



# AUSTRALIA



**Australian Mission to the United Nations**

E-mail [australia@un.int](mailto:australia@un.int)

150 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, New York NY 10017-5612 Ph 212 - 351 6600 Fax 212 - 351 6610 [www.AustraliaUN.org](http://www.AustraliaUN.org)

## **UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (FIFTH COMMITTEE)**

**11 May 2016**

## **IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

**Statement by Mr Scott-Marshall Harper  
Second Secretary of Australia to the United Nations**

(Check against delivery)

---

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

I have the honour to speak today on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. We would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Takasu for his presentation last week on the financial situation of the United Nations.

CANZ delegations welcome Mr Takasu's assessment that the overall financial situation of the United Nations at the end of 2015 was generally sound. We were also pleased to see that, in most areas, unpaid assessments were lower than at the corresponding time in 2014.

However, at the end of March 2016, \$827 million was still owed to Member States for peacekeeping activities. While this number is projected to decrease slightly by the end of the year, the number is still too high. Timely payments to Member States for the troops, formed police units, and contingent-owned equipment they contribute to peacekeeping operations, as well as for letters of assist and death and disability claims, will always depend on the ability of

Member States to meet their financial obligations to the United Nations in full and on time.

The consequences of unpaid assessed contributions are clear. Troop and police-contributing countries are left waiting for the reimbursement of the costs they have incurred, which can impact negatively on the motivation of Member States to contribute personnel and material assets to future peacekeeping operations. It also results in inequity between Member States which have paid their assessed contributions in full and on time and those which have not.

Mr Chairman

Unpaid assessed contributions also have a significant adverse impact on the cash flow of the Organization. As at 30 April 2016, more than \$1.4 billion of regular budget contributions remained outstanding. While the Working Capital Fund was established to provide advances to bridge the period before the receipt of contributions, this liquidity mechanism can only function properly if those contributions are paid on time and in full. We must be judicious in the use of this Fund and the Special Account, and avoid drawing heavily on them as we were required to at the end of last year to cover the \$217 million dollar cash shortfall. As Mr Takasu has pointed out, the regular budget situation will be tighter towards the end of this year and, if the trend of the previous year continues, the Organization's cash position will again be facing significant stress.

CANZ delegations will continue to demonstrate our commitment to the work of the United Nations by paying our dues in full and on time. While recognizing the challenges associated with differences in financial years and the timing of related national legislative processes, we urge all Member States to do the same. The Organization has a mechanism in place to assist Member States in addressing their fiscal arrears, and we encourage all eligible Member States to make use of this mechanism by submitting multi-year payment plans.

Mr Chairman

We must all continue to provide the Organisation with the resources it needs, but just as importantly, we must continue to identify areas where savings can be made, to refine processes, and commit ourselves fully to exhausting all options to make the most of what we have. It is the firm view of CANZ that in order to improve the financial situation of the United Nations we must, above all else, manage the resources provided to the Organisation efficiently and effectively.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.