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Statement by Ambassador Isobel Coleman
On Agenda Item 138 and 147: Scales of Assessment for the Apportionment of the
Expenses of the UN and UN PKOs
at the
Main Session of the Fifth Committee
70th UN General Assembly
October 8, 2015

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

I would like to thank Ambassador Bernardo Greiver, Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, and Mr. Lionelito Berridge, Chief of Contributions and Policy Coordination Service, for introducing their respective reports.

Mr. Chairman, as a founding member of the United Nations, the United States has consistently supported the principle that every UN Member State bears responsibility for contributing toward the expenses of the organization's operations, and we continue to believe strongly in this principle.

We also believe that Member States should be assessed according to their capacity to pay, even as we recognize that realizing this principle is not always a straight-forward process. From the beginning, the Committee on Contributions warned that Member States should not seek "unduly to minimize their contributions." At the same time, we have long maintained that no one country should shoulder an outsized share of the budget.

In that spirit, we agreed to the current negotiated ceiling of 22 percent, just as we previously agreed to a ceiling for the least developed countries.

Therefore, we maintain that the current scale of assessment methodology for the regular budget adequately addresses the principles above, and we support continuation of this methodology.

With respect to the peacekeeping scale of assessment, discounts for the wealthiest developing countries distort the principle of capacity to pay. Perpetuating such discounts is not in the UN's best interest. All Member States derive significant benefits from the stability that UN peace operations provide, and should contribute to peacekeeping at a rate commensurate with their ability to pay. Therefore all nations whose gross national income level meet the criteria for a full peacekeeping assessment should be assessed accordingly.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. The United States looks forward to continued discussion on scales of assessment in the coming weeks.