



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA
BY AMBASSADOR BOUBACAR DIALLO, G-77 COORDINATOR, PERMANENT MISSION
OF GUINEA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 141: PATTERN OF
CONFERENCES, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE
SEVENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

(New York, 12 November 2021)

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 141: Pattern of Conferences.
2. The Group wishes to thank H.E. Ambassador Alexander Marschik, Chair of the Committee on Conferences, and Mr. Abdallah Bachar Bong, Chair of the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), for introducing their respective reports. We also wish to thank the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management, Mr. Movses Abelian, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General.
3. The Group takes this opportunity to express its appreciation to Ambassador Marschik, for leading the works of the Committee on Conferences for 2021.
4. The Group of 77 and China would also like to express its gratitude to the staff of the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management for their continued efforts, alongside other key departments of the UN Secretariat, to assure the vitality of labors of the Organization, after two years facing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Chair,

5. The Group commends the Committee on Conferences for the work undertaken during its substantive session in 2021 and for the quality of its report. This report and the proposed draft resolution will serve as a good framework for the consideration of this item.
6. The Group recognizes the initiatives implemented during this last year to adapt our work to the new circumstances imposed by the current sanitary situation, allowing the Organization to fulfill its mandates in such challenging times. While acknowledging the usefulness of the digital tools employed until present, we remain concerned that the percentage of virtual meetings held so far with interpretation remains relatively low. We call for further efforts to increase the availability of these services, which is in line with multilingualism, a core value of the United Nations.
7. The Group is aware that the liquidity shortage faced by the Organization has led to a freeze in hiring, which particularly affects the staff in the language services. Nevertheless, we encourage the Secretariat to prioritize the recruitment of language professionals, aiming at the diversification of language backgrounds and promoting the equitable geographical representation of this staff.

Mr. Chair,

8. The Group emphasizes that as long as the use of virtual platforms in intergovernmental processes be required, it should be observed the full and equal participation of all member states without

discrimination. It must be assured that the representatives of member states can utilize on equal footing the platforms contracted by the United Nations, even if they are used from capitals.

9. The G-77 and China recalls the updated administrative instruction concerning the use of space for meetings, conferences, events and exhibits at Headquarters in New York. We continue to urge other conference-serving duty stations to follow suit and update their respective information circulars governing the use of United Nations premises, bearing in mind that every activity hosted in its facilities must be consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

10. We support the steps taken to increase the accessibility of persons with disability to the United Nations premises and conference services. We encourage the Secretary General to continue his efforts to ensure accessibility of all individuals to all duty stations.

Mr. Chair,

11. We look forward to learning more about the implementation of a cost-recovery mechanism for meetings not related to intergovernmental processes, which are held in the UN premises.

12. With respect to conferencing facilities, the Group notes that the Secretary General's report lacks sufficient information in this regard. The Group has questions on this matter, especially in terms of the Economic Commission for Africa where regular renovations and technological improvements are needed to ensure that the Commission maintains its ability to provide cutting-edge conference services.

13. The Group continues to be concerned by the deteriorating conditions of the Nairobi conference center, which are severely hampering its capacity to provide conference services, especially for the regular calendar meetings of United Nations bodies headquartered in Nairobi. The Group looks forward to the start of the project that should address the aforementioned deteriorating conditions.

Mr. Chair,

14. In conclusion, the Group stands ready to engage constructively on this agenda item and looks forward to its timely conclusion.

I thank you.