

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR MOHAMED TRAORE, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE FOR THE FIRST PART OF THE RESUMED 75TH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(New York, 1st March 2021)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group on the organization of work for the first part of the resumed 75th session of the Fifth Committee and to express the Group's appreciation for the excellent work done by you and your Bureau in ensuring business continuity under the circumstances we find ourselves in with regards the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The African Group also takes this opportunity to reiterate our appreciation for the excellent work of the Secretariat of the Fifth Committee under the leadership of Mr. Lionel Berridge, for their selfless work and being a strong pillar of the 5th Committee.
3. Likewise we also recognise Ms. Catherine Pollard, Under Secretary General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance and appreciate her briefing of this committee today on management and administrative issues especially the reform of the Secretary General which the African Group has given its utmost support.
4. Before closing the appreciation chapter, the African Group wishes to seize the opportunity of this first meeting of the Fifth Committee in 2021 to welcome Guinea as the current Chair of the Group of 77 and China and to reiterate our full support during its leadership of our Group. We also commend the remarkable chairmanship of Guyana, particularly during the unprecedented circumstances occasioned by Covid-19.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Looking at the Programme of work of the First resumed session, the African Group aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the representative of the Republic of Guinea on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and we would like to make a few additional remarks. The Group wishes to thank Ms. Martha Helena Lopez, Assistant Secretary General for Human Resources Management, for the introduction of the Secretary General's reports on Composition of the UN Secretariat; Mobility; disciplinary Matters and reform. The Group also thanks Ms

Elia Armstrong for the Ethics report as well as Mr. Abdallah Bachar Bong, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for introducing the related reports. We also congratulate all the new members of the Advisory Committee.

6. Please take note that the Group looks forward to the continued timely issuance of reports by the Secretariat and ACABQ, in all official languages, according to the Rules of procedure of the General Assembly. We acknowledge the improvement to address this problem of late issuance of reports in this session, but underscore that there is plenty of room for further improvement. The African Group has always stood firmly on this position because receiving documents in a timely manner is crucial to facilitating our deliberations and allowing the committee to effectively undertake and complete its work.
7. In a similar line of thought, the African Group regrets the lack of interpretation during crucial parts of the Committee's negotiations.

Mr. Chairman,

8. We have taken note of the Programme of work and the agenda items which will be considered in this session. The group places high priority on the Human Resources Management system of the Organisation especially on seconded personnel, composition and desirable ranges. The Group has also taken appreciation to the Accountability system in the UN Secretariat; Construction and property management i.e. at the UNON Conference facilities; United Nations Common system; utilisation of the contingency fund and the Joint Inspection Unit.
9. As the African Group has continuously reiterated on many occasions, the most valuable asset of the United Nations is its human resources. But also crucial to mention is the importance of a diverse workforce that is equally and geographically representative of the United Nations. Human Resources management is an important agenda item that requires our greatest attention; we must therefore at this session strive for a positive outcome for all so as to provide clear direction to the Secretary General. This would further bolster the management reform.
10. On Construction and property management most specifically UNON Conference facilities, the Group recalls that in previous resolutions related to construction projects, the General Assembly has impressed upon the Secretary-General on the need to use local capacity, including local material content in these projects. We therefore hope that during the implementation stages of the project efforts will be made to use locally manufactured materials including knowledge and technology. The Group also underscores the need for the Secretary-General to

continue to reflect on lessons learnt and best practices on matters of project governance in the implementation of this proposed project to ensure that it's completed on time and within the specified budget costs.

Mr. Chairman,

- 11.** We are all well aware that the first resumed session is a short session therefore let me assure you of the African Groups support and commitment to working constructively with all delegations to reach a successful outcome during for this session.
- 12.** To this end we reiterate our readiness to engage openly and transparently in the upcoming discussions with the aim of concluding this session in a timely manner.

I thank you.