



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY SAED KATKHUDA, SENIOR ADVISOR, PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 135: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR 2020 - REQUEST FOR A SUBVENTION TO THE EXTRAORDINARY CHAMBERS IN THE COURTS OF CAMBODIA AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE, MAIN PART OF THE 74<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**2 DECEMBER 2019**

Mr. Chairman,

1 I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item sub item 135: Request for a subvention to the extraordinary chambers in the courts of Cambodia. The Group wishes to thank Mr Chandru Ramanthan, Controller and Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Finance and Budget; Ms. Fatoumata Ndiaye, Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services; and Mr Cihan Terzi, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for introducing their respective reports.

2 We would like to join the Secretary-General in commending the judicial officials and staff of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia for their dedication and determination in fulfilling the mandate of the Chambers under trying circumstances. We note the progress made in the judicial proceedings and encourage the Chambers to take all necessary measures to expedite case completion, including through more effective planning, while fully respecting the requirements of the judicial progress.

3 The Group remains seized with the efficient and effective operation of the Chambers. In this regard, we welcome the findings of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) in its August 2019 report which concluded that controls over the Chambers' general operating expenditure were adequate. We also note that the United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials has accepted the OIOS' recommendations and has initiated action to implement them, such as monitoring the continued eligibility of foreign lawyers to serve as members of the defence teams. We continue to stress that ensuring adequate and sustainable financing for the Chambers remains a priority for the Group. This will ensure the smooth and efficient progress in the dispensation of justice in the Chambers.

4 The Group commends Cambodia, the Host Country, for its commitment to provide in-kind contributions and the majority of funding of the national component over the past five years. We further commend Member States who have provided extrabudgetary resources towards the important work of the Chambers. However, we remain concerned over the persistent financial challenges facing the Chambers despite various fundraising efforts. In

particular, we note that voluntary contributions has steadily decreased over the years from \$17.7 million in 2015 to \$6.3 million in 2019.

5 The Group commends the Secretary-General for the adoption of cost-saving measures in light of the shortfall from contributions. We also strongly encourage the Secretary-General to continue with his efforts in mobilising the necessary funds, through voluntary contributions from Member States, to fulfil the funding gaps for the Chambers.

Mr Chairman,

6 It remains critical for the international community to ensure that the Chambers have the necessary financial means to ensure full accountability for the crimes perpetrated during the former Khmer Rouge regime. A financial failure of the Chambers would constitute a renewed tragedy in the quest for justice of the people of Cambodia, who have waited for decades for these efforts to reach belated fruition, and would constitute a serious setback to the international community's fight against impunity.

7 In this regard, the Group supports the Secretary-General's proposal to supplement the extrabudgetary resources for the year 2020, which we trust will be considered positively during our deliberations. The Group has also studied the recommendations contained in the report of the ACABQ and we will provide our comments and queries on the proposed way forward during our informal consultations.

8 In conclusion, let me assure you of the commitment of the Group of 77 and China to work constructively with all delegations towards the timely conclusion of this agenda item.

Thank you.

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