

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR. ABDALLAH BACHAR BONG, 1<sup>ST</sup> COUSELLOR AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF CHAD TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 134: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY, AT THE FIRST PART OF THE RESUMED SEVENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**(New York, 6 March 2017)**

**Madam Chair,**

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group on Agenda item 134: Information and Communication technology.
2. I would like to thank Ms. Atefeh Riazi, Chief Information Technology Officer/Assistant Secretary-General, for introducing the second progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of ICT Strategy and Mr. Carlos Rius Massieu, the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee for presenting the key findings contained in the committee report (A/71/785).
3. The Africa Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

**Madam Chair,**

4. The Group takes note of the second progress report on the implementation of ICT strategy, and welcomes the Advisory Committee recommendations and observations in this respect.
5. Taking into consideration the ubiquitous utilization of ICT in all aspects of the work of the organization, the group firmly believes that it is imperative to mainstream related strategies and utilization plans as well as expedite the implementation of reform initiatives aimed at increasing efficiency, effectiveness and transparency in the organization.
6. This is why, the group is mostly concerned that the General Assembly's decisions endorsing the critical recommendations of the advisory committee and the Board of Auditors on ICT matters often are implemented with delays or still to be implemented. In this regard, we call for renewed commitments of all managers to comply with those guidelines and fastrack the implementation of the ICT strategy.

**Madam Chair,**

7. The Group takes note of the finalization of the policies and procedures for formalizing designation and delegation of Authority and the Secretary-General Bulletin on the organization of the Office of Information and Communications Technology.

8. While the Group notes the progress achieved in the implementation of the ICT strategy, we note that many aspects still need to be strengthened, specially the coordination and harmonization, in the peacekeeping and special political missions, the information security aspect aimed at preventing and addressing potential security risks, and the procurement. This will undoubtedly strengthen the credibility, efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.

9. The group is interested to learn in details the projected expenditures related to the aspects underlined above, including the share for the annual Umoja maintenance managed by the Office of Information and Communications Technology amounting.

**Madam Chair**

10. Global sourcing is of crucial importance to our group and it looks forward to examining detailed proposals by the Secretary-General in this regard which it trusts will be formulated in accordance with relevant UN procurement rules, regulations and policies as well as the need to boost the local and regional markets.

11. The group will be also interested during the informal consultations in seeking clarifications on the envisaged steps by the secretariat to meet the growing ICT demand as well as assessment of further investments needed, for example in the usage of video conference.

12. The group is of the view that the organization needs to formulate a well-defined effective and coherent application development strategy that eliminates redundant and obsolete applications and reduces the high level of fragmentation in this area, and looks forward in this regard to examining detailed proposals in this regard as soon as possible.

13. The Group particularly encourages the Secretary-General to strengthen the capacity-building programs for staff members, using in house capacity and support the peacekeeping missions with ICT tools to better implement their mandates.

In conclusion, Madam Chair, I would like to assure you of the group's intention to engage constructively in the negotiations related to this important agenda item, as well as its willingness to reach a fruitful outcome in this regard in a timely manner.

14. We looks forward during the upcoming informal consultations to examine possible ways and means to enhance the implementation of ICT Strategy.

**I thank you.**