

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR. MOHAMED TRAORE, COUNSELLOR AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE FOR THE MAIN PART OF THE 75<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**(New York, 5 October 2020)**

**Mr. Chairman,**

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group on the organization of work of the Fifth Committee for the main part of the 75<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly.
2. At the outset, the African Group would like to congratulate Your Excellency Ambassador Carlos Amorín, Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the United Nations for your appointment as the Chair of this Committee. In the same vein, we also extend our congratulations to all the Members of the Bureau upon their successful appointment.
3. The African Group would like to assure you Mr. Chair and the rest of the Bureau of our continued commitment to supporting you in fulfilling your mandates in an effective and efficient manner. We have full confidence that, under your guidance, the Committee will reach a successful and timely conclusion of its work during this session.

**Mr. Chairman,**

4. Let me also take this opportunity to express our deepest appreciation to Ambassador Andreas D. Mavroyiannis, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Cyprus to the United Nations, and his Bureau for the challenging work they saw the Committee through during the 74<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee, particularly under the unprecedented circumstances occasioned by Covid-19.
5. Furthermore, I take this opportunity to reiterate our sincere gratitude to the leadership and the team of the Fifth Committee Secretariat for their hard work and support to our work.
6. The African Group aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the representative of Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and we would like to make a few additional remarks.

**Mr. Chairman,**

7. The unprecedented circumstances we referred to earlier are, unfortunately, still ongoing. As a result, the setting and arrangements for the meetings of the Committee require creative adjustments, which have been made possible thanks to the assistance of relevant Departments of the Organization and the flexibility shown by the membership of the Committee.
8. While some of the adjustments to the working methods allowed the Committee to successfully deliver during the first and second resumed parts of the last session, the African Group expects that the shortfalls and challenges encountered during these sessions will be dealt with in a timely and effective manner during the current session. It is of paramount importance for all delegations to be able to participate in discussions, negotiations and decision-making processes through proper interpretation for meetings, as provisioned by relevant regulations and rules.

**Mr. Chairman,**

9. With regard to the work before us, the African Group would like to thank the Bureau for preparing the draft programme of work and also welcomes the designated Coordinators who will facilitate the various agenda items to be considered during this part of our session.
10. Although improvements have been noticeable, the late issuance of important reports remains a challenge affecting the work of the Committee. We therefore, as a Group, particularly request that all pending reports such as the revised estimates for NEPAD, Special Political Missions (SPMs) reports etc. be addressed as a matter of priority. Also on the issue of SPMs, their Funding and Backstopping is another subject of importance to the Group. We look forward to discussing this issue in a dispassionate manner with a view to arriving at a decision that would enable the effective and efficient delivery of mandates, particularly given their crucial role in the maintenance of global peace and security.
11. Other items of equal importance to be considered are the annual regular budget of the Organization-which is in its second year of trials, the reports of the Board of Auditors, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone, the status of implementation of the United Nations peace and security pillar reform, management reform, and the financing of the African Union - United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) as well as Construction and Property Management with its sub-items.

- 12.** Importantly, the Group wishes to reiterate that approved mandates should dictate the level of the budget that is to be approved and not the other way round. In this regard, the Group is committed to working with partners to ensure that an adequate level of resources is approved for the Economic Commission for Africa, NEPAD, OSAA, UNEP and UN-HABIT. Equally, it is important for an adequate and equitable level of resources to be dedicated to the sub-programmes of Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States to facilitate the realization of Agenda 2030. The aforementioned sub-programmes have not been optimally funded in the past and therefore, the Group wishes to express its readiness to work with partners with an aim to correct this budgetary misalignment.
- 13.** Also important to note is the recurrent delays in the submission of reports in all official languages. We expect that the issue will be looked at with full seriousness with a view to eliminating this key obstacle that frustrates the work of the Committee as well as the full participation of all the 193 members of the General Assembly.

**Mr. Chairman,**

- 14.** Before closing, let me note that the African Group would like to emphasize the need for an expedited decision on the scale of assessments that will grant exemptions under Article 19 of the Charter. Our swift consideration and decision will enable the Member States concerned to fully participate in the work of the Assembly.
- 15. In conclusion,** the African Group would like to stress its longstanding position that negotiations in this Committee should be conducted in an inclusive and transparent manner and within the official allocated time. We would like to assure your Excellency of our Group's readiness to engage constructively with a view to achieving positive outcomes for all agenda items under consideration in a timely manner.

**I thank you.**