



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY SAED KATKHUDA, SENIOR ADVISOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE OBSERVER STATE OF PALESTINE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 135: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR 2020: REQUEST FOR A SUBVENTION TO THE RESIDUAL SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY- FOURTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, FIFTH COMMITTEE

(New York, 11 DECEMBER 2019)

Mr. Chair

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 135: Proposed programme budget for 2020 with specific reference to the request for a subvention to the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone (RSCSL).

At the outset, the Group wishes to thank Mr. Chandru Ramanathan, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller, Office of Programme Planning, Finance and Budget, as well as Ms. Julia Maciel, Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing their respective reports.

The Group of 77 and China continues to reiterate its strong support to the work of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone. We wish to recall that since the commencement of its operations in January 2014, the Court has continued to carry out important residual functions of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, including supporting witness protection, supervising the enforcement of sentences, assistance to national prosecuting authorities, and the management and preservation of archives. In addition, the Court conducts *ad hoc* proceedings, and has the power to prosecute the remaining fugitive, if arrested, or to refer his case to a competent national jurisdiction for trial. In this regard, the Group attaches great importance to ensuring the adequacy of resources for the effective implementation of the Court's mandate.

Mr. Chair,

The Group notes with concern, again this year, the insufficiency of voluntary contributions, despite the intensive fundraising endeavors by the Secretary General, the Oversight Committee and the principal officials of the Court. With no prospects of predictable and reliable voluntary contributions in the current budget period, effective implementation of the

mandate of the Court is at risk. While the Group supports the approval of the full amount of the subvention requested by the Secretary General, we remain mindful of the fact that subvention is only a temporary measure. In this regard, the Group of 77 and China reiterate the need for a long-term sustainable funding mechanism for the Court, preferably, through assessed contributions from Member States.

The Group is encouraged by the measures taken by the court to reduce expenditure with the view of increasing value for money, and effective use of the commitment's authority as well as actions pursued to secure additional voluntary contributions for the court. The Group would like to convey its profound thanks and appreciation to the Government of Sierra Leone for her sustained support and effort towards the functioning of the Court, as well as, other Member States and partners for their invaluable support towards the work of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone.

In conclusion, the Group would like to assure you of our readiness to engage constructively in the consideration of this agenda item with a view to reaching a conclusion in a timely manner.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.