



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS NADA  
TARBUSH, FIRST SECRETARY, MISSION OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE TO THE  
UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 135: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR 2020,  
ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING PROJECT, UMOJA, AT THE FIFTH  
COMMITTEE DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF  
THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

(New York, 2 December 2019)

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on this topic. At the outset, the group would like to thank Mr. Chandru Ramanathan, Assistant Secretary-General, ERP-Umoja; Mr. Peter Korn, Director of External Audit (Germany) and Chair of the Audit Operations Committee, Board of Auditors; and Mr. Cihan Terzi, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing their respective reports.
2. The Group of 77 and China commends the report by the Board of Auditors on the Umoja project. Oversight is crucial in a project of this magnitude and complexity. We urge the Secretary-General to ensure that the recommendations of the Board of Auditors are implemented in full and without delay.
3. The General Assembly has heard much about Umoja and its role as a key pillar of the Secretary-General's reform efforts. We have been promised repeatedly that Umoja will ensure greater efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of mandates, as well as promote accountability across the Organisation, especially in the stewardship of resources.
4. We note that Umoja Extension 2 and its subprojects are in the process of being deployed. We also take note of progress in areas such as software and hardware infrastructure upgrades, as well as efforts at training staff to ensure institutional capacity to support Umoja. The Group had earlier urged the Secretary-General to closely monitor UE2's implementation, and ensure that lessons learned from the implementation of Umoja Foundation and UE1 be proactively applied.
5. To our dismay, the Umoja team did not complete the implementation of the full scope of the project within the approved timeline and budget. We are disappointed that there is yet another request for an extension of the project timeline to end-2020, at further cost to the Organisation and Member States, despite its repeated delays and ballooning costs. We share the Advisory Committee's deep concerns of persistent weaknesses in project planning and monitoring which should not be happening at this late stage of the project.

Mr Chair

6. We have already expended a significant amount of financial resources on Umoja. Till this day, the Secretary-General has yet to provide a final update on the total cost of ownership of the system, the full extent of realization of benefits, nor a mainstreaming plan, despite the General Assembly's request.

7. There is clearly an urgent need to take corrective action. The Group of 77 and China calls on the Secretary-General to ensure that the Umoja project is completely implemented by the end of 2020, and prioritise the enforcement of mitigation measures to ensure that there are no more delays. The Group reiterates the need for a benefits realisation plan to be issued quickly to establish a clear and transparent record of the quantitative and qualitative Umoja benefits that are realised. We also urge the relevant governance committees to play a more proactive and sustained leadership role in exercising stronger oversight over the deployment of Umoja.

8. At a time of fiscal austerity and uncertainty across the Organisation, we would continue to take a hard look at Umoja, and apply a consistent standard of fiscal discipline to this project. The Group also looks forward to detailed updates on the deployment of UE2 and its impact on supply chain management, and reimbursements and payments to troop- and police-contributing countries. We also look forward to updates on the measures that are urgently needed to plug the gaps in Umoja's application controls and maintenance of master data, amongst the concerns that were flagged by the Board of Auditors and Advisory Committee.

Mr. Chair,

9. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China stands ready to continue to engage constructively during the informal deliberations on this agenda item.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.