



STATEMENT

**by Mr. Brouz Ralph Enneric COFFI, Minister Plenipotentiary at the
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations,
on agenda item 134 Proposed programme budget for the biennium
2014-2015: Strengthening the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa during
the main part of the sixty-eight session of the Fifth Committee
of the General Assembly
(New York, 2 December, 2013)**

Mr. Chairman,

1- I have the honor to speak on behalf of the African Group on agenda item 134 proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015: Strengthening the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. This statement comes fully in support to the one just delivered by the Representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2- The African Group wishes to thank Mr. Johannes Huisman, Director of Programme, Planning and Budget Division for introducing reports of the Secretary General on the revised estimates and in particular on the report related to the Strengthening the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. We would also like to thank Mr. Carlos Massieu, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for introducing the related reports.

3- The African Group continue to attach highest priority and importance to the role played by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa in coordinating United Nations system-wide support and mobilizing international support for Africa's development, and peace and security in general, and for NEPAD in particular.

Mr. Chairman,

4- The African Group recalls that by its resolution 57/300, the General Assembly endorsed the creation of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and entrusted to it the role of coordinating reports and global advocacy in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The African Group also recalls a number of consultative processes, including by Summits of Heads of States and government in Africa, as well as at the United Nations level prior to establishment of the Office, which were geared to transform the previous agenda of the Continent to the new one under the NEPAD.

5- Our Groups also notes that Africa, as one of the eight priorities of the United Nations, has been undergoing a significant transformation marked by major social, political and economic changes since the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) ten years ago. This transformation has been strengthened by the African Head of States and Government through a new African narrative and rebranding mandate entitled the Africa Renaissance. Very important meetings and activities to further implement this mandate are currently on going worldwide. Our Group expects that the United Nations, as it has always do, will continue to support the Africa Renaissance aimed at reinforcing the development of Africa. The United Nations support is of key importance as will further enhance the current rapid transformation of Africa which presents now new and more opportunities and also challenges that will require the OSAA to expand, strengthen its activities and broaden its engagement in order to better respond to the needs of the continent in the light of its global changing in the context of Africa Renaissance.

Mr. Chairman,

6- The African Group has taken note that the Office has suffered negatively from the lack of senior leadership in recent years. We once again welcome the initiative taken by Secretary general to respond to members states mandates not only those from General Assembly resolution 66/293 but a number of calls coming from experts and other intergovernmental bodies including the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the ECOSOC on strengthening the activities of the Office.

Mr. Chairman,

7- The African Group welcomes and fully support the Secretary-General proposal on post and non-post resources on strengthening the Office in the areas of policy analysis, monitoring and research, intergovernmental support, advocacy and inter-agency coordination. We also fully support the Secretary General proposal on establishing additional 10 new posts in the Office, as well as the related financial requirement.

8- The African Group would like to emphasize that, the strengthening of the Office should be commensurate with the mandates entrusted to it and that all posts requested and approved must be filled as a matter of priority and in full compliance with existing provisions, including geographical and gender balances.

9- The Group commends the Office for providing support to African Countries in important intergovernmental negotiations and processes including those related to climate change and sustainable development goals, including Africa priorities in the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda. As regards to transfer of technology, no meaningful progress has been made in these recent years, the Group calls on the Office to continue working in this area in order to have Africa's development partners meet their commitments toward the continent.

10- The African Group will thus closely scrutinize the comments, observation and recommendations of the Advisory Committee with the aim of making an informed decision. We will further analyze how all previous mandates have been incorporated in the proposal before us.

Mr. Chairman,

11- In conclusion, I wish to reiterate the African Group's readiness and willingness to constructively engage in negotiations on this important item for the Organization with the aim of reaching a positive outcome to the earliest possible time.

I thank you.