

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR. KATLEGO MMALANE,  
FIRST SECRETARY, THE PERMANENT MISSION OF BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED  
NATIONS, ON THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK FOR THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-  
FOURTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S FIFTH COMMITTEE  
(New York, 7 October 2019)**

**Mr. Chair,**

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group on the organization of the work of the Fifth Committee during the main part of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly.

The African Group would like to congratulate Your Excellency Ambassador Andreas D. Mavroyiannis, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Cyprus to the United Nations, on your appointment as the Chair of the Fifth Committee. We would also like to extend our congratulations to all the Members of the Bureau on the assumption of their new roles and responsibilities.

The African Group wishes to assure you, Mr. Chair, and the membership of the Bureau of our continued commitment to supporting the execution of the Bureau's mandate.

The Group would also like to express our deepest appreciation to the outgoing Bureau for the excellent work done under the guidance of Her Excellency Ambassador Gillian Bird, Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations.

At the outset, the Group acknowledges the presence of Mr. Chandramouli Ramanathan, Assistant-Secretary General and Controller, and Mr. Cihan Terzi, Chair of the Advisory Committee on administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).

The African Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the State of Palestine on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and would like to add a few remarks.

**Mr. Chair,**

On the organization of work of the Fifth committee, the African Group would like to express its appreciation to the Bureau for preparing the draft programme of work and to also congratulate designated facilitators of the various agenda items that would be under consideration during this part of the session.

The Group notes that the Committee is expected to consider a significant number of documents related to the many agenda items on hand and this, as usual, would place a very heavy workload on us. In consideration of this, we reiterate that the issuance of documents be timely in order to facilitate the undertaking of the Committee's packed programme.

**Mr. Chair,**

We have quite the lineup of important agenda items such as the Proposed Programme Budget for 2020, Human Resource Management, the Common System, Construction and Property Management, Financing of Special Political Missions (SPMs), the AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), to mention but a few.

The Group takes particular note that in its resolution 72/266, the General Assembly approved the introduction of an annual budget on a trial basis, beginning with the programme budget for 2020 and also notes the Secretary-General's indication that the proposed programme budget has been prepared in keeping with this decision. The African Group, as usual, will engage keenly and transparently on the item while paying close attention to the peculiarities of this pilot format and its impact on the Group's interests.

Also of great importance to the Group are the reports of the Board of Auditors, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals and the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone.

**Mr. Chair,**

With regard to the scale of assessment on the apportionment of expenses of the United Nations, in particular Article 19 of the Charter, the African Group would like to stress the need for expedite action on the matter to enable the full participation of concerned Member States in the work of the General Assembly. We anticipate the conclusion of this matter this morning.

**Mr. Chair,**

On the methods of work of the Committee, the African Group urges all to avoid the “session in, session out business-as-usual pace of work” and that we ought to rather seek to be efficient with time and effective with our output. We all do, at least, agree that the extension of the programme of work beyond the officially allocated timeframe should not be commonplace. We share the view that the timely conclusion of the Committee’s work would, to a greater extent, be determined by the conduct, commitment as well as sacrifice of delegations.

To conclude, Mr. Chair, the African Group would like to re-emphasize its longstanding position that negotiations in this Committee should be conducted in an open, inclusive and transparent manner devoid of backroom dealings and closed group machinations.

The Group wishes to assure you of its readiness to engage constructively on all agenda items with a view to having an early Christmas.

**I thank you,**