STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. KAREN LOCK, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 124: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2006-2007 (PROGRAMME BUDGET IMPLICATIONS ON THE DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/60/L.48) FINALISING THE ESTABLISMENT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL), AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 9 March 2006)

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China has been ready since Monday, March 6 to adopt the Programme Budget Implications (PBI) submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. By adopting the Programme Budget Implications, the Committee will facilitate the adoption of draft resolution A/60/L.48, which will finalize the establishment of the Human Rights Council by the General Assembly.

The Group of 77 and China is ready to endorse the resource levels requested by the Secretary-General of $ US 4,503,700 of which of $US4, 328,700 will be charged to the Contingency Fund. We note that the Committee is unable to take action on the Programme Budget Implications today due to lack of instructions on the part of one delegation.

The Group of 77 and China wishes to assure you, Mr. Chairman, that we are ready to respond with a sense of urgency to the request by the President of the General Assembly to take action on the Programme Budget Implications and we trust that the Bureau will schedule informal consultations thereon as a matter of priority. We also trust that all delegations will be able to join the consensus at that time.

This Committee has a large number of items before it and we stand ready to engage in earnest negotiations on each and every item to ensure that we do not waste the resources of the Organization.

The Group of 77 and China supports the reform efforts to strengthen the United Nations, including its human rights machinery. Action on the results of negotiations that have been conducted over several months is necessary in order to ensure that the human rights machinery of the United Nations, which is presently awaiting a decision on this resolution, carries on its functions without any interruption.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.