

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR. KATLEGO  
MMALANE, FIRST SECRETARY, THE PERMANENT MISSION OF  
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 135: PROPOSED  
PROGRAMME BUDGET 2020: REQUEST FOR A SUBVENTION TO THE  
RESIDUAL SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE (RSCSL)**

**(New York, 11 DECEMBER 2019)**

**Mr. Chair,**

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the African Group on this agenda item.

At the outset, the Group wishes to thank Mr. Chandru Ramanathan, ASG, Controller and Ms. Julia Maciel, Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing their respective reports.

The Group continues to remember Mr. Desmond Da Silva, a former Prosecutor of the Special Court who passed away during 2018. May he rest in peace.

The African Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Palestine on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and wishes to make additional remarks.

**Mr. Chair,**

While we acknowledge article 3 of the Agreement establishing the Residual Special Court, whereby the expenses of the Court shall be borne by voluntary contributions from the international community, without precluding the exploration of alternative means of funding the Court, we also acknowledge that this funding arrangement has posed serious challenges to the continued sustainability of the Court, thereby threatening the effective implementation of its mandate.

To sustain funding, it is noted that extensive fundraising activities have been undertaken by the Oversight Committee, the principals of the Court and other relevant stakeholders during 2019. Despite these concerted efforts, funding challenges for the RSCSL still remain. This goes to highlight the unpredictability and unreliability of the current funding mechanism of voluntary contributions to support the work of the Court. For this, the Group fully understands the concerns of the Secretary-General about the future financing of the Residual Special Court. It is worrying the Court has not received sufficient voluntary contributions for its operations since 2015 and has had to rely on subventions from the General Assembly. The African Group

stands ready to work with all stakeholders to establish a funding mechanism that would be more sustainable, predictable and reliable for the Residual Special Court.

For the period 1 January to 31 December 2020, the Secretary-General has requested for approval of a subvention of \$2,899,500 to enable the Residual Special Court continue carrying out its mandate. It is worth noting that the identification of savings in the preparation of the 2020 budget has contributed to a budget reduction of \$85,100.

**Mr. Chair.**

The Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone commenced operations on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2014 to succeed the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL). In preservation of the legacy of the Special Court in matters of international criminal justice, the Residual Special Court has had to undertake, inter alia, supervision of the enforcement of sentences, review of convictions and acquittals, conduct of contempt of court proceedings or referral, witness and victim protection and support as well as maintenance, preservation and management of archives of the Special Court.

The preservation of this legacy continues to be an important element of the work of the Residual Special Court, which also seeks to contribute to the development of international criminal justice. The African Group appreciates that the judges of the Court continue to participate in external activities as part of promoting the legacy and increasing the profile of the Court at no cost to the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Turning to archives, we note that the physical archives of the Residual Special Court occupy approximately 600 linear metres of paper records, and the digital archives occupy approximately 13.4 terabytes in addition to the original audiovisual recordings of about 150 terabytes. The Group appreciates that significant progress has been made though the compilation and final review of the comprehensive archive index is labour intensive and remains a work in progress.

**Mr. Chair,**

In conclusion, the Group would like to thank the Government of Sierra Leone, Member States and relevant stakeholder institutions for the continued support to the Court.

The Group, as always, stands ready to engage constructively for a timely and successful conclusion of the agenda item.

**I thank you.**