



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN
NATIONS BY H.E. AMBASSADOR KAREN TAN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED
NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 134: PROPOSED
PROGRAMME BUDGET BIENNIUM 2016-2017 –
SPECIAL POLITICAL MISSIONS, 4
NOVEMBER 2015**

1 Thank you, Mr Chairman. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 10 Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on this agenda item.

2 I thank Ms Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller, for introducing thematic cluster II of the Secretary-General's report on estimates in respect of special political missions (SPMs) and other political initiatives authorised by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council. We also thank Mr Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), for introducing the ACABQ's report on the same.

3 ASEAN Member States fully support the indispensable role played by SPMs. The number, size and mandate complexity of SPMs have grown rapidly because they have proved to be an effective tool in the maintenance of international peace and security. Their optimal functioning should be a high priority for Member States. However, we have failed to reform the funding and backstopping arrangements for SPMs for five years, although the ACABQ's 2011 recommendations remain relevant and have been reaffirmed by other bodies like the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations.

4 ASEAN believes that it is time to implement these recommendations. Otherwise, we risk jeopardising the efficiency and capability of the Organization. The regular budget is shrinking in real terms. The Secretariat has proposed a budget level of \$5.57 billion for 2016 to 2017, which is 1.6% below the appropriation for the current biennium. However, the share of SPMs in the shrinking budget has grown. Even assuming that the Security Council will not create any new SPMs for the next two years, their provision is still estimated to increase by \$8.4 million, meaning that SPMs will account for over 20% of the regular budget. In the context of an overall budget that some Member States insist on keeping stagnant, each increase in the SPMs budget

inevitably cannibalises funding for other equally important parts of the budget, notably development, which is a key priority for many developing countries.

5 SPMs have been crying out for urgent attention for the last five years. ASEAN Member States support the immediate implementation of the funding and backstopping recommendations proposed by the ACABQ. We also believe that it is imperative to create a separate account for SPMs aligned with the budgetary cycle for peacekeeping operations. A separate account aligned with the peacekeeping cycle would facilitate the implementation of recommendations regarding transfers between SPMs and resources currently accessed only by peacekeeping operations, such as the peacekeeping support account and strategic deployment stocks. The solution to SPMs funding and backstopping should be holistic. A piecemeal approach based on satisfying political interests rather than on what would work best for SPMs risks creating more problems in the future.

6 ASEAN notes that 34 out of 36 SPMs operating today were created through the decisions of the Security Council, including large field missions which have more in common with peacekeeping operations than traditional SPMs. In its resolutions, the General Assembly has reaffirmed that “the special responsibilities of the permanent members of the Security Council for the maintenance of peace and security should be borne in mind in connection with their contributions to the financing of peace and security operations”. ASEAN will keep this principle in mind while working with other delegations to ensure a constructive outcome on this agenda item that is in the best interests of SPMs.

7 Thank you, Mr Chairman.