



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA
BY MS. SIRITHON WAIRATPANIJ, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM
OF THAILAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 135: PROGRAMME PLANNING
AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(New York, 30 September 2016)**

Madam Chairperson,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 135, entitled "Programme Planning".

2. At the outset the Group of 77 and China wishes to commend the Chairperson of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), and thank her for her statement introducing the report of the Committee contained in document A/71/16. The Group also extends its appreciation to Mr. Johannes Huisman, Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division, and Mr. Mario Baez, Chief of Policy and Oversight Coordination Service for introducing the relevant reports.

Madam Chairperson,

3. Programme Planning deals with the crucial task of translating the intergovernmental mandates into implementable programmes. In this regard, the Group wishes to underline the importance of the work of the CPC as the main subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council for planning, programming and coordination. The CPC not only gives guidance to the Secretariat by interpreting legislative intents but also considers and develops evaluation procedures for the improvement of programme design and avoid overlap and duplication. The work of the CPC, in fact, forms the core capacity of the General Assembly to provide oversight in this key area. The Group therefore reaffirms its continued commitment in supporting and strengthening the work of the CPC.

4. The Group acknowledges and appreciates valuable inputs and comments provided by the CPC during its fifty-sixth session and fully endorses the recommendations and conclusions contained in its report. The Group also welcomes the guidance provided by the CPC on the proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019. We re-emphasize that setting priorities of the United Nations remains the sole prerogative of Member States.

5. Given the importance of evaluation processes in the Secretariat, the Group expects that the recommendations and conclusions of the CPC regarding evaluation are diligently implemented by the managers of the Secretariat. We also expect that the Secretariat, in accordance with the recommendations and conclusions of the CPC, when preparing future plan outlines, fully takes into account the need to consult widely with Member States before presenting proposals on management reform for the consideration of the General Assembly.

Madam Chairperson,

6. The Group attaches great importance to the programme performance report as it is an important accountability and management tool for Member States and the Secretariat, particularly the sections on lessons learned where departments and offices should make better use of those experiences to improve the future work. The Group would like to also emphasize that additional outputs during a biennium should mainly come from intergovernmental mandates.

7. The Group is satisfied with the report's content and format to date. While we remain open to any discussion, it must be emphasized that any proposal to change the format of the programme performance report must be discussed and approved by the General Assembly.

8. Another tool that must be recognized is the "Report on consolidated changes to the biennial programme plan as reflected in the proposed programme budget". In this regard, the Group underscores the importance of the linkage between the Programmatic and Budgetary Aspects of the Programme, the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/2016/6) and the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations (ST/SGB/2013/4 and ST/SGB/2015/4).

Madam Chairperson,

9. With regard to the proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019, as recommended by the CPC, the Group stresses that the longer-term priorities of the Organization must reflect the priorities set forth by Member States, especially for activities related to promoting sustained economic growth and sustainable development, and the outcomes of internationally agreed development goals and of major United Nations conferences and international agreements.

10. The Group stresses the importance of the Programme Plan for 2018-2019 which will be adopted by the General Assembly in the coming week and subsequently be implemented by the administration under the new Secretary-General. Among other important mandates from the General Assembly under this Plan, it is worth mentioning that the Plan will fully commence the implementation of the framework of the 2030 Agenda which would extend beyond one biennium as it would cover a period of 15 years. Therefore, the objectives, expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement and outcomes would need to evolve along the line of the discussions and decisions of Member States at intergovernmental meetings. This is a matter of priority for the Group and one that will be closely and regularly examined.

11. Along the same line, the Group awaits with interest how the changes especially those relating to the 2030 Agenda and Addis Ababa Action Agenda would be reflected in the budget outline proposal to be submitted at this main part of the seventy-first session and the subsequent submission of the proposed programme budget for the period 2018-2019.

Madam Chairperson,

12. The Group supports improvements in the reporting of management initiatives to the CPC and the Fifth Committee. More light needs to be shed on how the implementation of the mobility framework, the International Public Sector Accounting Standards and Umoja would facilitate the programme planning process, including the impact on programme delivery and realizing efficiencies, as well as on the expected implementation time frame. A deeper assessment is needed on these initiatives' effectiveness and their expected accomplishments and benefits as well as their impact on productivity with a continuous drawing of lessons learned.

13. The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) has a key role in coordinating the work of the United Nations system, including in implementing administrative and management initiatives. The Board's role should aim at avoiding duplication and strengthening programme effectiveness. The CEB has to also ensure that its work continues to align with Member States' priorities and guided by intergovernmental mandates. The CEB should not undertake initiatives for which no intergovernmental mandate exists. Any initiative must be presented to the relevant governing bodies of the United Nations system before being implemented.

Madam Chairperson,

14. One of the priorities for the Group of 77 and China under this agenda item is the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The Group expresses its support for the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the Special Adviser. The Group expresses its concern over the lack of resources and funding in support of implementation of the global and regional development frameworks in Africa. We wish to continue to receive detailed information relating to the possible outcomes of the achievements of NEPAD targets.

15. Also important for the Group is the work of the Joint Inspection Unit, as the sole independent, external oversight body of the United Nations system. The work of the Unit is essential to continuously enhance the Organization's evaluation function so as to allow it to achieve its objectives and account for its success. The Group encourages the Unit to continue to submit reports within the mandate of the CPC for its consideration.

Madam Chairperson,

16. In conclusion, the Group would like to reiterate its appreciation for the work done by the members of the CPC and for the support received from the Secretariat during the past session. We would like to assure you of our constructive participation during the informal deliberations on this item in order to reach positive outcome.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson.
