

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICA GROUP BY MR BACHAR BONG ABDALLAH, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF CHAD TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 149: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS, IN PARTICULAR THE REVIEW OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE TO THE AFRICAN UNION, AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(New York, 7 December 2016)

Madame Chairperson,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Africa Group on agenda item 149, in particular on the Review of the United Nations Office to the African Union.

2. At the outset, the Group would like to thank Ms. Bettina Tucci for presenting the report of the Secretary-General as contained in document A/71/551, as well as Mr Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for presenting the related report as contained in document A/71/646.

3. The Africa Group aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the Kingdom of Thailand on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Madame Chairperson,

4. The relationship between the United Nations and the African Union is central to the implementation and the realisation of peace and security. Greater strategic political coherence between the two organizations in the prevention, sustainability of peace, and resolution of conflicts in the region is vital.

5. The Group believes that more can be done to further enhance the existing relationship in the areas of peace and development. Development is important to ensure peace and security and is crucial for achieving the goals set out in the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

6. The United Nations and regional organisations such as the African Union have their respective comparative advantage. Strategic partnership between the two organizations need to be enhanced through closer collaboration and cooperation including through joint actions to address global peace, security and development challenges.

7. In this regard, the Group welcomes the significant progress made in the AU-UN partnership in the past years, particularly the signing by the UN Secretariat and the AU Commission of an overarching framework on enhancing partnership in peace and security, and stresses that the partnership should develop into a systematic, harmonized, and strategic one, including by providing predictable funding to the peacekeeping operations authorized by the Security Council, and led by the African Union.

8. The African Group would like to encourage the United Nations to continue to coordinate closely with the African Union Commission and the African Union Peace and Security Council, including in the areas of mediation, capacity-building, operationalizing the African Peace and Security Architecture and the 10-year implementation plan for the African Union Agenda 2063.

Madam Chairperson,

9. The African Group notes that the Secretary-General's proposal is submitted in response to the mandate given in resolution 70/287 which called for the need to undertake a comprehensive review of the United Nations Office to the African Union to enable the office to better deliver on its given mandates.

10. The African Group has further taken note that the Secretary-General proposal to strengthen the Office through the restructuring and reorganization of human resources aimed to better deliver the given mandates including those under the partnership between the United Nations and African Union.

11. The Group notes the proposed revised structure and will be interested to learn further details of some elements of the proposal during our informal consultations, including on the role and functions of the proposed human resources and the work of the new component as connected to mandate delivery including under the Institutional and Operational Partnership as well as Mission Support Planning.

12. The Group will also be interested to learn how the proposal will enhance the partnership with the African Union in the area of peace and security and provide coordinated and consistent United Nations support to the African Union on both long-term institutional capacity-building and short-term operational support matters.

Madam Chairperson,

13. The continuously evolving partnership with the African Union on issues of peace and security to address threats on the continent calls for further strengthening of the capacity of UNOAU to manage the strategic and operational relationship. The Group therefore fully supports restructuring of the Office and stands ready to engage constructively in the consideration of this agenda item with a view to reaching positive outcome in a timely fashion.

I thank you,