



**STATEMENT BY MRS. AICHA AFIFI, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY,
DELEGATION OF MOROCCO, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND
CHINA, ON THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE
DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH
SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 30 September 2003)**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Allow me at the outset to congratulate you for your election as Chairman of the Fifth Committee for the fifty-eighth session. It is also my privilege to congratulate other members of the bureau for their well deserved election. It is indeed our conviction that under your leadership, the Committee will accomplish all the important tasks entrusted to it. In this context, I would like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, of the Group's fullest cooperation in achieving our common objectives in the interest of Member States and the Organization.

I would like to seize this opportunity to thank the Secretariat as well as the bureau for organizing technical seminars on the scale of assessments and on the budgetary process. We believe that this valuable initiative will help delegations understand better the technical aspects of these important issues.

Mr. Chairman,

We appreciate the efforts of the bureau in suggesting a programme of work. The Group of 77 and China has considered the proposed programme of work submitted by the bureau. We are pleased that the programme of work before us accommodates a number of outstanding items that were deferred from the last session. We stress the importance of allocating adequate time to the priority items to ensure their successful conclusion. In keeping with the traditional practice in the Committee, we stand ready to make the necessary adjustments to the proposed programme as required.

Mr. Chairman,

This session is one of special importance to all Member States. First and foremost, we are about to embark on serious discussions regarding the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005. We also have a number of items that have special significance for my Group among which are the reform of the Organization, the scale of assessments, improving the financial situation of the UN, pattern of conferences, procurement/outsourcing, financing of peacekeeping operations, capital master plan, programme planning, as well as financing of the International Criminal Tribunals.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group is of the understanding that the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions is traditionally mandated to extract and submit to the President of the General Assembly the aspect of the report of the Committee dealing with applications under Article 19. This is to enable expeditious decision on the matter and allow concerned Member States to participate in the voting process. For

that reason, the Group would prefer that the issue of Article 19 be brought forward for consideration during the first week of our programme.

In this respect, it is important that the Secretariat submit documentation in accordance with the six-week rule, so that all delegations may have sufficient time to review them before their consideration in the Committee. The late submission of documents affects all delegations and has proved to be an impediment to the proper functioning of our Committee.

The Group recognizes the efforts that have been exerted by the Secretariat in the area of timely issuance of documents, which has illustrated some improvements as compared to previous sessions. However, we note with concern that some documents continue to be issued late. In this regard, we would like to emphasize the responsibility of author departments to submit their reports on time in order for such documents to be issued in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions and its Rules of Procedure. We were wondering why the item related to administration of justice has not been reflected in this proposed programme of work while it is supposed to be considered during this session.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, it is our hope that a spirit of cordiality and cooperation would prevail throughout the session and impact on the conclusions the Committee will reach on all issues before us. To this end, we call on all our negotiating partners to be prepared to demonstrate maximum flexibility in the course of the session to enable the Committee to finish all the scheduled agenda items on time.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate its assurance of full cooperation and wish you the best of success.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.