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STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR. KODJOVI DOSSEH, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TOGO TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 132: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE FINANCING UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR EBOLA EMERGENCY RESPONSE DURING THE SECOND RESUMED PART OF THE SIXTY NINTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

(New York 21st May, 2015)

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group on agenda item 132: programme budget for biennium 2014-2015, in particular financing the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER).

The African Group wishes to express thanks and appreciation to Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller for introducing the Secretary-General's report on this item. We would also like to extend our appreciation to Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for introducing the Committee's related report.

The Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Republic of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The Ebola virus disease, which broke out in the West African sub-region in December 2013, has led to huge socio-economic and humanitarian crises in the three most affected countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The delayed detection of cases at the onset of the outbreak and the rapid rate at which the disease spread in the Mano River Union basin exposed the fragility of the healthcare systems in the three countries. The impact of the Ebola outbreak on the economies of the three countries has been profound. There has been decline in public revenue generation, investment propensity, employment rate and agricultural productivity. The outbreak also disrupted the normal academic calendars of the affected countries as schools and colleges were closed for long periods.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group is pleased that the Ebola outbreak is almost coming to an end. As you may be aware, the World Health Organization has recently declared Liberia Ebola-free and the number of new cases in Guinea and Sierra Leone continue to decline significantly. The high level of global support to the three most affected countries in particular, and the sub-region as a whole, has been truly unprecedented and made a great difference in our effectiveness in the fight to eradicate the Ebola virus. The contribution of UNMEER in this fight has been outstanding. We remain grateful to the international community and look forward to continued support in our fight to achieve and sustain zero cases at nearest future.

The successes achieved so far in the fight against the Ebola scourge must however be celebrated with cautious optimism, especially when Guinea and Sierra Leone have not been declared Ebola-free. In this regard, the African Group would like to underscore the need to remain focused on surveillance, contact tracing and social mobilization until we achieve and maintain zero cases in the entire region.

Mr. Chairman

As stated earlier, the exponential rate at which the Ebola virus spread among the three most affected countries clearly revealed their critical level of fragility. In this context, the draw-down of UNMEER must be properly structured in such a way that the governments of the affected countries and implementing partners, including those of the UN agencies, funds and programmes working on the ground are well positioned to effectively address all Post-Ebola challenges particularly in the area of building resilient health care systems. Adequate logistics, human and financial resources are required to ensure that our hard earned achievements in the fight against the Ebola virus disease are not reversed.

Turning now to information on actual expenditure and the revised budget before us, the African Group has taken note as of 31 March 2015, a total amount of \$63,3 million has been spent and an additional amount of \$24,6 million is projected to be disbursed by 30 September 2015 for the operations of the office of the Special Envoy on Ebola and UNMEER.

We have also taken note that for the period 19 September 2014 - 31st December 2015, the proposed additional resource requirements for the biennium 2014 - 2015 are estimated at \$90,9 million gross (\$88,1 million net) which are lower by \$13,6 million than the level of the commitment authority granted to the Secretary-General by the General Assembly in its resolution 69/262. As pointed out by the ACABQ, if the initial proposal of the Secretary-General for revised estimates in the amount of \$189.6 million

would have been approved by the General Assembly, this would have led to over-assessment of more than \$100 million of Member States' contributions to the regular budget.

While acknowledging the unique nature and the speed of the deployment of the Mission, we concur with the ACABQ that the planning assumptions underlying the Secretary-General's initial budget proposal have proven to be unrealistic.

The Group expects that the ongoing review of all the organizational, operational, administrative and planning aspects of UNMEER as well as coordination between partners, including actors outside the United Nations system involved in the fight against Ebola, will result in documenting the lessons learned with the view to ensuring that the Organization is more prepared to deal with such a crisis in the future.

Mr. Chairman,

Concerning the staffing structure of the Office of the Special Envoy for Ebola and UNMEER, the Group deeply regrets that the Secretary-General disregarded paragraph 6, section X of the General Assembly resolution 69/262 and the staffing complement proposed for the Mission continues to include a large number of positions at the high levels.

The Group will carefully examine the number of proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General, including those related to ICT, human resources as well as acquisition and the transfer of the vehicles and will seek specific clarifications on this matter during our informal consultations.

In conclusion, the Group wishes to reassure you of its readiness to engage constructively with other delegations, with a view to achieving a positive outcome on this agenda item.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman

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MR. KODJOVI DOSSEH, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
TOGO TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 132: PROGRAMME
BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2014-2015 SPECIAL POLITICAL MISSIONS
SECOND RESUMED PART OF SIXTY NINTH SESSION OF THE UNITED
NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY-FIFTH COMMITTEE**

(New York 21st May, 2015)

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Africa Group on agenda item 132: programme budget for biennium 2014-2015 in respect of financing the Special Political Missions UNAMA, UNSMIL, MENDUB, and the Panel on South Sudan.

On behalf of the Group, I would like to thank to Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller for introducing the reports of the Secretary-General, as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, the Chairperson of the ACABQ for introducing the respective reports of the Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group attaches great importance to critical roles played by the SPMs at the heart of the United Nations' efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts, and to build sustainable peace, reconciliation and pave the way to development. SPMs deliver a wide range of complex mandates in situations of active and in post-conflicts environment and therefore, the Group strongly believes that the allocation of adequate resources to the SPMs is part of the critical element for the efficient and effective discharging of their given mandates.

The African Group has taken note of the additional resource proposal for the SPMs before the Committee. The Group has also taken note of the comments, observation and recommendations of the Advisory Committee. The African Group will carefully scrutinize a number of issues contained in the proposed additional budget for SPMs and we will be seeking specific clarification on number of the key budgetary elements and parameters during our informal consultations.

The Group would also like to express its concerns on the ongoing staff reduction in SPMs including proposed reductions in the UN Mission Support for Libya which is about 47%. We are deeply concerned at the possible negative impact of such an enormous reduction on the ability of the mission to fulfill its given mandate. The Group will also be interested to learn in detail the current and

future arrangements for the relocation of the mission headquarters, and its impact on the overall staffing structure and mandate delivery.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group notes that taking into account the additional resources of more than 31 million dollars appropriated in resolution A/69/262 and the amount currently requested of more than 94 million dollars, the total additional resources requested for the SPMs would be above US\$ 125 million, or 11.6 percent over the initial approved resources for the biennium 2014-2015.

The African Group would like to reiterate once again our position with regard to the importance of establishing the separate and special account for SPMs financing so as to bring transparent, good governance and accountability in the management of the resources allocated to the SPMs, which continue to distort the regular budget. We believe that the Members States will finalize the consultations on this matter in timely manner.

Mr. Chairman

The African Group will also be interested to receive the updates on the status of implementation of provision of paragraph 11 Section IV of General Assembly resolution 69/262 in relation to the appointment of Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union, which is vacant and therefore undermines the mandate delivery.

In conclusion, we would like to assure you of our readiness to engage constructively in negotiations on this agenda item with the aim of reaching a satisfactory conclusion in a timely manner.

I Thank You.