



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE ASSOCIATION  
OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS BY  
AMBASSADOR BURHAN GAFOOR, PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED NATIONS AT THE  
FIFTH COMMITTEE ON AGENDA ITEM 136:  
PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE  
BIENNIUM 2018 TO 2019, DURING THE 72ND  
SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON 11  
OCTOBER 2017**

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

1 I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 10 Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Agenda Item 136: Proposed Programme Budget for the Biennium 2018 to 2019. ASEAN aligns ourselves with the statement made by Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2 ASEAN thanks the Secretary-General for his remarks at the introduction of his first proposed programme budget. We extend our appreciation to Mr Carlos G. Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for introducing the report of the ACABQ. Since this is also the first time that I take the floor in the Fifth Committee, please allow me to congratulate you, Mr Chairman, and the members of your Bureau, on your election. Your fortitude is admirable.

Mr Chairman,

3 ASEAN supports the Secretary-General's efforts to make the United Nations more effective, responsive, and accountable, in order to improve mandate delivery and make a real impact to the people on the ground. We welcome the Secretary-General's push for a United Nations that is more transparent and accountable to the membership. ASEAN believes that the Organisation must be able to more visibly and meaningfully demonstrate a clearer link between resources and results, and we commend the Secretary-General for his commitment to work towards this goal.

4 At the same time, ASEAN reminds this Committee that the mandates the Organisation is tasked with implementing resulted from the decisions of Member States. ASEAN therefore reiterates our firm belief that the Organisation must be provided with the necessary resources to fulfil its mandates. Member States look to the United Nations to solve problems of international peace and security, development, and humanitarian affairs. The United Nations gives voice to the ignored, and visibility to the forgotten. With growing global challenges, we need a more dynamic and effective United Nations that is equipped to address short-term threats while holding the long-term foundations of peace and dignity for all. It is therefore not tenable for us to continue to demand more from the Organisation while seeking arbitrary cuts or threatening to withhold resources. The United Nations must work more efficiently and demonstrate that it is making effective use of the resources it has been entrusted with. But we should not artificially put the Organisation in a straitjacket and hamper its ability to fulfil its mandates. The Secretary-General has expressed his commitment to delivering on the ground. Member States should support his drive to produce results, with both our words, and our deeds.

Mr Chairman,

5 ASEAN notes that initial estimates to finance Special Political Missions in the proposed budget amount to over US\$1.1 billion. This continues to account for over 20 percent of the proposed budget for the biennium. ASEAN appreciates the role of Special Political Missions in the United Nations' work on peace and security. However, we also believe that it is time this Assembly had a serious discussion on the funding arrangements for Special Political Missions vis-à-vis other development priorities, which is all the more pertinent in view of the Secretary-General's proposals on reform of the United Nations' peace and security architecture. We look forward to having further discussions on this topic when the specific agenda item of SPMs is considered during this session.

Mr Chairman,

6 ASEAN will take an active interest in the forthcoming discussions. We look forward to a constructive and productive dialogue with all stakeholders.

7 I thank you.

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