



**STATEMENT BY CHERRYL GORDON, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AT THE 7TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION ON AGENDA ITEM 2: PROGRAMME AND BUDGET (Nairobi, Kenya, 19 October 2005)**

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the Committee of the Whole. I would also like to thank the Secretariat of the UNCCD for their comprehensive and excellent presentation of this agenda item on the Programme and Budget of the Organisation.

Mr. Chairman,

The G77 and China is still in the process of studying the technical implications of all the various proposals and the technical data contained in the various documents associated with this agenda item. Nevertheless, we wish to underline the paramount importance that the Group attaches to the funding of all the decisions that the COP has taken to implement this Convention. Indeed, it is surprising that, as we draw increasingly closer to the stage of implementation, we find that many of the activities that we have mandated do lack the necessary financial resources to become operational. Of particular concern is the decrease in resources for activities in the key area of science and technology.

We understand that the fluctuations in the exchange rate between the US Dollar and the Euro may have played a part in the failure to implement important activities and in the shortfall we are currently facing. Nevertheless, we urge all Parties to continue to give other activities under the Convention the resources they require.

Mr. Chairman,

In the informal session, the G77 and China will participate in the detailed discussions on exploring all possible options to overcome this situation. We take note of the economy- saving measures that the Executive Secretary has taken and we caution that those measures should not harm activities related to the implementation of the Convention, especially in affected country Parties.

We are grateful to all those who have assisted in alleviating the burden of these fluctuations in our budget.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the Report of the UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), which we will address in the context of its consideration later this week. However, as a preliminary comment, we recognise that many of the recommendations in the Report could assist us in finding, hopefully, a lasting solution to the problems that we face.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the G77 and China would like to recall that the work of the Programme and Budget would have to take into account the outcome of the discussions on many other items of the agenda that we have before us.

The G77 and China will do its best to co-operate fully with you and all our partners in the discussion of this agenda item.

Thank You.