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**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP  
BY MR. MÁRCIO BURITY, THIRD SECRETARY AT THE  
PERMANENT MISSION OF ANGOLA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON  
GENDA ITEM: 136 PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM  
2018-2019: SPECIAL POLITICAL MISSIONS, AT THE MAIN PART OF  
THE SEVENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY-FIFTH COMMITTEE  
(New York, 27 December, 2017)**

**Mr. Chairman,**

First of all, allow me to thank Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller, for introducing the reports of Secretary-General, as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee for introducing the Committee's related report.

**Mr. Chairman,**

After repeated Member States' calls to the Secretariat for the early issuance of official documents to allow Member States and the ACABQ enough time to thoroughly study and consider different subjects, yet all these calls were not responded to by the Secretariat.

Considering the seriousness and the impact of the oversight role of the Fifth Committee for the good reputation and the smooth functioning of the Organization, it is unacceptable that we are given only five days to consider and take such important decision on resources allocated for SPMs, which exceed one billion dollars..

We are aware that the ACABQ took more time than expected to consider these resources, but given their magnitude, we cannot blame the ACABQ for considering them carefully and thoroughly.

The African Group calls upon the Secretary-General to accelerate the delivery of the SPMs reports in line with General Assembly resolution 67/246, section I, paragraph 4 and to establish a mechanism to hold accountable those who are responsible for the late

issuance of official documents and to report thereon to the Fifth Committee at the General Assembly 73<sup>rd</sup> session. In this mechanism, a clear benchmark for late issuance of the UN official documents has to be included in the senior managers compact.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The Group is mindful that staffing form a major part of the inputs for the SPMs performance and we have taken a good note of the proposed requirement for 2018 -2019. The Group will be interested to learn the rationale for some changes in the staffing in several SPMs. Furthermore the Group will be interested to learn the rationale for some movement of staffing from one location to another during our informal consultations.

We do also reiterate our position that the quality and timeliness of the delivery of all mandated programmes and activities must always be the overriding factor in determining the Secretariat's resource requirements and its overall staffing structure for Special Political Missions.

Therefore, the Group will be seeking a number of clarifications on the resources reduction proposed in Special Political Missions while the mandates and activities of these Missions are more and more complex, especially those of the Missions operating in Africa.

Our Group emphasizes that all Peace Missions should be adequately funded to avoid any jeopardy to the efforts made by the United Nations to preserve peace, security and stability in different part of the world.

The African Group will be examining in details of the other key elements including those related to vacancy management, consultancy, a degree of automaticity in the requests under operational costs in particular procurement matters, information and technology, repairs and maintenance, in some Mission specifically during our informal consultations.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The Group wishes to reiterate the importance it attaches to the vital role Special Political Missions (SPMs) continue to play in fostering international peace and security through

early warning, mediation, preventive diplomacy, support to electoral process, good offices and peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts.

The varied and complex mandates of SPMs are often delivered in situations of active and in post-conflicts environment. Increasingly today, most of the SPMs operate in environments where transnational organized crime and drug trafficking and extremist activities constitute the main drivers of instability. In this regard, the African Group strongly believes that the allocation of adequate resources to the SPMs is a critical element for the efficient and effective discharge of their given mandates.

**Mr. Chairman,**

We notes with concern the exponential increase in the financial requirements and complexity of Special Political Missions over the past decade and acknowledge their unique characteristics in terms of establishment, financing as well as backstopping, since they do not follow the regular budget cycle of the United Nations, despite being funded by this budget.

In order to enhance efficiency and transparency of the budgetary process of the Organization, and taking into account the characteristics of the approval, functioning, scope and mandate of these activities, we strongly support the funding mechanism of these missions as proposed by the ACABQ in document A/66/7/Add.21, including establishing a special and separate account that would be budgeted, funded and reported upon on an annual basis with a financial period of 1 July to 30 June.

**Mr. Chairman,**

In conclusion, the African Group would like to assure you of our readiness to engage constructively in negotiations on this agenda item with the aim of reaching satisfactory outcomes on this important agenda in a timely manner.

**I thank you,**