

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR. MOHAMED TRAORE, COUNSELOR AT THE PERMANENT MISSION OF MALI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 143: IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS AT THE SECOND RESUMED PART OF THE SEVENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(New York, 14 May 2021)

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group on agenda item 143: Improving the financial situation of the United Nations.
2. The African Group extends its appreciation to Ms. Catherine Pollard, Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC) for the presentation on the financial situation of the Organization made on 7 May 2021 and for introducing the report of the Secretary-General A/75/387/Add.1.
3. The Group also expresses its appreciation to the Office of Contributions for the updated information on the payment of assessments by the Member States and its continued support to the Member States in the process of fulfilling their financial obligations.
4. The African Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Representative of Guinea on behalf of the Group of 77 & China. We wish to add a few remarks.

Mr. Chair,

5. The Group is pleased to note that collections in April spiked to a record \$1 billion hence reaching a cumulative 76% of the year's assessment by the end of April. The Group salutes the Member States that were able to make their contributions in this period and on time. We encourage all the Member States that are in a position to pay their contributions in full, on time, and without conditions, to do so in order to avert the distressing financial situation to the Organization.
6. The African Group is, however, concerned that the cash situation with regard to the regular budget remained a source of grave concern throughout the 2020 period despite the strict cash conservation measures, including the suspension of hiring for regular budget operations that were implemented in the year.
7. The Group is particularly concerned that the year also ended with another new record for outstanding regular budget contributions of \$808 million hence breaking another record for all the wrong reasons. It is untenable to imagine that an organization such as ours, due to a severe liquidity crisis, had to rely on

borrowings from the Working Capital Fund, Special Account, and closed peacekeeping missions in **ten out of twenty-four** months during 2019 and 2020 periods. This simply cannot become business as usual.

8. The Group wishes to applaud the Secretary-General and the Secretariat for the effort undertaken, including austerity measures that are aimed at improving the financial position of the Organization. However, the Group is concerned that most of the measures taken have and continue to affect mandate delivery by the Organization. Measures such as suspension of hiring for the regular budget deprive the Organization of the human resources necessary to execute the given mandates. As has been stated over time, the Organization cannot be expected to do more with less resources.

Mr. Chair

9. Turning to the peacekeeping operations, the Group is encouraged by the positive trend in the cash balances of peacekeeping operations. We note the positive contribution of the decision by the General Assembly in its resolution 73/307 that removed the restriction on cross-borrowing of cash for active missions, along with the assessment and collection for non-mandated periods, and the management of cash for peacekeeping operations as a pool, which has resulted in improvement in the overall liquidity of active peacekeeping operations. The Group is particularly pleased that Payments for troops/formed police units and contingent-owned equipment are current for all active missions except for \$65 million for UNAMID. We reiterate that all efforts should be made to ensure that all reimbursements to the TCC/PCC are settled as soon as possible.

10. The African Group implores that a permanent solution must be found very soon since borrowing from active and closed peacekeeping operations is not ideal. Neither is it sustainable for the Organization, as this practice will negatively impact the delivery of the Organization's mandate.

Mr. Chair

11. The African Group is fully aware of the financial constraints that most of our Member States find themselves in, more so due to the impact Covid-19 has had on the economies of the developing countries. Covid-19 has exacerbated an already difficult situation for many States within our Group. The African Group empathizes with these Member States that are genuinely unable to meet their financial obligations for reasons beyond their control.

12. In conclusion, Mr. Chair, the African Group assures you that it will participate and engage in all and any constructive efforts towards resolving the financial difficulties the Organization faces.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.