



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. SAED KATKHUDA, SENIOR ADVISOR, MISSION OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 144: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE OFFICE OF INTERNAL OVERSIGHT SERVICES AND AGENDA ITEM 133: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(New York, 11 October 2019)**

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General, Ms. Heidi Mendoza, for introducing the report [A/74/67](#) of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. The Group also wishes to thank Ms. Patricia X. Arriagada Villouta, Chair of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee (IAAC), for introducing its related report [A/74/92](#).

Mr. Chair,

2. The Group would like to acknowledge the important role of the OIOS in strengthening the internal oversight of the organization through internal audit, inspection, evaluation and investigations. The office plays a central role in improving internal controls, accountability and organizational efficiency and effectiveness. We would like to reaffirm our support to the operational independence of the Office in line with the General Assembly resolution 48/218 B.

3. The Group welcomes the continuous coordination between the Office and other oversight entities, including the Board of Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit, in order to minimize overlap and duplication of oversight work. We encourage maintaining and further enhancing this coordination. Also, the Group urges the full cooperation of all relevant UN entities with the Office in discharging its responsibilities. We encourage the Secretary-General to ensure continuous reporting on any impediments to the work of the OIOS, and to take measures to prevent such a situation.

Mr. Chair,

4. The present report provides an assessment of the state of evaluation across 31 United Nations entities during the biennium 2016–2017 in terms of evaluation functions, resources and practice. The Group acknowledges that these three areas are not mutually exclusive hence, the need to optimize their complementarity.

5. To emphasize, the organizational independence of evaluation functions is defined to a significant extent by their structural arrangement, and this is indicative of their autonomy in setting the evaluation agenda and performing their tasks with minimal interference and that, the reporting lines of the senior-most evaluation staff indicate the extent to which an evaluation function has the autonomy to plan its work and submit its results to the appropriate level of decision-making.

6. Having made this emphasis, the Group notes that 17 entities have shifted their reporting line to the head of entity. We also note that having such an arrangement has enabled formal improvements to the evaluation functions of these entities.

7. On the other hand, it is also noted that three entities, namely the Department of Field Support/Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Department of Management, indicated that their reporting line had shifted towards less independence.

8. With the observation of this divergence between the entities that have improved their evaluation function and those that have not improved or in some cases retrogressed, the Group wishes to reiterate the need for a continuous commitment to strengthening accountability and evaluation. The Group expects that weaknesses found in evaluation function and practice will be urgently addressed and in this regard, welcomes, among other measures, the establishment of the Evaluation Section of the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC). The Group will seek to better appreciate the role of this newly-established Section during informal deliberations.

Mr. Chair,

9. With respect to entities' capacity of evaluation, the Group notes that budgeted resources allocated to evaluation totalled \$28 million for 2016–2017, compared with \$26.4 million in 2014–2015.

10. Though there has been a nominal increase compared with the last biennium, expenditure on evaluation as a proportion of programme budgets generally remained below organizational benchmarks. Only 6 of 30 entities met the minimum threshold for evaluation spending, with most evaluation functions spending under 0.5 per cent of programme budgets on evaluation. Average spending on evaluation reports proportionate to the overall budgets was 0.31 per cent, falling below the range indicated by the Joint Inspection Unit.

11. Last but not the least, the Group wishes to highlight that no evaluation reports were produced by the Department of Management, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the Office for Outer Space Affairs, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the United Nations Office at Nairobi and the United Nations Office at Vienna although these aforementioned entities budgeted for evaluation.

Mr. Chair,

12. Turning to the report of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee (IAAC), the Group would like to express its appreciation for the expert advice and assistance it receives from the IAAC. We continue to attach great value to the Advisory Committee's comments, observations and recommendations aimed, among other important tasks, at ensuring compliance with audit and oversight recommendations, as well as the overall effectiveness of the risk management procedures in internal control systems.

Mr. Chair,

13. The Group of 77 and China has carefully examined the comments and recommendations contained in the reports, and looks forward to having an in-depth discussion during informal consultations.

14. Our readiness to engage in an open and constructive manner on this agenda item is, as always, assured.

I thank you.