

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. GARFIELD BARNWELL, DELEGATE OF GUYANA ON THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York, 21 September 1999

Madam Chairman,

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

The Group of 77 and China would like to congratulate you and other members for election to the Bureau of the Fifth Committee. We wish you and the bureau members the best of success in fulfilling your respective functions. Further, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to assure you of our 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 all the important tasks before it.

Madam Chairman,

We appreciate the efforts of the Bureau in suggesting a programme of work which also accommodates a number of outstanding agenda items that could not be concluded in the last session. The Group would like to thank the Fifth Committee Secretariat for submission of the documentation for this meeting.

The late submission of documentation is of continuing concern to the Group. A large number of reports are yet to be issued. This chronic state of affairs affects the smooth functioning of the Committee's work and should be addressed seriously under the relevant agenda item. It is of utmost importance that the Secretariat should comply with the six-week rule for submission of the documents. In this context, we emphasize full implementation of the relevant provisions of the General Assembly resolution 53/208 and rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Further, the Group notes with great concern the continued non-compliance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 52/214 B, paragraphs 24-25, and resolution 53/208 B, paragraphs 10-11, and the rules of procedure of the General Assembly concerning the format of reports submitted by the Secretariat and expert bodies. Once again, we would like to seek clarification from the Secretariat on the reasons for non-compliance with these decisions regarding the format of reports. We reiterate the Group's reluctance to consider all those reports which are not submitted in full conformity with the decisions of the General Assembly.

Madam Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China would like to state that the informal consultations should be conducted in a transparent manner. Moreover, there should not be any parallel informal consultations and these should be announced well in advance to enable all delegations to participate in these consultations.

The Group of 77 and China is looking forward to make this session a great success. We are ready to engage in constructive negotiations in the usual spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding with our negotiating partners. We hope that all of our negotiating partners will join us in the same spirit for the successful conclusion of this session.

We are conscious of the fact that the agenda of the Fifth Committee is not only growing but also contains complex issues. All of us should strive to conclude our work in time without resorting to late night and weekend meetings. The Group attaches great importance to the efficient functioning of this Committee.

The Group of 77 and China is of the view that in case the Fifth Committee is unable to accomplish its work in this main part of the fifty-fourth session, the Bureau should plan to hold a longer first resumed session than the previous sessions. This would be inevitable to reduce the growing number of items on the Fifth Committee agenda and to achieve desirable results.

Madam Chairman,

In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China would like to assure you of its full cooperation and wish you a great success.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.