

Australian Statement on behalf of CANZ to the Fifth Committee in response to the Secretary-General's presentation on the budget

Thank you Mr Chairman. I have the honour to speak on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Let me start by thanking you, Mr Secretary-General, for presenting us your proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019 and for recapping your important reform agenda, including the welcome steps that you have already introduced such as the new counter-terrorism architecture, measures on sexual exploitation and abuse, and whistleblower protections, and lastly, but by no means least, on gender equity which we see as an equal fourth pillar of reform.

On behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand I will make three very brief points at this stage of the Committee's consideration of the proposed budget.

Firstly, let me state that CANZ will work tirelessly with other Member States to find consensus on the UN budget in this session of the Fifth Committee, and we look forward to the swift conclusion of the session in December.

Secondly, let me offer CANZ's strong support for your efforts, Mr Secretary-General, to reform the United Nations, including in the way the UN budget is formulated and delivered.

We welcome the proposals in your recent report to improve and streamline the programme planning and budgeting process. This includes moving to an annual budget cycle and improving the presentation of the budget materials and results, to ensure greater transparency and accountability.

Unless we as Member States collectively support your ambitious reform proposals across all three reform pillars, including budget and management

reform, we risk a UN that is unable to deliver at this critical time for multilateralism.

In order for the Organisation to deliver the mandates entrusted to it by Member States, we must ensure that our current processes are fit for purpose.

And my final point, and it goes to this issue of ensuring the Organisation delivers more effectively, this will take more than just embracing the reforms.

We also need to carefully re-examine our responsibilities as Member States, that is, our culture: how we work together and our collective approach to this committee.

We need to be as ambitious in our approach as you, Mr Secretary-General, have been in your reform proposals and resist a business-as-usual approach.

We're very pleased to see so many Permanent Representative colleagues here today. We need to continue to take an interest in the budget, to ensure that the reforms that the Secretary-General has set out - to make us as effective and efficient as possible - are fully implemented.

Mr Secretary-General and Mr Chairman,

CANZ commits to you, and to all Member States in this room, to work constructively for what is best for this Organization and, ultimately, better serve the people the United Nations was created to serve.

Thank you.