

INTERVENTION BY THE DELEGATION OF INDONESIA ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA IN THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON AGENDA ITEM 116, PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999: ON THE REDUCTION AND REFOCUSING OF NON-PROGRAMME COSTS

New York, 13 March 1998

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 116, programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999: specifically on the reduction and refocusing of non-programme costs.
2. At the outset the Group of 77 and China wish to express its gratitude to the Under-Secretary-General for Management of the United Nations for his introductory remarks to the report of the Secretary-General on the reduction and refocusing of non-programme costs as contained in document A/52/758.
3. We would also like to express our appreciation to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for his lucid introduction to the report of the Advisory Committee as contained in document A/52/7/Add.10.

Mr. Chairman,

4. We have read with interest the report of the Secretary-General, and we take note with appreciation the report of the ACABQ, upon which we would like to make a few brief comments:
 - a. We share the view by the ACABQ that the report of the Secretary-General does not reflect a clear concept of what constitutes the nature of the activities funded by the regular budget. In this context, for example, it is not clear to us as to how some intergovernmental and expert bodies are included as non-programme costs.
 - b. We also concur with the comments of the ACABQ that there is serious problem with the methodology for calculating the percentage of the non-programme costs.
 - c. We note the ACABQ's observation, as elucidated in paragraph 7 of its report, the assumption that the activities of the Department of Public Information are a non-programme costs has no basis.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group of 77 and China attach particular interest to the issue of reduction and refocusing of non-programme costs. We are of the view that the decision on this matter should only be taken after the Secretary-General submits a detailed report by the end of March 1998 identifying the sustainability of the establishment of the development account as well as the modalities of implementation, the specific purposes and associated performance criteria for the use of such resources as was requested by General Assembly resolution 52/12B. In this regard, the report should also take into account the comments of the ACABQ as contained in its report A/52/7/Add.10. Therefore, we would like to propose that consideration of this matter be deferred until the Secretary-General submits the report.

Thank you.