



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. SAED KATKHUDA, SENIOR ADVISER, PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 142: UNITED NATIONS COMMON SYSTEM, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

(New York, 25 October 2019)

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 142, entitled "United Nations Common System".
2. The Group wishes to thank Ambassador Larbi Djacta, Chair of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and Ms. Julia Maciel, Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing their respective reports. We also thank Mr. Johannes Huisman, Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division, for presenting the statement of the Secretary-General on the administrative and financial implications of the decisions and recommendations contained in the report of the ICSC.

Mr. Chair,

3. The Group notes with appreciation the work of the ICSC and reiterates its commitment to a single, unified United Nations common system and reaffirms the crucial role of the Commission as a cornerstone for the regulation and coordination of the conditions of service of the United Nations Common system as stipulated in article 1 paragraph 1 of its statute.
4. The Group notes that 16 organizations have accepted the statute of the ICSC. We also note that with the participation of the UN and its funds and programmes, there are 28 organizations, funds and programmes that cooperate closely in the Commission and apply the provisions of its statute.
5. As the guardian of the common system, the Commission needs strong support to ensure that the common system does not disintegrate. This is especially important because of the imperativeness to maintain a harmonized and consistent structure of the common system.

Mr. Chair,

6. It is no secret that the common system is confronted with a challenge in Geneva today due to the judgments of the ILO Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT). It is disconcerting to emphasize that ILOAT judgments 4134 to 4138 with respect to the implementation of the Geneva Post Adjustment results threaten the very existence of the common system as we know it. The Group is perplexed at how the judgment arrived at a ruling that the Commission “did not have the power to decide, by itself, the level of post adjustments for a duty station”. Since its inception in 1975, the ICSC has constantly established post adjustment multipliers for duty stations worldwide in accordance with articles 10 and 11 of its-Statute.

7. The Group would like to reiterate its long-standing position and reaffirm the mandate of the Commission to continue to establish post adjustment multipliers under article 11 of the latter’s statute.

8. The Group recognizes the value of the work of the ICSC Task Force on Post Adjustment as well as that of the Advisory Committee on Post Adjustment Questions. We equally recognize and appreciate the contributions of multiple working groups in collectively and constructively developing proposals on pertinent common system issues for the Commission’s consideration. The Group also wishes to stress the importance of enhanced consultations with stakeholders that help the Commission in reaching its decisions, this is an element that cannot be discounted.

9. On that score, the Group acknowledges that, while answerable to the General Assembly, its policies and decisions are more sustainable and better implemented when they have the buy-in of organizations and staff. It is recommended that more effort is made in investing in better communication with staff and shedding more light on its methodologies and practices, reaching out to stakeholders, identifying concerns well in advance and collectively exploring policy solutions.

10. Finally, Mr. Chair, the Group notes the efforts being made by organizations to introduce policies to enhance diversity in the common system in relation to gender and disability. Going forward, we would like to re-emphasize the need for an equitable geographical representation system-wide and look forward to receiving a comprehensive report on this issue from the Commission next year.

11. In conclusion, Mr. Chair, the Group wishes to assure you that it stands ready to engage constructively on this item towards a timely conclusion.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.