



**STATEMENT BY MR KEN SIAH, COUNSELLOR,
PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ON AGENDA ITEM 145: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE
APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF UNITED NATIONS
PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS,
AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SIXTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE FIFTH
COMMITTEE, 9 OCTOBER 2012**

1 Thank you Mr Chairman. I thank Mr Chandramouli Ramanathan, Deputy Controller, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 55/235 and 55/236, as contained in document A/67/224. My delegation fully aligns itself with the statements made by the distinguished representative of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by the distinguished representative of the Philippines on behalf of the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

2 Peacekeeping operations are a fundamental function of this organisation. Singapore has always honoured our assessed contributions in full, on time and without conditions, to do our part in ensuring that the UN has adequate resources for peacekeeping activities. We have also made modest military contributions to UN peacekeeping operations over the years. We do so as a responsible member of the international community even though we, like other small states, face inherent limitations in how much we can contribute.

Mr Chairman,

3 In a world where power is usually associated with military, economic and population size, it is easy to forget that small states make up the backbone and form the majority of this organisation's membership. Small states are significantly affected by the decisions of larger powers, decisions which are usually taken without consideration for the smaller countries they affect. Too often, we are unable to get the UN machinery to work, even in urgent situations, because of resistance from large powers. In the area of peacekeeping financing, we must recognise that a majority of UN members may face challenges in contributing to the United Nations because of their size. Take Singapore for example. Our land

area of 275 square miles is slightly bigger than Manhattan but smaller than the five boroughs of New York. We have no natural resources, and have to import our food, water and fuel. Many small developing states are in a similar situation. The unique economic, structural and geophysical challenges which confront small states cannot be ignored. Bearing this in mind, we have three further points to make on this agenda item.

4 One, as set out in Resolution 55/235, the special responsibilities of the Permanent Members of the Security Council for the maintenance of peace and security must be at the forefront of any discussion on the peacekeeping scale. The Permanent Members of the Security Council occupy a privileged position in this organisation. They have been tasked to make decisions on international peace and security on behalf on the international community. Some of these decisions may not be entirely in our national interests, nevertheless they are binding upon us and we strive to uphold them. The five Permanent Members also have special prerogatives conferred upon them by the Charter such as the right of veto. Those members of the United Nations who hold power and influence over and above what the rest of the general membership possess must also accept the responsibilities that come with it. As such, there must always be a Level A in the system of discounts for the peacekeeping scale, and the Permanent Members of the Council must continue to absorb the discounts of other members. My delegation is concerned that some Permanent Members would like to reduce or do away with the discounts that some countries have while retaining all the benefits of their privileged permanent membership. If the modest costs of maintaining a fair peacekeeping scale are truly so onerous to these Permanent Members, then they should consider expanding the permanent membership of the Security Council. This would allow responsibilities to be distributed in a way which is more equitable for everyone.

5 Two, the present structure of the ten levels for the peacekeeping scale was created after significant negotiations in 2000. Singapore's position then was that we would support a peacekeeping scale that was equitable and which did not structurally disadvantage any country or group of countries. While our discount was drastically reduced following that review, we have continued to observe our obligations. Singapore believes that the existing ten levels and the system of discounts must be retained to reflect the different responsibilities and stages of development of member states. We are firmly opposed to any proposals which would force countries to stomach further reductions in their discounts.

6 Three, there must be a clear acknowledgement of the challenges faced by developing countries, particularly small developing states. It is not equitable for developing countries to be assigned automatically to the *de facto* developed world category of Level B on the sole basis of their nominally high per capita incomes. The idea that a small island developing state should be ranked in the same category as developed economic powers and face the same obligations is unacceptable. Due to their smaller population sizes, small countries' per capita incomes may appear deceptively high, inaccurately reflecting their real economic situations and their capacity to assume developed world obligations. My delegation expresses our solidarity with the concerns expressed by other developing countries, the Group of 77 and China, the Caribbean Community, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Association of Southeast Asian nations on this issue.

7 In conclusion, I would like to express my delegation's commitment to engage constructively with you and other colleagues in the Fifth Committee on this important agenda item. Thank you Mr Chairman.