

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP BY MR. MOHAMED TRAORE, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 154: BUDGET OF THE REGIONAL SERVICE CENTRE IN ENTEBBE, UGANDA DURING THE SECOND PART OF THE RESUMED SEVENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**(NEW YORK, 11 MAY 2021)**

**Mr. Chair,**

1. I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group on agenda item 154: Budget of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe (RSCE), Uganda, for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.

2. The Group would like to thank Mr. **Chandru Ramanathan, the Assistant Secretary-General and Controller, and Mr. Abdallah Bachar Bong**, the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing their respective reports.

3. 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,**

4. The African Group attaches great importance to, and recognizes the role of the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, in supporting peacekeeping operations mission, especially on the African continent.

5. Indeed, as highlighted in the proposed budget of the Centre for the 2021/22 period, the Centre will continue to provide services in the area of human resources, finance, communications and information technology, transportation and movement control, personnel and cargo transport, and procurement support to its 19 client entities, including (eight) 8 Peacekeeping Missions, (ten) 10 Special Political Missions, as well as other Missions in the region including closing missions.

6. The Group observes that the workload and volume of transactions carried out by the Centre have increased tremendously. However, this is not commensurate with the staffing strength of the Centre. As of 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021, sixty-one (61) posts were vacant in the Centre, and this situation is of concern to the Group. Considering the increase in the number of clients and workload of the Centre, we reiterate that the Center should be adequately staffed and provided with adequate/appropriate resources to ensure effective implementation of its mandate as envisaged by the General Assembly.

7. The Group also recalls that the General Assembly, in its resolution 72/286, noted that the national staff of the Centre are eligible for continuing contracts and requested the Secretary-General to ensure that they are granted continuing contracts in line with the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions. The Group, therefore, urges the Secretary-General to continue to facilitate the issuance of continuing contracts to the national staff that meet the eligibility criteria.

**Mr. Chair,**

6. The African Group welcomes the conclusion of the study that was requested by the General Assembly on the Strategic Air Operations Centre, the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre as well the Global Procurement Support Section in the context of an integrated supply chain management approach. The Group further welcomes the proposed integration of the Global procurement Section within RSCE as a tenant unit and the establishment of the Forward Support and Deployment Hub (FSDH) as a tenant unit to replace the TMICC.

7. The Group requests the Secretary-General to continue to make full use of the Global Procurement Support Section in Entebbe for procurement in the field to achieve economies of scale.

**Mr. Chair,**

9. The Group notes the proposed drawn down and reduced reliance on the Entebbe Base by MONUSCO and looks forward to understanding the Secretary-General's vision for the management of the facilities at the Entebbe Base and the need to have an independent host Government Agreement for the management of the facilities at the Regional Service Centre Entebbe, Uganda.

Finally, the Group would like to extend its gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Uganda for the continued support extended to the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe.

9. In conclusion, Mr. Chair, the Group, assures you of our commitment to engage constructively on this important agenda item.

**I thank you, Mr. Chair.**