



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

231 EAST 51<sup>ST</sup> STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10022  
TEL: (212) 826 0840 FAX: (212) 826 2964

**STATEMENT BY MR KEN SIAH, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF  
SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
ON AGENDA ITEM 136,  
IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS,  
AT THE SECOND RESUMED PART OF THE SIXTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE  
FIFTH COMMITTEE,  
24 MAY 2012**

---

1 Thank you, Mr Chairman. Let me begin by thanking Mr Warren Sachs, Assistant Secretary-General and Officer-In-Charge of the Department of Management for his presentation last Monday on Agenda Item 136: Improving the Financial Situation of the United Nations.

2 Singapore is encouraged to learn that there has been improvement in financial indicators for the United Nations in 2012 in some areas. The number of Member States that have paid all their regular budget assessments in full as of 7 May this year increased to 36, compared to 29 in 2011. The level of total unpaid assessments as of 7 May 2012 has also decreased by over \$600 million. We applaud the efforts made by the Member States who have met their financial obligations to the United Nations. We hope that this trend continues. Nevertheless, we should remember that the financial situation of the United Nations remains far from ideal and that the level of outstanding assessments remains high.

Mr Chairman,

3 The financial difficulties of the United Nations are completely avoidable. We understand that some Member States, particularly those in the developing world face genuine difficulties in paying their assessments. We sympathise with their predicament. But these countries do not account for a large proportion of assessments. Their inability to pay does not jeopardise the United Nations' ability to carry out its mandates.

4 It is the major contributors which have the capacity to pay their assessments in full and on time, but deliberately fail to do so that place the United Nations and other Member States in a difficult situation. These major contributors enjoy a privileged position in the United Nations. It is a geopolitical reality that although each Member State has one vote in the United Nations, major contributors exercise more influence than other members. However, some of their actions reflect a disturbing cynicism towards the United Nations. The tendency of some of these Member States to attach conditions to the payments that they are duty bound to make under the United Nations Charter amounts to fiscal blackmail. There are also some major contributors who seek to transfer their financial responsibilities to developing countries without surrendering any of their privileges. My delegation firmly believes that Member States should remember their financial responsibilities to the United Nations and that major contributors should continue to pay their share.

5 Singapore reiterates that the United Nations is the only multilateral body in the world with global membership and universal legitimacy. Each one of us in this room recognises the unique and indispensable role the United Nations plays in the international community. The Organisation must be provided with the resources necessary to fulfil the mandates entrusted to it. Singapore therefore calls on major contributors to pay their assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions.

6 In addition to recognising Member States' responsibility to the United Nations, the Organisation also needs to be similarly accountable to Member States. The Secretariat must manage the financial resources it has been entrusted with effectively. It should work in a transparent manner, consulting all relevant stakeholders and providing clear and timely information to Member States. The Secretariat has to convincingly demonstrate that it can be entrusted with the hard-earned savings of Member States. It is too easily forgotten that each dollar of assessed contributions could potentially have been used to alleviate poverty, improve healthcare, foster education and create employment in the contributors' own societies. Unless resources given to the United Nations are used honestly, transparently and effectively, securing the required resources will always be a challenging process filled with suspicion and mistrust.

Mr Chairman,

7 The global challenges confronting the world today are complex. The United Nations must be responsive to such challenges. It cannot do this without being given the necessary resources to fulfil its mandates. Withholding contributions from the United Nations to induce more efficient performance is a myopic and cynical tactic. Each Member State has entered into a commitment to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time. We urge Member States to fulfil these commitments. Thank you.