

**STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF GUYANA, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, ON AGENDA ITEM 124: PATTERN OF CONFERENCES, BEFORE THE FIFTH COMMITTEE AT THE 54TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**New York, 19 October 1999**

Madam Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 124, Pattern of Conferences.
2. The Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation to the chairman of the Committee on Conferences for presentation of the Committee's reports.
3. We would also like to thank the Under-Secretary General for General Assembly Affairs and Conferences Services for introducing the reports of the Secretary-General on this agenda item.
4. The Group notes the overall utilization of the Conference services in New York during 1998 exceeding the benchmark along with similar trends in Geneva and Vienna.
5. We would also like to express our appreciation for the inclusion of meeting statistics for the United Nations Office at Nairobi. However, the Group would like to reaffirm the position of the Foreign Ministers of the Group of 77 and China in the Ministerial Declaration of September 24, 1999, where the Ministers underscored the importance of the United Nations Office at Nairobi, as the only United Nations Centre in the developing world and highlighted that this Office should have the same status as United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna. In this regard they expressed concern at the low number of meetings held at the United Nations Office at Nairobi and emphasized the need for the establishment of a permanent interpretation service at the Office.
6. With regard to the format of documentation and reports, the Group of 77 and China notes with concern that the provision of paragraphs 24 and 25 of General Assembly resolution 52/214 B and General Assembly resolution 53/208 B are not being fully implemented. In this regard, we emphasize full implementation of the provisions of the General Assembly resolutions by the Secretariat and expert bodies. Moreover, the Group would like to seek clarification on the reasons for non-compliance with the decisions of the General Assembly. The Group reiterates its reluctance to consider all those reports which are not submitted in compliance with the General Assembly decisions.

Madam Chairman,

7. The Group of 77 and China expresses its deep concern on the chronic problem of delay in the issuance of documentation and reiterates its position for compliance with the six-week rule for issuance of documents. This is particularly important for small delegations to have ample time to consider the reports.
8. Furthermore, the Group of 77 and China stresses the need to strengthen the capacity and the capability of the Document Distribution Section, so as to enable this Section to perform its functions better in serving the Member States.

9. We would like to express our deep concern for the suspension of some publications in all official languages and the continued high rates of self-revision during peak workload period, which sometimes make it difficult for the delegates to work with maximum efficiency. We request the Secretariat to make efforts to ensure timely submission of documents in all the official languages.

Madam Chairman,

10. Finally, the Group of 77 and China would like to underline that the Secretary-General should issue public information material in all official languages on the United Nations Web site, as soon as possible, in accordance with the resolutions 52/214 and 53/208. In this regard, we would like to receive information from the Secretariat on the implementation of these provisions.

11. The Group also notes with deep concern the further reduction in resources proposed for the General Assembly and Conference Services in the biennium 2000-2001. In view of the difficulties being faced by the Conference Services we find it difficult to understand the rationale for such reductions. The Conference Services is the main service provided to Member States. We therefore emphasize that all necessary resources should be provided to it for its effective functioning.

12. In order to avoid further unbalancing of the rate of utilization of conference services and facilities in the different duty stations, the Group of 77 and China would like to emphasize the importance and necessity for all UN bodies and organs to abide by the headquarters rule, and in this regard requests the Committee on Conferences to carefully consider each request before providing any exceptions to such a rule.

I thank you, Madam Chairman.