

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR. MOHAMED TRAORE, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 141: PROGRAMME BUDGET: REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE AND SECURITY PILLAR REFORM –FIFTH COMMITTEE, MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**(NEW YORK, 18 NOVEMBER, 2020)**

**Mr. Chair,**

- 1.** I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group on agenda item 141: ***“Review of the implementation of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar Reform”***.
- 2.** The African Group would like to thank Ms. Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de Cabinet for presenting the Secretary General’s report A/75/202 titled Programme Budget: Review of the implementation of the United Nations Peace and Security Pillar Reform”. We wish to also thank the Chair of the Advisory Committee, Mr. Abdallah Bachar Bong for introducing the related report. The recommendations and observations of the Board of Auditors on this subject are also duly acknowledged.
- 3.** The African Group aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the representative of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana on behalf of the G77 and China and would like to make a few additional remarks.

**Mr. Chair,**

- 4.** This reform is at the heart of the United Nations Charter and its commitment to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. After 75 years of the founding of the UN, that goal remains as relevant and urgent as ever. Today’s rapidly shifting global landscape and dynamics, require a United Nations that is more coherent, pragmatic, nimble and effective, and very much capable of collaborating with partners from within and without the UN system to prevent conflicts and sustain peace, including regional and sub-regional entities. We believe that the reform of the peace and security pillar is a right step towards achieving the goals of this organization.

5. The African Group, therefore Mr. Chairman, commends the efforts of the Secretary General in advancing the implementation of the reform despite the challenges brought about by the COVID 19 Pandemic.
6. The Group acknowledges the efforts undertaken by the Secretary General to promote culture change with the implementation of the peace and security pillar reform, and further recognizes the complementary roles of cultural change, leadership and accountability in the success of structural changes. The Group also acknowledges the tools established such as the online benefits tracker system to enable better reporting of the benefits of the reform. Last but not least let me also appreciate the restructuring of the two main Departments , i.e the Department of Political Affairs and Peacebuilding, and the Department of Peace Operations and their common and shared vision to collaborate and work together to achieve greater efficiency.

**Mr. Chairman**

7. The Group is conscious of the fact that such major project of this magnitude will ultimately raise challenges and short-comings during the process of implementation. The African Group, under the ambit of the Group of 77 and China looks forward to discussing these issues during the consideration of this agenda item. Some of these issues include but are not limited to the following:
  - i. **Monitoring benefits:** Firstly there appears to be a lack of clarity with respect to the correlation between the four main goals outlined by the Secretary-General in his initial reform proposal and the nine benefits under the three objectives newly presented in his report on the implementation of the reform. We will appreciate further discussion on this matter.
  - ii. **Enhancing effectiveness, efficiencies and coherence:** the African Group will seek to assess and discuss further cost-benefit analysis and efficiency gains of the reform, which should have been made part of the reform initiatives.
  - iii. **Dual Reporting Lines:** On the issue of dual reporting lines, as can be recalled in resolution 72/262 C , the General Assembly

appreciated the dual reporting lines that exists between the Assistant Secretaries General heading the single political-operational structures and the Under-Secretaries General for Peace Operations and Political and Peace-building Affairs, and as per the request of the General Assembly, the Group will seek details on the implementation of dual reporting lines including ensuring that line management within the single political-operational structure is clear, coherent and accountable.

- iv. **Aligning with the development pillar:** the African Group is of the view that the coordination and collaboration between the two departments, DPPA and DPO and the resident coordinators system are a critical element in realizing the reform goal of aligning the peace and security pillar more closely with the development pillar and trusts that the Secretary General will continue to explore how this arrangement can be developed further.
  
- v. **Equitable geographical representation:** On this matter, we view that the composition of the two departments should be further improved to reflect more equitable geographical representation. As reiterated in General Assembly resolution 72/262 C that I mentioned earlier, the Secretary-General was requested to address the issue of equitable geographical representation of Member States, in conformity with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, at all levels of the two Departments and to intensify his efforts to ensure proper representation of troop-contributing countries in the relevant new departments, taking into account their contributions to United Nations peacekeeping.

**Mr. Chairman,**

- 8. As recommended by the ACABQ with regards the Board of Auditors report, several areas of improvements can be made in the implementation of the peace and security reform. To name but a few, planning and implementation of the reform; change management; revitalization of the Peacebuilding Support Office; and financing the Peacebuilding Fund. The Group cannot but stress the importance of the full and expeditious implementation of the recommendations of the Board and the Advisory Committee. We look forward to discussing this further in great detail.

9. Let me conclude, **Mr. Chair**, by acknowledging that while we are at the early stages of stabilizing the introduced changes of the reform and working our way towards full implementation despite this great pandemic of our times, the Secretary-General has nonetheless made great effort in responding to the challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure business continuity for both the Secretariat and intergovernmental processes. We hope that lessons learned will be adequately captured, to inform any further rethinking on the adequacy of the systems in place.
  
10. Let me therefore reassure you Mr Chairman of the African Group's readiness to engage constructively with all delegations with a view to concluding deliberations of this important agenda item in a timely manner.

**I thank you.**