

Item 136 – Regional Restructuring of the OHCHR – CANZ statement, 16 March 2018

Mr. Chair,

First please allow me, on behalf of CANZ, to commend you for the decision regarding the Programme of Work. It is only proper that the full membership be allowed to consider all the Secretary-General's reports in a timely manner.

Mr. Chair,

CANZ would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the new report, which captures the many improvements made to the proposed decentralization of OHCHR's technical cooperation resources since it was first presented to this Committee.

The revisions demonstrate the degree to which OHCHR has proven responsive to the advice from the ACABQ and the concerns previously raised by members of the 5th Committee.

Our delegations would also like to thank the ACABQ for its recent report, which reiterated ACABQ's recommendation that the General Assembly approve the proposals of the Secretary-General. We add our thanks to the [Chair/Vice-Chair] of ACABQ for today's presentation.

Mr. Chair,

The proposal does much to improve the standard of service Member States can expect when seeking technical cooperation from OHCHR.

It would strengthen existing regional offices, regularize the status of the office in Yaoundé and add a regional office in the Caribbean.

Governments in the South Pacific, Africa and the Americas all stand to gain greater access to UN staff, who would be able to use limited travel resources within regions and sub-regions instead of travelling to and from a distant headquarters.

With improved dialogue with the Governments the UN serves should come more responsive programming to meet governments' SDG needs.

Mr. Chair,

Fifth Committee should always be seeking to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the UN's operations. This proposal clearly does so, in a cost neutral fashion.

We should be commending the Secretary-General's responsiveness to concerns raised in the past and approving the proposal by consensus.

There are other, more appropriate, venues for delegations to raise political considerations regarding other aspects of OHCHR's mandate. This proposal is about getting the greatest benefit possible from the limited resources devoted to development assistance.

It is time to allow the OHCHR's Technical Cooperation Division to move to where it is needed most. We urge the Committee to approve the proposal by consensus, this Session.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.