



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE  
ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN  
NATIONS BY AMBASSADOR KAREN TAN,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED  
NATIONS, AGENDA ITEM 134: PROPOSED  
PROGRAMME BUDGET BIENNIUM 2014-2015  
– SPECIAL POLITICAL MISSIONS,  
16 DECEMBER 2013**

1 Thank you, Mr Chairman.

2 I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 10 Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. We thank Controller Ms Gina Casar and ACABQ Chair Mr Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairman for introducing their reports.

3 SPMs have grown significantly in number, size and complexity in recent years. Today, they include large field missions which have more in common with peacekeeping operations than traditional UN political missions. Costs have also escalated. In 2000-2001, \$86 million was appropriated for SPMs. The preliminary proposed budget for SPMs for 2014-2015 is \$1.1 billion, an increase of well over 1000%. If the overall regular budget had followed a similar trend, we would be discussing a budget proposal in excess of \$25 billion today.

4 ASEAN recognises and fully supports the role played by SPMs in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. SPMs are often deployed to address challenges which other actors are unwilling or unable to deal with. They fill a gap in the maintenance of peace and security, helping many who would otherwise be neglected. ASEAN deeply appreciates the sacrifices of their staff, many of whom work in conflict and post-conflict zones.

5 Given the important contributions of SPMs, their effective functioning should be a matter of high priority for all Member States. To enhance their effectiveness, we should undertake a serious review of their funding and backstopping arrangements. With the burgeoning share of SPMs in the regular budget, the inadequacy of the current arrangements is increasingly evident. Proposals to address the problem were presented in 2011, but have

yet to be acted on by this Committee.

6 The delay is partly due to the chronically late introduction of SPM budgets. Today's introduction, for example, is taking place after the session was supposed to have ended. The habitual late introduction of budgets hinders substantive consideration of SPM funding and backstopping although the reports on the latter have been outstanding since 2011. ASEAN is deeply concerned by this unnecessary impact. If a satisfactory outcome on funding and backstopping is still not achieved in this session, ASEAN proposes delinking future consideration of this topic from the introduction of SPM budgets.

7 The main cause of delay, however, is the lack of meaningful engagement by some delegations on the ACABQ's recommendations, particularly the creation of a separate account for SPMs. ASEAN believes that a separate account aligned with the PKO budget cycle would benefit SPMs. One, the current format of the biennial programme budget is ill-suited to SPMs, which are created or expanded at any time within a biennium. Two, synchronised SPM and PKO budget cycles would facilitate transitions from one form of mission to another. Three, field-based SPMs are already planned and managed using PKO models and alignment with the peacekeeping budget cycle is logical.

8 ASEAN emphasises that the creation of a separate account is indivisible from other measures improving SPM funding and backstopping. A separate SPMs account synchronised with the PKO budget cycle facilitates the implementation of other proposals regarding transfers between SPMs and resources accessed only by PKOs such as the peacekeeping reserve fund, peacekeeping support account and strategic deployment stocks. We should not authorise these transfers, only to undermine the reform process by taking a piecemeal approach and rejecting the separate account. Acting in the best interests of SPMs requires considering inter-related proposals holistically and implementing reforms as a whole to maximise their cumulative benefits.

9 ASEAN also emphasises that the unequal influence among Member States over the creation and mandate setting of SPMs should be reflected in how they are funded. 34 out of the current 38 SPMs were created by the Security Council. The scale of assessments for PKOs reflects the special responsibilities of the Permanent Members of the Security Council, and we believe that the scale of assessments for SPMs should do the same. If those who hold the most influence over SPMs cannot bear these modest costs, serious consideration should be given to the expansion of the permanent

membership. This will allow responsibility and power to be distributed in a way that is more equitable for everyone. The general membership of the UN should not be unduly taxed if they have inadequate representation in the decisions of the Security Council.

10 ASEAN Member States look forward to discussing all proposed measures on funding and backstopping of SPMs. Thank you Mr Chairman.