

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICA GROUP BY MR. FELIX-FILS EBOA EBONGUE, PERMANENT MISSION OF CAMEROON TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 142: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND AGENDA ITEM 149: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS, AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SEVENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 4 October 2021)

Mr chair,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the member states of the Africa group on agenda item 142, entitled "scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations" and on agenda item 149, entitled "scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations".

2. The Africa group thanks Ambassador Bernardo Greiver, chair of the Committee on contributions, and Mr. Chandru Ramanathan, controller and Assistant secretary-general for programme planning, finance and budget for introducing their respective reports.

3- The Group aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the distinguished representative of Guinea on behalf of the G77+china and would like to make the following additional remarks.

Mr chair,

4. The Africa group believes that any apportionment methodology only makes sense when member states fulfil their responsibility to pay their contribution on time, in full and without condition.

5 Equality of member states, ascertained in Article 2 of the Charter, relates to rights and responsibilities and implies that member States equitably contribute in providing financial resources to the Organization. Underpinning this notion, is the principle of capacity to pay. This principle remains the main factor in the definition of the assessment of member states; it is therefore unacceptable and unfair that certain Member states, which are otherwise wealthier, continue to shift their statutory responsibilities to others, especially to developing countries.

7 The Africa group stresses that, the political circumstances that led to the 2000 agreement and that profoundly distorted the notion of equitable shared responsibilities no longer stand the test of time and is a fundamental distortion of the principle of “capacity to pay” . The Group therefore urges the General Assembly to make sure every Member State contributes to its real capacity to pay: not more, not less.

8 The Group also stresses that any attempt to change the current methodology of calculation of contribution in a sense that will add to the already very heavy burden of developing countries is simply not acceptable. The Group reiterates that the core elements of the current methodology of the scale of assessments such as Base period, Gross national income, Conversion rates, low per capita income adjustment, gradient, floor, ceiling for least developed countries, and debt burden adjustment, must be kept intact; they are not negotiable.

8 On another issue, the Africa group reaffirms that privileges and responsibilities are two sides of the same coin and cannot be dissociated. the use of services of the Organization, in any way whatsoever, comes with the responsibility to contribute to the financial burden of the institution. It cannot be accepted that certain countries or groups of observer countries or organizations benefiting from the services of the United Nations be exempted from assuming the financial responsibilities that come with; it particularly becomes an injustice when members with same enhanced observer status are treated differently. The Group once more asks the General Assembly to correct this situation as soon as possible.

9 Relatedly, and concerning the scale of assessment for peace keeping operations, the Africa group reaffirms that the peacekeeping scale must clearly reflect the special responsibilities of the Permanent members of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr Chair

10 In addition to the foregoing, the devastating consequences of the covid-19 pandemic on developing countries' economies suggest that any discussion on the system of discounts applied to the peacekeeping scale should be in the sense of relieving these economies.

11 The negative consequences of this pandemic, coupled with other structural problems, have already prevented some developing countries from temporarily meeting their financial obligations. The Group therefore strongly recommends to the Committee to consider dealing with Article 19 exemptions on an urgent manner and endorse the Committee on

Contributions' recommendation that Comoros, Sao Tome and Principe, and Somalia, be permitted to vote until the end of the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly.

Mr chair,

12. The Africa group reaffirms that negotiations on all Fifth committee agenda items must be conducted in an open, inclusive, and transparent manner and assures you of its readiness to constructively participate to upcoming discussions on this agenda item.

I thank you, my chair.