



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA
BY MS MEGAYLA AUSTIN, MINISTER COUNSELLOR OF THE PERMANENT
MISSION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS, ON THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK FOR THE FIFTH COMMITTEE
DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

(New York, October 5th, 2020)

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the organization of work of the Fifth Committee for the main part of the 75th Session of the General Assembly.
2. At the outset, the Group extends congratulations to you and the members of your Bureau on your election. We are assured that under your able leadership and guidance, the Committee will conclude this session in a timely manner and with a positive outcome. We also would like to record our sincere appreciation to the outgoing Bureau members for their hard work during the 74th session.
3. We reiterate our deep gratitude for the stellar work of the Secretariat of the Fifth Committee led by Mr. Lionelito Berridge, in facilitating the work of the Committee.
4. The Group also wishes to thank the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for its invaluable support and assistance to our work. The Group recognizes the extraordinary circumstances of the current times and is grateful for the Secretariat's and ACABQ's additional efforts to overcome the difficulties imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic in carrying out their work.
5. The Group thanks the Bureau and the Secretariat for providing the draft programme of work and the status of preparedness of documentation contained in document A/C.5/75/L.1, both of which, we know, will be reviewed and adjusted during the course of the session to reflect the progress of the work and priorities of the Committee and the limitations posed by the prevailing public health situation.

Mr. Chair,

6. Though the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing, the Group celebrates that circumstances here in New York have improved. This has enabled us to resume our business in a manner that hopefully with each passing day resembles more and more what we had last year. We look forward

to the introduction of agenda items through formal meetings and to have summary records of the work of the Committee. The Group however is greatly disappointed that due to security concerns the Committee is again deprived of interpretation services during our informal consultations. Multilingualism continues to be yet another victim of this pandemic.

7. We are committed to a thorough consideration of the agenda items allocated to the Committee, and in this regard, note with disappointment that several important reports are still outstanding. This, Mr. Chair, significantly compromises the Committee's work. The Group wishes to reiterate that adequate time should be given to each item and that practical steps must be taken to ensure that reports from the Secretariat and the ACABQ are issued in all official languages in a timely fashion, in line with the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly and relevant resolutions to this effect.

8. In the weeks ahead, the Fifth Committee will address issues of crucial importance to the General Assembly and the Organisation. The Group will actively engage in the deliberations of this session on both the Proposed Programme Plan and Programme Budget for 2021. In this regard, the Group reiterates its long-standing position that mandates as translated into the strategic framework, must determine budget proposals and not the other way around. Further, the level of resources to be approved by the General Assembly must be commensurate with all mandated programmes and activities in order to ensure their full and effective implementation.

Mr. Chair,

9. The Group notes the efforts of Member States in fulfilling their financial obligations while overcoming the economic and financial difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Group also notes that the total amount of outstanding contributions and peacekeeping assessments exceeds 5.1 billion US dollars as of September 30 with the majority from one single Member State. At this very juncture of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, the Group once again calls on all Member States to fulfill their legal obligations to bear the expenses of the Organisation, in accordance with the UN Charter, by paying their assessed contributions in full, on time, and without conditions.

10. Further, the Group of 77 and China will actively participate in the Committee's deliberations on other agenda items, including the review of the implementation of the peace and security pillar reform, review of the implementation of resolution 72/266B, Construction and Property Management, the funding model of the DMSPC and DOS, Review of budgetary cycle involving CPC and ACABQ Sequencing, the United Nations Common System, Pension System, Umoja and Administration of Justice. Close attention will also be paid to deliberations on the Scale of Assessments, the Capital Master Plan, all programme budget implications and revised estimates, Improving the Financial Situation of the United Nations, as well as the reports of the Board of Auditors and the OIOS.

11. The Group believes that the consideration of the Budget on a yearly basis imposes additional time constraints for the thorough discussion of other agenda items and is committed to overcoming this challenge. We trust that the Committee will devote an adequate level of dedication to all agenda items.

Mr. Chair,

12. The Group reaffirms its continued commitment to considering and concluding our work within the allocated timeframe, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. We look forward to having fruitful discussions on all items before us, and stress the enduring need to conduct negotiations in an open, transparent and inclusive manner.

13. In closing, the Group assures you of its full cooperation and constructive engagement with you, the Bureau and our partners to reach a successful outcome for this session.

I thank you.