

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JERRY MATJILA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEMS 124, 134, 136, 137 AND 141 ON THE REPORT ENTITLED “SHIFTING THE MANAGEMENT PARADIGM IN THE UNITED NATIONS: ENSURING A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL” DURING THE MAIN PART OF SEVENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(NEW YORK, 4 DECEMBER 2017)

Mr. Chairman,

1. At the outset, let me thank Mr António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for introducing his report entitled “Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: Ensuring a Better Future for All”. I would also like to extend my appreciation to Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing its related report.

2. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the statement delivered by the representative of Ghana on behalf of the African Group.

Mr Chairman,

3. We have welcomed the inclusive and consultative process on the reforms personally led by the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General and their teams. We trust that this will continue as we move from a vision to detailed proposals to implementation. We also welcome the submission of the Secretary-General’s vision for comprehensive reform to the General Assembly for consideration, as well as more detailed proposals on the budget, organizational structure and funding mechanisms. We look forward to engaging constructively on these proposals.

4. The Secretary-General’s report reflects his clear vision and firm determination to enhance multilateralism and strengthen the authority and role of the United Nations. South Africa is committed to working with the United Nations to ensure that our efforts place the world on a trajectory that will lead to the attainment of sustainable development, eradicate poverty, combat discrimination and uphold equality for all, and seek ways to enhance the UN’s ability to prevent crises through the adoption of a culture of prevention. South Africa also welcomes the centrality of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the reform proposals and calls for further alignment with African Union’s Agenda 2063.

5. South Africa believes that the United Nations needs to be effective, efficient, transparent, accountable and people-centred. We support the vision of a United Nations that is agile and responsive and able to deliver on all its mandates in complex environments.

Mr Chairman,

6. For my delegation, the overarching principle will be of enhancing the Organisation’s ability to be responsive, effective, efficient and accountable for

mandate delivery on the ground. Furthermore, we would like to see that the organisation becomes more cost-effective by reducing waste and duplication and streamlining cumbersome administrative and budgetary processes. Moreover, we believe that a key element in assuring the effective and timely delivery of mandates are adequate, efficient, predictable and sustainable resources – of a financial as well as a human nature.

7. Therefore, South Africa supports proposals to simplify and normalize the Organisation's programme plans and programme budgets, and will consider them in light of their impact on increased transparency, accountability and oversight by member states. Any reforms to reports and information presentation must improve the ability of the existing intergovernmental processes to plan, monitor, evaluate and shape strategic planning and resource allocation.

8. Reform is not a static process and must be adaptive to lessons learned both from previous reform efforts and the implementation phase of this reform. We do not have the luxury of pausing the Organisation to implement the reforms. Mandate delivery must continue, and we look forward to concrete proposals for a smooth transition should the General Assembly agree to the structural and substantive proposals.

Mr Chairman,

9. Management reform should not be seen in isolation of the other reform initiatives. South Africa continues to support the strengthening of the voice and representation of African and developing countries in the United Nations. The Organisation cannot expect to understand, predict and react to developments on our continent, in the developing world and globally without having capable staff and senior management from Africa and the developing world.

10. South Africa finally also welcomes the Gender Parity Strategy of the Secretary-General and looks forward to the Strategy on Geographical Representation.

11. In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm South Africa's commitment to working with the Secretary-General and all member states to build a stronger, more effective and equitable United Nations that will deliver for all the peoples of the world.

I thank you.