

(Please check against delivery)

Mr Chair,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the African Group at this closing session of the second part of resumed seventy-third session of the Fifth Committee.
2. At the outset, The African Group would like to commend your personal efforts and commitment as well as your positive yet virtual presence during the negotiations, encouraging delegations to come up with constructive ideas to face the constraints of time and for the sake of compromise.
3. We also wish to thank the members of your Bureau who tirelessly contributed to the process.
4. The crucial role of the facilitators deserves an acknowledgement, that extends to Mr. Borgar Tormodsgard, from Norway who had the responsibility to ease the final negotiations on Peacekeeping missions.
5. We appreciate the presence of Mr Abdallah Bachar Bong, the Chair of the Advisory Committee to our meeting today.
6. The Group aligns itself with comments and remarks expressed by the Representative of the Republic of Guinea on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and we have few additions to make.

Mr Chair,

7. The Group notes the continued challenge posed by the working 7(ha)8(l)1(by)-59(t)-39.33 234.

8. In addition, virtual meetings negotiations somehow prevent the creation or strengthening of the natural bond coming from in-person meetings. The group is confident that the gradual return to normal working arrangements will benefit the Committee.

Mr Chair,

9. Besides the punctual difficulties due to Covid, the Group reiterates its appeal for a structural change of the working methods of the Fifth Committee. Indeed, the official allocation of a month to conclude the session, while the practice for several years now of a 2 month-long session calls for an assessment of the situation.

10. Parallely, the African Group trusts that the membership of the Committee will benefit from an adjustment of its longstanding habit of starting the session in a moderate fashion, to then concentrate all its energy on the last weeks or days, which bears the consequence of having consecutive days and nights of negotiations, with unnecessary and avoidable time pressure.

11. We commend the sincere cooperation of all delegations and groups, who accepted to engage in good faith in the renewed Mission by Mission approach of PKOs budget proposals consideration. Despite the limitation of the approach during this session, mainly due to time constraints, good results have been reached and pose a basis for next sessions.

Mr Chair,

12. The African Group salutes the outcome of negotiations, concluded just a few hours ago. Achieving the adoption of an overall gross envelope of 6,3 billion dollars for the Missions, as well as agreements on posts and necessitated hard compromises and sacrifices from all sides.

13. As the Second Resumed session is mostly about Peacekeeping Missions

Mr Chair,

16. The African Group deeply regrets that serious and grave concerns regarding the United Nations Support Office in Somalia were not taken on board by the Committee during the negotiations.

17. The African Group trusts that the situation on the ground, as depicted in several