Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the African Group on the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (PKOs) as well as UN support Office to Somalia (UNSOS) in particular to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

The Group Would like to thank Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, Assistant Secretary-General, the Controller for introducing various reports of the Secretary-General today and we also thank her in advance for the introduction to come this and next week on the performance and budget proposals for various peacekeeping missions. We would also to extend our appreciation to Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee for introducing the related reports- and of course for those to be introduced this and next week.

This approach of one statement for all PKOs is part of our practical commitment to save time and money, so you can be assured the question of working beyond May, is not part of our agenda.

Allow me on behalf of the African Group to once again salute all uniformed and civilian personnel who have dedicated their lives to serve peacekeeping under the umbrella of the United Nations and African Union under difficult, harsh, dangerous and complex environments. Once again, the Group pay special tribute to those who lost their lives in servicing the United Nations and/or African Union for humanity and peace on earth.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the budget performance for the active Missions, the African Group has taken note of the related information for the year 2014/2015 as well as updates for the projected expenditure for the 2015/2016. The Group notes the overall financial performance at the rate of 96.7 % for financial year 2014/2015 for
the 15 active PKOs, Regional Service Center Entebbe, Logistic Base in Brindisi and support account to which were allocated a total of US$ 8.5 billion.

The Group has taken note on the elements of the variations and will be interested to study in details a number of key elements of the budget implementation, in particular those related to the facilities and infrastructure including accommodations, recruitments and human resources management issues as well as other mission support elements such as medical, training and expenditure related to the information communication technology, troop and equipment reimbursement as well as elements of a number of reform initiatives during informal deliberations.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the proposals for the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations for financial year 2016/2017, the African Group has taken note of proposed resources for each of the individual mission and support for the African Union Mission in Somalia which aggregate in the amount of US$ 8.25 billion representing a reduction of about 0.3% of the approved resources for the current financial year.

The Group would like to reiterate the great importance it attaches to the allocation of the adequate resources to each of individual peacekeeping operations in general and specifically those located in Africa taking into account the complexity of their respective mandate, the unique circumstances justifying these mandates and the magnitude of the challenges of the operations in the ground. The Group continues to be of the strong view that, among many other factors, allocation of the adequate resources is critical to ensuring that peacekeeping operations deliver on their mandate in an efficient, effective and timely manner.

We will be interested to learn the details of assumptions behind derivation of each of the element of the proposal in each of the mission budget and to what extent are those assumption and the numbers are compatible in ensuring the delivery of the specific mandate of the mission.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group strongly believes that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the United Nations Security Council and that role of regional arrangements and agencies should continue to be implemented in accordance with the relevant provisions in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Group notes that United Nations arrangement for support to the peacekeeping activities approved by the United Nations Security Council and carried by the regional and/or sub-regional organizations in particular the African Union Mission in Somalia are not receiving the same treatment like those under United Nations.
In this regard, the African Group recalls the ‘Djibouti Declaration’-the Outcome document on the Summit of the troop and police contributing countries of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) which was held in Djibouti on 28 February 2016 and it is the Group’s strong view that, the United Nations through Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) should fully support AMISOM at all levels, especially on the reimbursement of troops and contingent owned equipment (COE) with similar treatment to that of United Nations peacekeeping missions, within the provision of the Chapter 8 of the Charter of the United Nations and in accordance with the relevant mandates including Security Council resolutions 2036 (2012), 2093 (2013), and 2111 (2013).

Mr. Chairman,

As we stated in the past, the African Group would like to stress that, the consideration of the peacekeeping budgets should not be taken as a simple costs reduction exercise but rather a responsible mandate implementation-resource allocation and policy guidance driven exercise. We will invest our time to ensure these principle are applied as we scrutinize each of the budget proposal. The Group will further study careful findings of the oversight bodies in particular Board of Auditors as well as observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee in formulating our proposals.

The Group will also follow closely a number of cross cutting issues directly linked to the successful implementation of the each of the missions mandate, including those related to mission support, Umoja implementation, post Global Field Support Strategy, facilities and infrastructure, oversight, ethical matters, supply chain management, environmental and waste management as well as a number of elements derived from the outcome of the high level panel on peace operation.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, the African Group reiterates its longstanding position that the work of this Committee should be conducted in an open, transparent and all-inclusive manner. The Group therefore wishes to reassure you of its readiness to engage with other delegations in a constructive and of course with application of innovative ideas, with a view to achieving a positive outcome on all agenda items before end the month.

We would like to encourage other delegations to do their part including avoiding some unnecessary tactics which may negatively impact the work of the Committee and the population in the ground.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.