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**STATEMENT BY**  
**H.E. HAROLD ADLAI AGYEMAN**  
**AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE**  
**REPUBLIC OF GHANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**  
  
**ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICA GROUP**

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**ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF THE**  
**FIFTH COMMITTEE FOR THE MAIN PART OF THE**  
**76TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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4 October 2021  
United Nations HQ,  
New York

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Members States of the Africa Group on the organization of work of the Fifth Committee for the main part of the 76<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly.

2. At the outset, the Africa Group would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election as the Chair of the Fifth Committee. In the same vein, the Group extends its congratulations to all the other members of your Bureau.

3. The Africa Group would also like to assure you and the other members of the Bureau of our continued commitment to support the work of the Committee during this session. We are confident that your rich experience and known qualities, Mr. Chairman, will help the Committee to successfully fulfill its mandate in an effective, efficient, and timely manner; even in these challenging times.

4. The African Group also extends its deepest appreciation to Ambassador Carlos Amorin, Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the United Nations, and his bureau for the excellent work they carried out during the 75<sup>th</sup> session, particularly taking into account the unprecedented circumstances that was occasioned by COVID-19 pandemic and the necessity for remote working methods.

5. We furthermore reiterate our sincere gratitude to the Fifth Committee Secretariat very ably led by Mr. Lionel Berridge, for their hard work and continued support to our deliberations.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Africa Group aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the distinguished representative of Guinea on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and make these additional remarks.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Africa Group notes with satisfaction, the gradual, prudent and positive steps taken towards a return to normalcy after more than a year of lockdown and remote meetings.

8. While some adjustments to the working methods allowed the Committee to conclude its negotiations successfully during the first and second resumed parts of the last session, the Africa Group expects that the Committee will take advantage of the improved public health situation to revert, as much as possible, to in-person meetings which greatly enhances negotiations.

9. We insist that, as much as possible, all in-person meetings be held with interpretation services as required by the relevant rules of procedure of the General Assembly and agreed resolutions on multilingualism that is at the core of this organization. Members of the Africa Group use, as working languages, four of the six official languages of the United Nations. The Group therefore considers it of utmost importance that Member States should be able to contribute to the deliberations of the Committee in the official language they are optimally effective in.

10. The Africa Group would like to thank the Bureau for preparing the draft programme of work and welcomes the designation of Coordinators to facilitate the various agenda items to be considered during this part of the session.

11. On the issuance of working documents, even though improvements are noticeable, the late issuance of important reports remains a challenge affecting the work of the Committee. We, therefore, request that all pending reports be finalised and issued as a matter of priority.

Mr. Chairman,

12. The Committee will consider a new scale of assessment of contributions for both the regular budget and peacekeeping operations. The Africa Group values the work of the Committee on Contributions and believes that its report is a critical basis for the adoption of the new scale of assessment. The Group stresses that any attempt to modify the elements of the current methodology must not be detrimental to developing countries and should bear in mind their peculiarities, particularly African countries that at this time confront multiple and unprecedented challenges in the health, economic and social dimensions.

13. Other items of equal importance to the Group during this session are the annual regular budget of the Organization, which is in its third and final year of trial, as well as the reports of the Board of Auditors, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone, and Construction and Property Management with its sub-items. The Group will be paying particular attention to these items.

14. The Africa Group considers Special Political Missions as one of the most effective tools for sustaining international peace. Unfortunately, this Committee has so far failed in providing Special Political Missions with adequate financial and human resources. Considering that Special Political Missions provide early warning mechanisms in conflict situations, it is imperative that we adequately resource them so as to lessen the need to fund Peacekeeping Operations and thus save lives and preserve the integrity of States from the scourge of conflict.

15. In any case, the Group wishes to reiterate that approved mandates should dictate budgetary allocations and not the other way round. In this regard, the Group is committed to working with all partners to ensure adequate level of resources for the Economic Commission for Africa, NEPAD, OSAA, UNEP and UN-HABITAT amongst others.

Mr. Chairman,

16. The Africa Group would like to emphasize the need for an expedited decision that will grant exemptions under Article 19 of the Charter to enable the Member States concerned to fully participate in the work of the Assembly.

17. In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the Africa Group would like to stress its longstanding position that negotiations in this Committee should be conducted in an inclusive, open and transparent manner and within the official allocated time. We would like to assure you of our Group's readiness to engage constructively with a view to achieving positive outcomes for all agenda items under consideration by the Committee in a timely manner.

I thank you.