

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR. KATLEGO MMALANE, PERMANENT MISSION OF BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 163: FINANCING OF THE AFRICAN UNION-UNITED NATIONS HYBRID OPERATION IN DARFUR (UNAMID), AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Mr. Chair,

I have the honor of delivering this statement on behalf of the African Group on agenda item 163, entitled ***“Financing of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)”***.

At the outset, the African Group wishes to thank the ASG Controller as well as the Chair of ACABQ for introducing their respective reports.

The African Group commends the efforts and the measures put in place by the Fifth Committee Bureau in order to mitigate the risks associated with these difficult times and circumstances and safeguard the safety of UN staff and Member States’ delegations alike.

The Group acknowledges the priority given to the current agenda item, as it is the only time-bound item for action during the first part of the resumed 74th Session of the General Assembly. Mindful of the time constraint, I will highlight some key aspects that the Group would like to emphasize. The complete version of the statement will be available on the Fifth Committee place.

Mr. Chair

With respect to the United Nations presence in the Sudan, the Group reiterates its commitment to ensure sufficient support through international efforts in order to provide the people of the Darfur region the peace dividends it has been waiting for so long, and thus, allowing the Sudan to progress along the path of sustainable peace, stability and development.

The Group therefore requests that UNAMID work in close collaboration with the African Union (AU), the host Government; the UN Resident Coordinator as the Representative of the Secretary General and other key stakeholders so as to ensure continuity and assistance of support by the UN in line with the 2030 Agenda and the AU’s 2063.

The Group further welcomes the implementation of programmatic activities by the Mission in collaboration with the United Nations Country Team through state liaison functions.

At this critical stage of its drawdown process, we recall that it is of utmost importance for the Mission to be provided with proper resources to deliver its mandate. The African Group is concerned by the outstanding balance of \$282,244,000 since the Mission's inception and calls on all Member States to fulfil their financial obligations and pay their assessed contribution to the budget of the Mission, on time, in full and without condition.

Also, we reiterate our call to the Secretary General to draw on the experience gained in the liquidation of recently closed missions such as UNOCI in Côte d'Ivoire, UNMIL in Liberia and MINUSTAH and MINUJUSTH in Haiti, as well as using the Liquidation Manual as a necessary guide during the drawdown phase.

Mr. Chair

Drawdown processes are characterized by the abolition of posts and positions. Considering the particular situation of national staff, the African Group appreciates the efforts of the Secretary General to optimize the opportunities of national staff for future employment, such as micro-enterprise fairs, workshops and training in transferrable skills.

However, the Group wishes to request that affected national staff be continuously assisted through capacity building and other measures in a bid to prepare them for a competitive job market, noting that their time with the Organization may have also equipped them with relevant skills and experience.

With regards to the environmental strategy of the United Nations and considering the eventual environmental remediation of sites, the Group emphasizes the need for the Organization to reduce the overall environmental footprint of the Mission.

This should include the implementation of environmentally friendly waste management and power generation systems, in full compliance with the relevant rules and regulations, including the United Nations environmental and waste management policy and procedures.

In conclusion Mr. Chair, the African Group wishes to recall the terms of General Assembly resolutions 73/278 B and 74/261, and in this regard wishes to express its support for the authorization of an amount of \$129,306,900 for the three-month period from 1 April to 30 June 2020.

We assure you, Mr. Chair, of our usual commitment to engage constructively on this important agenda item.

I thank you.
