

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICA GROUP BY MR.¹
ABDALLAH BACHAR BONG, 1ST COUSSELLOR AT THE PERMANENT
MISSION OF CHAD TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM
133: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND
FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS;
PROCUREMENT ACTIVITES IN THE UNITED NATIONS
SECRETARIAT, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING FIRST
RESUMED SESSION OF THE 71ST SESSION OF THE UNITED
NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (NEW YORK, 9 MARCH 2017)**

Madam Chair,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Africa Group on agenda item 133: Review of the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations Procurement Activities during the first part of the seventy first resumed Session of the Fifth Committee.
2. At the Outset, the Group would like to thank Assistant Secretary General for central support services Mr. Stephen Cutts, for presenting the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Procurement activities, and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for introducing the committees report on this Agenda item.
3. I would also like to thank Mr. Gopinathan Achamkulangare, Inspector of the Joint Inspection Unit for introducing the report of the joint inspection Unit on Contract management and administration in the United Nations system, as well as Mr. Kenneth Herman, Senior Adviser On Information management Policy Coordination in the United Nations CEB Secretariat for introducing the note of the Secretary-General.

Madam Chair,

4. The Africa Group fully aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the distinguished representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
5. With an annual growing budget of \$3.1 billion in 2012 to an estimated \$3.4 billion in 2014 and 2015 UN procurement costs for goods and services have risen making the United Nations a major buyer in the global economy, more reason why fairness, equality and non-discrimination in the access to UN Opportunities is vital for all who are part of the United Nations Family.

6. We also take this opportunity to commend the Secretary General in his efforts of increasing procurement opportunities for vendors and companies in developing countries and request he intensifies his efforts in this regard. We therefore support the varying multifaceted outreach initiatives such as business seminars, online portals and UN manuals as a way of raising awareness about the opportunities and the procedural requirements of participating in procurement activities with the United Nations. We however request that all these initiatives especially manuals and online portals be translated to all the 7 UN languages so that No one who calls Himself/herself a United Nations Member is left behind.
7. The importance of transparency, equal opportunities for vendors from developing countries, streamlined UN processes, are key in our efforts of making the United Nations procurement system more efficient.
8. The Africa Group therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary General to continue to explore additional innovative ways to promote procurement from developing countries and countries with economies in transition both at Headquarters and field offices.

Madam Chair,

9. On the issue of aligning procurement authorities and accountability standards, the Group has carefully scrutinized the report of the Secretary General and the ACABQ report and requests that the Secretary General ensure that procurement reporting procedures are fully applied in a timely manner, while also improving procurement accountability and responsibility at peacekeeping missions and offices.
10. On the notion of the concept of environmentally friendly and sustainable Procurement, the Group recalls that the General Assembly has not approved the idea and would therefore request the Secretary General to prepare a comprehensive report on the content of and criteria for such a concept including its possible impact on the diversification of the origin of vendors and on international competition.
11. On the use of Information technology to achieve efficiencies in the processing of solicitations, the Africa Group is weary of technology challenges for vendors who may not be able to reach and access such systems. Bearing this in mind the Group

will seek an update report on this e-tendering project proposal and how it intends to curb such challenges.

12. Last but not least the Group notes the benefits realized since the establishment of the Regional Procurement Office in Entebbe and its consolidated procurement approach and would therefore seek more information on the Secretariat's proposal regarding the future of the Regional Procurement Office especially as we now consider prospects of a global service-delivery model.
13. In conclusion, the African Group reiterates its appreciation to the Secretary General for efforts made thus in capacitating and ensuring that developing countries participate in United Nations procurement opportunities. We therefore would like to assure you of our readiness to engage constructively in upcoming discussions and negotiations with our partners with the aim of concluding this important agenda item in a timely fashion.

I thank you, Madam Chair.