



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR LYLE DAVIDSON, COUNSELLOR AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 132: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2014-2015: UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR EBOLA EMERGENCY RESPONSE, AT THE SECOND PART OF THE RESUMED SIXTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 21 May 2015)

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 132: programme budget for biennium 2014-2015, specifically on the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER).

The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller for introducing the Secretary-General's report on this agenda item. We would also like to extend our appreciation to Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for introducing the related report.

The Group would like to take this opportunity to express its appreciation to the personnel of the United Nations system and the international community at large for their dedicated service and commitment to serving the affected countries and providing assistance to the populations of the countries concerned. We would like to pay special tribute to those who lost their lives in this service to humanity.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group appreciates the collective support from the international community in the effort to overcome the disease and we recognize the need for further measures and support to local authorities to prevent future outbreaks by putting in place necessary health care infrastructure and early warning mechanisms in the affected countries.

The Group recognizes the efforts made by the Secretary-General, in particular the significant progress made in the implementation of the four identified critical lines of action: case finding and contact tracing; case management; safe and dignified burials; and community engagement and social mobilization. The Group welcomes the sharp decline in the rate of transmission of Ebola across the three most affected countries through the concerted and collective efforts of all stakeholders.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group has taken note of the revised estimates for UNMEER to the amount of \$91 million representing a decrease of US\$ 103 million or 53% from the initial proposal. We have also taken note of the observations, comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the detailed elements of the proposed resource requirement.

The Group of 77 and China recalls that the General Assembly regretted the proposed top-heavy

structure of the Mission and Special Envoy in resolution 69/262. The Group is disappointed to learn that the Secretary-General continues to present similar proposals despite the previous reservation expressed. In this regard, the Group does not see the need for two positions at Under-Secretary-General level for an operation which is drawing down. The Group believes that the Head of the Mission can assume the functions of the Special Envoy as appropriate.

The Group will critically examine the merits of other posts and budgetary elements as well as the need for proposed backstopping arrangement at Headquarters. We will present concrete proposals to address our concern during the informal consultations.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, the Group would like to assure you that, despite the time constraints, we will engage constructively on this agenda item with a view to conclude in a timely manner.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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