

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR. ABDALLAH BACHAR BONG, 1ST COUSSELLOR AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF CHAD TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 134: PROGRAMME BUDGET: BIENNIUM 2016-2017: UNMEER, 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 honour to speak on behalf of the African Group on agenda item 134: Programme Budget for Biennium 2016-2017: with particular reference to Lessons Learned Exercise on the Coordination Activities of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER).

2. At the outset, the African Group would like to thank Mr. Patrick Carey, Representative of the Secretary General for presenting the report (A/70/737 and A/70/737/Corr.1) and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairman of the Advisory Committee for introducing the reports on this agenda item contained in document A/71/810.

3. The African 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 African Group would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary General for establishing on 19 September 2014 the UNMEER, the first ever UN emergency health mission, following the joint appeal of the three most affected countries, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea translated in the General Assembly resolution 69/1.

5. The Group would like to once again commend the efforts of UNMEER in mobilizing the necessary financial and human resources to scale up the international efforts to curtail the Ebola outbreak.

Madam Chair,

6. The report under consideration presents the key findings from the lessons learned exercise conducted, noting that the objective is to provide a feedback and broader insight into how the United Nations system and member states collectively managed this crisis.

7. The Group shares the views of the ACABQ, underlining many aspects, including the organization of the Mission, and pointed out the lack of coordination and collaboration among different entities, the lack of effective support to the local actors, the issues related to the implementation of mandate and so on.

Madam Chair,

8. As the Ebola outbreak unfolded in 2014, the lack of capacity and preparedness contributed to an ineffective and delayed response to the disease as well as to its extension. In this context, from our view the lessons learned should have emphasized the need for resilience to protect the populations, strengthen the capacities of member states, in cooperation with the wider UN system and establish a greater preventive measures to avoid any future similar scenarios.

9. From our perspective, after the Ebola crisis, we need to establish a global Centre for Emergency Preparedness and Response with regional and local sections, provide support to strengthen, in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, the health sector of vulnerable member states, strengthen global coordination mechanisms, and in particular avoid reducing resources allocated to the health sector.

Madam Chair,

10. The Group hopes that the lessons learned on the activities of UNMEER will guide the Member states and the entire UN family in dealing with future global, regional and local health crisis.

11. In conclusion, Madam Chair, we ensure you of our readiness to engage constructively in the consideration of this agenda item.

I thank you.