



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. MEGAYLA AUSTIN, MINISTER COUNSELLO OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 148: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS: SUPPORT ACCOUNT FOR PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS DURING THE SECOND PART OF THE RESUMED SEVENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (NEW YORK, 13TH MAY, 2020)

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on Agenda Item 148: Administrative and Budgetary Aspects on the Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Support account for peacekeeping operations.
2. At the outset, the Group would like thank the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee for the submission of their respective reports.

Mr. Chair,

3. The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to peacekeeping operations and this particular agenda item, concerning the backstopping of peacekeeping operations, is of special relevance. Not only does the membership of the Group contribute financially to the budgets of the peacekeeping missions, it also provides the largest share of troop and police contribution. We must also bear in mind the fact that most of the peacekeeping operations, both active and closed are or were hosted in the territories of members of the Group.
4. As the Committee will appreciate, peacekeeping operations are carried out in remote and high-risk areas that put the troops and police, as well as civilian staff, in challenging conditions. The political instability of the environments in which they operate and the complexity of their mandates demand that adequate and timely resources be provided for the support component of peacekeeping operations, in order to enable the effective execution of the changing and complex mandates.
5. The Group reiterates that the level of the support account should be commensurate with the number, size, and complexity of peacekeeping operations in the field in order to continue to provide seamless backstopping support for peacekeeping operations, in accordance with the given mandate, number, size and complexity of peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Chair,

6. The Group notes that the proposed budget for the support account for the 2020/21 period amounts to \$363,420,700, including requirements for corporate initiatives of \$42,230,500, which represents an increase of \$14,522,700 compared with the appropriation of 2019/2020. The Group further notes that for the 2020/21 period, the number of authorized uniformed personnel supported, including African Union personnel, is expected to decrease from 116,163 to 112,153 and the number of civilian personnel in missions is expected to decrease from 14,132 to 13,872, owing mainly to anticipated reductions in UNAMID and the closure of MINUJUSTH.
7. The Group stresses that closure and downsizing of missions must take into account the continued need for backstopping support in order to provide for the completion and/or the transition planning activities of those Missions. In this regard, resources requirements must reflect those needs accordingly.
8. The Group notes from the Secretary-General's report an increase in the backlog of cases and claims concerning Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, especially from the closed peacekeeping operations. The Group recalls that the General Assembly, in its resolution 52/177, emphasized the need for early settlement of death and disability claims.
9. The Group concurs with the ACABQ that a study on a sustainable and appropriate approach to PTSD claims should be conducted by the Secretary-General to provide for a holistic analysis of the policy, legal, administrative and financial aspects of the matter, including the procedures for processing claims, medical standards, the budgetary methodology for liability estimation and source of funding as well as related questions for the consideration of the General Assembly.

Mr. Chair,

10. The Group further notes the shortfalls in respect of the After Service Health Insurance and the arrangements made by the Secretary-General in using the unencumbered balances of nine peacekeeping missions to cover for the salary overruns under the support account and the postponement of payment of the peacekeeping share of the after-service health insurance to the following financial period. The Group is, however, concerned that there may not have been compliance with the Financial Regulations and Rules while undertaking these arrangements and that the approval of the General Assembly was not sought prior to doing so as has been observed by the ACABQ in its report A/74/809.

- 11.The Group also wishes to point out once again that only activities and corporate initiatives that have been fully considered and approved by the General Assembly should be budgeted for, and their resource requirements only included in the support account after approval by the General Assembly.
- 12.The Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate our strong support and commitment for United Nations peacekeeping operations and our call for adequate backstopping capabilities of peacekeeping operations.
- 13.In conclusion, Mr. Chair, the Group would like to reiterate our support and commitment for United Nations peacekeeping operations, our call for adequate backstopping capabilities of peacekeeping operations, and to assure you of our commitment to engage constructively on this important agenda item, especially now in these difficult circumstances.

I thank you.