



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA
BY MR MAJED BAMYA, MISSION OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE TO THE UNITED
NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 135: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE
ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS, IN
PARTICULAR PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE UNITED NATIONS
SECRETARIAT, AT THE FIRST RESUMED PART OF THE SEVENTY-THIRD SESSION
OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(New York, 15 March 2019)**

Madam Chair,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 135: review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations: procurement activities in the United Nations Secretariat.
2. The Group would like to thank Mr. Christian Saunders, Assistant Secretary-General for Supply Chain Management, Department of Operational Support, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on procurement activities in the United Nations Secretariat, as contained in document A/73/704, as well as Mr. Cihan Terzi, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing its related report as contained in document A/73/790.

Madam Chair,

3. The Organisation has been engaged in a continuous process of reforms in order to promote the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of its mandates. A transparent, consistent and non-discriminatory procurement strategy is necessary to enable the Organization to get the best possible return for its resources and at the same time deliver efficient services to the intended beneficiaries of United Nations programmes. The structural changes implemented through management reform are not ends in themselves, and the Group looks forward to a procurement strategy that brings a coherent direction to the various supply chain and procurement initiatives across the Secretariat.
4. The Group is unwavering in its belief that opening up procurement opportunities to all Member States is in the best interest of the Organisation. A greater diversity of products, services and vendors not only strengthens competition and lowers prices, but also ensures that the economic benefits of doing business with the United Nations assist in the promotion of social and economic development globally.
5. The Group of 77 and China takes note of efforts being made by the Secretariat's Procurement Division to reach out to the wider audience through the usage of business seminars, the United Nations Global Market place online portal and UN procurement manuals. The Group welcomes, in particular, the establishment of the Enabling and Outreach Service, and stresses the role assigned to

this unit in the diversification of the sources of procurement to the United Nations. However, the Group notes the risk that the status quo in United Nations procurement remains unchanged by management reform. The Group continues to call for more active and innovative measures to promote broader and more meaningful vendor participation from developing countries, including in high value centralized procurement.

6. The proposal for regional procurement centres in the Asia-Pacific and Latin American and Caribbean regions is of interest to the Group and we look forward to more detailed proposals in this regard. The Group also notes the proposed diversification of the portfolio of the Regional Procurement Office in Entebbe, and looks forward to more detailed information on how the Secretariat will strengthen the office to manage global procurement, both in the region and beyond the African peacekeeping missions.

Madam Chair,

7. A key element of the new procurement framework is the increased delegation of procurement authority. The Group believes that delegation of authority must be matched by sufficient guidance, tools and training to ensure that delegated authority is properly exercised, as well as increased compliance and accountability mechanisms. The Group welcomes the increased professionalization of the procurement division, but notes that the Secretariat should ensure that certificates from internationally recognized authorities in developing countries be included before the certification process is made mandatory on 1 January 2021.

8. The Group notes the Secretariat's move towards e-tendering and mobile applications, and emphasizes that all procurement initiatives must be applied in a consistent, universal, non-discriminatory and transparent manner. The Group will seek further detailed information on efforts made to reach vendors who are not be able to access the system, noting that goods and services procured for peacekeeping operations are often required in areas without wide internet access, without impacting on the quality and suitability of the service provided.

9. On the notion of sustainable procurement, the Group notes that although the General Assembly has not yet approved the concept of environmentally friendly and sustainable procurement, the Secretariat has insisted on using the concept in procurement reports. The Group reiterates that consideration of this concept must be based on reasoned analysis on the definition of the concept and how it can be applied in practical terms in the United Nations.

Madam Chair,

10. Goods and services procured by the Organization should be in compliance with established procurement procedures, based on international competitive bidding and the widest possible geographical base. The Group will examine the proposals of the Secretary-General in light of our desire for a transparent, open, impartial, and cost-effective procurement system that fully reflects the international character of the United Nations, as requested in many General Assembly resolutions.

11. In conclusion, Madam Chair, the Group of 77 and China looks forward to constructive and fruitful discussions on the issue of procurement. This is an important issue and we look forward to concrete results that will ensure greater accountability and better use of resources.

I thank you.