

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF GUYANA ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION OF THE FIRST PART OF THE RESUMED FIFTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

8 March 1999

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. Since I am addressing this Committee for the first time, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to assure you of full cooperation of the Group of 77 and China in achieving our common objectives in the interest of the Member States and the Organization. The Group is confident that under your able leadership this Committee will be able to accomplish the important task before it.
3. We would also like to congratulate the delegation of Indonesia for their important role in successfully leading the Group of 77 and China in 1998. The Group was successful in achieving common understanding and agreements on a number of difficult negotiations under the capable leadership of Indonesia. We would like to continue the same positive and constructive attitude in negotiations with our partners in this Committee in pursuit of our common objectives.
4. The G-77 and China is concerned about the growing tendency among some members to put blame on the G-77 and China for lack of progress on certain items. In this context, we recall the unwarranted remarks by a group of member states accusing the G-77 of inconclusive negotiations on a certain agenda item. As a matter of fact, it is only the G-77 which had its proposals on that issue. We do not believe that such a tendency is at all helpful to our work. Since we all share responsibility for the work of the Committee, it is desirable to maintain a cooperative, positive and respectful attitude to all of our colleagues and their commitment to the success of the work of the Committee.
5. The Group of 77 and China notes with deep concern some uncalled for, undiplomatic and impolite remarks made by a delegation in the local media about some developing countries. We recall that similar remarks were made by the same delegation against developing countries in August 1998. The Group of 77 and China deeply regrets this kind of attitude which is not acceptable and in no way would contribute in making the environment in this Committee conducive to achieving positive results.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Group would like to thank the Secretariat for timely submission of the two documents on the programme of work and the status of documentation as contained in documents A/C.5/53/L.37 and A/C.5/53/L.38. We appreciate their efforts in suggesting a programme of work which could accommodate almost all outstanding issues which could not be concluded in the last session.
7. At the same time, we would like also to reiterate our concern about late submission of documents which disrupts the smooth functioning of the Committee. This chronic problem needs to be addressed seriously to ensure that the Secretariat complies with the six-week rule which is reaffirmed every year by the General Assembly. In this context, we emphasize full implementation of the relevant paragraphs of resolution 53/208.
8. The Group also notes with concern that a number of reports are not submitted in accordance with resolution 51/214 B, paras 24-25, and resolution 53/208 B, paras. 10 and 11. We would like to seek a clarification from the Secretariat on the reasons for non-compliance with this decision of the General

Assembly regarding the format of the reports.

Mr. Chairman,

9. We would like to offer our brief comments and suggestions on the programme of work suggested by the Secretariat. In our view during the session sufficient time should be allocated to the agenda items on Human Resources Management, Procurement Reform, budget-related issues including the Development Account, Gratis Personnel, scale of assessments (doc. A/53/11/Add.1) and the review of resolution 48/218 B, in order to conclude our consideration of these important agenda items during this session. We may attain this objective by better organization of our programme of work. We would like to suggest that the meetings should not be fragmented and too many items should not be clustered in one meeting.

10. As regards procurement reform, we propose that the Fifth Committee begin consideration of the issue of procurement reform and defer consideration of outsourcing practices until we receive comments of ACABQ on the Secretary-General's report. We hope ACABQ would find it convenient to provide us with its recommendations on the report to enable us to conclude this item in its entirety in this session.

11. The Group is of the view that the time proposed for the meetings on the thematic reports of the Joint Inspection Unit and the Office of Internal Oversight Services may be utilized for the aforementioned agenda items. Once we reach an agreement on the related outstanding issues it will be perhaps easier to reach a conclusion on these items.

12. As regards the reports of the Board of Auditors, if no delegation has expressed its desire to raise a particular issue under this agenda item, we may also utilize the time allocated for the purpose to the agenda items which should be concluded in this session.

Mr. Chairman,

13. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China would like to assure you of our full cooperation and expresses its readiness to engage in constructive negotiations with the hope that all of our negotiating partners will join us in the same spirit to make this session a great success.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.