



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. SIRITHON WAIRATPANIJ, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEMS 134: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2016-2017: STRATEGIC CAPITAL REVIEW AT THE FIRST PART OF THE RESUMED SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 21 March, 2016)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 134: programme budget for biennium 2016-2017 in particular the strategic capital review.

2. At the outset, the Group of 77 and China would like to thank Mr. Stephen Cutts, Assistant Secretary-General, Office of Central Support Services, for introducing the Secretary-General's report (A/70/697) and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for introducing its related report.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group of 77 and China, once again, wishes to express its appreciation for the Secretary-General's initiative to develop a futuristic global property management framework in the name of strategic capital review. The Group recognizes the potential benefits which would be accrued from the framework, including possibility of identifying in advance deficiencies in buildings and structures in order to ensure compliance with the statutory and applicable building codes. The framework would also ensure the ability to forecast capital maintenance requirements for over twenty-year period hence setting ground for preparations regarding the required funding and management aspects.

4. The Group has taken note of the progress made to date on development of the property management framework for the United Nations owned buildings and facilities. We wish to thank the Office of the Central Support Services for the efforts made in this respect and urge the Office to continue updating the framework to ensure that the intended effectiveness and efficient maintenance of the UN properties are achieved.

5. The Group notes that the Secretary-General has presented the updated list of prioritized capital projects in line with the need to respond to critical aspects of life safety, modernization and maintenance as well as changing client needs, including accessibility aspect. This prioritization is important to allow proper sequencing of the maintenance plan and the mobilization of adequate resources. The Group would seek more details on further changes in prioritization including those related to maintenance and construction in Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Santiago and Bangkok. In this context, the Group welcomes the intention of the Secretariat to engage host countries from the early planning phase of projects and seek assistance from host countries as appropriate.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Group of 77 and China recognizes that the Secretary-General is currently implementing other reform initiatives which are related to construction matters including flexible workplace strategies and global service delivery model, among others. In this respect, the Group views that in the implementing the strategic capital review and for future updates, the Secretary-General should provide detailed information on the effects of the application of these initiatives. The Group also hopes that the strengthening of property management framework which is being developed will be a useful tool in ensuring effective implementation of the strategic capital review.

7. The Group of 77 and China also believes that the availability of the required human resource capacities and know-how in each of the duty station is a key element in the implementation of the strategic capital review. In this regard, the Group supports the proposal to strengthen the capacities in this area and we expect that the future proposal by the Secretary-General will reflect provision on this key element.

8. The Group believes that the strategic capital review should aim to address the accommodation needs of all UN offices and staff. The General Assembly in its resolution 70/170 decided that there should be full realization of an inclusive and accessible UN for persons with disabilities. We are pleased to note that aspects on addressing access by persons with disabilities to the UN facilities have been articulated in the present report. The Group will seek more information on other issues such as the adequacy of any proposed construction project in terms of space requirements during the informal consultations.

Mr. Chairman,

9. The Group continues to pay close attention to the proposed oversight and governance structures. The services of the Office of Internal Oversight Services should be enlisted all through the implementation process of the projects proposed under the strategic capital review. The role of the Office of Central Support Services would continue to provide required support as well as guidance and coordination to all offices away from Headquarters in all stages of maintenance and construction.

10. In conclusion, the Group will actively participate in the informal consultations on this matter with the aim of concluding it in a timely manner. We will also seek clarifications on a number of issues and look forward for timely response from Secretariat in this regard.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.