Chair of the Advisory Committee on the Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for introducing their respective reports.

Madam Chair,

The Group welcomes the report of the Secretary General (A/73/774) and that of the Advisory committee (A/73/755/Add.9) on the financing of Peacekeeping operations; UNLB.

The Group recalls that the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, has been in operation since late 1994 and that the United Nations Logistics Base operates as a unified entity, comprising the Global Service Centre, Brindisi, and the United Nations Information and Communications Technology Facility, Valencia, both of which provide global geospatial, information and telecommunications technologies, logistics and supply chain operational management, as well as enabling support services throughout the life cycle of field missions, from start-up planning and preparation to liquidation.

At the outset, the Group recognizes the important role of the UNLB in supporting peacekeeping missions to deliver their mandates, and therefore continues to believe in improving its functioning. In this regard, we note the main priorities of the Secretary-General regarding UNLB in this period, including:

- Renaming the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies (SGITT) the Global Technology Service (GTS);
- Resubmitting the revised concept of operations for Strategic Deployment Stocks (SDS);
- Implementing the second and final phase of Civilian Staffing Review recommendations;
- Updating the scalability model for UNLB;
- Transforming the Field Central Review Bodies (FCRB) Unit into a new tenant unit of the Department of Operational Support (DOS) hosted in UNLB; and
- Increasing the capacity of UNLB in the areas of environmental management and occupational safety and health.

Madam Chair,

We wish to recall General Assembly Resolutions 71/294 and 72/287, and the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services in documents A/71/836/Add.10 and A/71/798 and those of the Secretary-General in document A/72/783, which discussed the revised concept of operations for SDS.

We echo the Advisory Committee's observation that the report of the Secretary-General states that additional resources required for maintaining commercial enabling capability will be included in the budget of UNLB, and that UNLB will develop a comprehensive solicitation plan in collaboration with United Nations Headquarters and identify the proposed requirements to be presented to the General Assembly.

The Group will seek further clarification on the role of the procurement division in the Department of Operational Support at Headquarters and of UNLB with regard to the procurement process and the generation of sourcing options.

Madam Chair,

In recalling the OIOS recommendation regarding the need to consider alternative venues for SDS storage closer to the theatre of operations, including through partnerships with, and by leveraging the experiences of other United Nations entities, the Group does not understand why the study and decision on the matter were not expedited noting that procurement is one of the major reforms that urgently needs to be addressed especially when its percentage of budget allocation is taken into account.

The Group considers the inclusion of unmanned aerial vehicles as part of the Strategic Deployment Stock to be unjustified and will further examine the category of items identified for inclusion in the SDS and the level of procurement sought to enable the Committee to make specific recommendations on the SDS. The Group also looks forward to obtaining a better understanding of the concept of Delegation of Authority as applied in the case of procurement.

The Group welcomes the efficiency gains in UNLB obtained through the application of the established scalability model to reflect the decreased demand for services, which has resulted in a net reduction of 16 contractors, estimated at some \$2 million in regard to the client base of the SGITT due to the closure of UNOCI and UNMIL, and downsizing of UNAMID. However, the Group notes that there were no substantial changes in the staff allocation.

In closing, Madam Chair, allow me to assure you of the Group's readiness to engage constructively in order to reach a successful conclusion on this agenda item.

I thank you.