



## **STATEMENT BY**

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
MALAWI TO THE UNITED NATIONS CHAIRPERSON  
OF THE AFRICAN GROUP FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL  
2005

ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP  
AT THE

INFORMAL THEMATIC CONSULTATIONS OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON CLUSTER IV  
(THE IMPERATIVE FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION:  
STRENGTHENING THE UNITED NATIONS)

NEW YORK, APRIL 28, 2005

**STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN GROUP ON CLUSTER IV: THE IMPERATIVE FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION: STRENGTHENING THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr. Facilitator

I wish to thank you on behalf of the African Group for facilitating this Cluster. The African Group associates itself with the statement made by Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Africa strongly favors a holistic approach of the institutional reforms of the United Nations and considers it as a means for strengthening the overall performance of the United Nations system and multilateralism with the aim of promoting development and international security.

The final objective should be to enhance and strengthen the overall performance of the United Nations system to enable it to deliver effectively bearing in mind that Africa is at the epicenter of world crises.

Mr Facilitator,

Allow me to elaborate on the various recommendations of the Secretary General's report with respect to the strengthening of the United Nations.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The General Assembly should be strengthened for it to play its proper role as the most representative and democratic body within the UN System and as the parliament of the world. The inter-governmental nature of the General Assembly should be preserved to ensure that it remains essentially a forum for intergovernmental dialogue.

**SECURITY COUNCIL**

The African Group wishes to refer to its Statement made during the informal consultations of the plenary of the General Assembly on 6 April 2005, in which it stressed that Africa's goal is to be fully represented in all the decision-making organs of the UN, particularly in the Security Council, which is the principal decision-making organ of the UN in matters relating to international peace and security.

Full representation of Africa in the Security Council means:

- i. not less than two permanent seats with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership including the right of veto;
- ii. Five non-permanent seats.

## ECOSOC

The African Group believes that ECOSOC should be strengthened with a view to go beyond policy coherence, research and coordination and should play a key role in economic and social development.

ECOSOC should be the central mechanism for coordination of the activities of the UN system and its specialised agencies as well as supervision of subsidiary bodies in the economic, social and related fields to enable it play a pivotal role in furthering the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals ( MDGs ).

## HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The African Group takes note of the explanatory note submitted by the Secretary General regarding his proposal for the creation of a Human Rights Council and will further reflect on this issue

## REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The African Group agrees with the Secretary-General's recommendations on the strengthening of the cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations. There is need to elaborate the institutional framework for this cooperation including on development and security matters.

The Group also believes that it is necessary to maintain sustained interaction between the United Nations and the Regional organizations in order to build particularly the operational capacities of the organizations. To this end, the United Nations and other partners should continue to give logistic and financial support to the speeding up of the establishment of an African Standby Force for it to become operational as soon as possible, but not later than 2010.

The African Group further believes that it is imperative that regional organizations, in area of proximity to conflicts, are empowered to take action in this regard. In this connection the present rule of the UN relating to the peacekeeping budget should be amended in order to give the UN the latitude to finance operations carried out by Regional organizations on the basis of contributions to be recovered.

Mr. Facilitator

## SECRETARIAT

With regard to the proposals on the reform of the Secretariat, the African Group would like to make the following general comments:

The African Group believes that legislative mandates of the Organization should be given commensurate resources for their effective implementation. We stress that the review of the priorities of the Organization should take place within the context of the relevant inter-governmental bodies responsible for these mandates. We note that the General Assembly has mechanisms in place for considering the relevance of legislative mandated activities, as well as for the Secretary-General to propose the elimination of obsolete outputs. We also note that there is no clear and agreed definition of what constitutes “new and emerging challenges”, which should be subject to inter-governmental discussion within the General Assembly.

The African Group strongly supports the call for a more professional and well-trained Secretariat that ensures equitable geographical representation and reflects the international character of the Organization. We wish to seek more information on the proposal for a one time staff buy-out concerning whether such a policy would be voluntary or compulsory in nature, measures to address the high vacancy rates in some duty stations, in particular those in Africa, the mechanisms to ensure satisfactory recourse for the staff of the Organization, as well as the financial implications of such a proposal. The Group will also require information on the mechanism that will be put in place to ensure that the Organization retains its qualified and well-trained staff.

The Group wishes to re-affirm the Charter mandated role of the General Assembly in considering and approving budgetary and administrative issues, and its authority in allocating and re-allocating financial and human resources to and between programmes. The Group recalls that the General Assembly in 2003 concluded a review of the budgetary process and is still awaiting the results of that experiment to be assessed in its 62<sup>nd</sup> session. Moreover, the GA at its 55<sup>th</sup> session endorsed the Secretary-General’s human resources reform package, which is currently under implementation and periodically reviewed by the General Assembly.

The Group wishes to support the efforts of the Secretary-General to improve accountability, transparency and efficiency within the Secretariat. We believe that the full implementation of the relevant General Assembly resolutions will contribute to these efforts. We look forward to receiving detailed information on the measures that require endorsement by Member States. In this regard, the Group supports the need to strengthen and ensure the independence of the oversight bodies of the United Nations. We believe that any further reviews of OIOS, if deemed necessary by the General Assembly, should be done in the context of the governance review requested in GA resolutions 57/278 and 59/264. The group further notes that the deliberation of the technical aspects of the proposals on the reform of the Secretariat may be enhanced by the consideration at a technical level.

With regards to the updating of the Charter of the Organization, the African Group is still consulting on the issues raised in paragraphs 216 and 219 of the report of the Secretary-General. The outcome of our deliberations will be submitted in due course.

The African Group wishes to emphasize the need to strengthen the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa to ensure that it has adequate resources to meet its mandate.

Mr. Facilitator

#### SYSTEM-WIDE COHERENCE

The African Group takes note of the proposal of the Secretary General regarding a stronger system-wide coherence to ensure better coordination and to avoid duplication of mandates and actions between different bodies within the United Nations system.

In this context the Group is of the view that the coordination mechanisms between the Special Representatives of the Secretary General and the Resident Representatives be enhanced so that they can function as one integrated entity.

I thank you.