



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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AFRICAN GROUP STATEMENT

**ON AGENDA ITEM 151: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS
MISSION IN THE SUDAN (UNMIS)**

PRESENTED BY

MS. NONYE UDO

AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

NEW YORK, 12TH JUNE, 2006

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the African Group on agenda item 151: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). At the outset, the Group expresses its appreciation to the team of the Secretary-General that worked tirelessly to prepare an improved budget document for our consideration. To this end, we thank Mr. Warren Sach, Budget Controller, for his introduction of the Secretary-General's reports on UNMIS contained in documents A/60/626, A/60/726 & Corrigendum 1 and Mr. Rajat Saha, Chairman of the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions for his introduction of his Committee's related report, A/60/868.

It was only a few months ago, on the 1st of November 2005 that this Committee was able, for the first time, to consider a full budget for the Mission in Sudan, following the earlier commitment authority granted for the take-off of the mission. In the course of our consideration of the first full budget for UNMIS, the General Assembly welcomed the review undertaken by the mission on the proposed structure and requested the Secretary-General to take further steps to elaborate on the management efficiencies achieved, as well as on the strengthened monitoring and accountability system in the context of an unified, area-based and decentralized organizational structure, bearing in mind the comments made by the Advisory Committee in its report.

Further, the Committee called on the Secretary-General to also take action and intensify efforts to ensure coordination and collaboration of efforts with all United Nations agencies in Sudan and present a description of their respective roles and responsibilities in this current budget document. In the same vein, we mandated the Secretary-General to undertake disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities and welcomed the use of Entebbe installation to enhance the efficiency and responsiveness of its logistical support operations for peacekeeping missions in the region.

We are aware that the budget document before us today was prepared barely three months after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 60/122, and as such it was too early for the Secretariat to reflect the broad and extensive picture that would have encompassed all that Member States had requested. While appreciating the efforts made to present a more detailed budget this second time around, we would however appreciate receiving an initial assessment of the extent to which the guidelines of the General Assembly could be implemented even within the limited time between the request and the conclusion of the 2006/2007 budget, including the initial difficulties encountered if any, in this regard. We would also request that these efforts be sustained and that the Assembly be kept fully informed of developments in the Mission in subsequent reports.

The African Group wishes to pay tribute to all those who contributed to the success of the African Union-led Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks, held in Abuja, which has afforded the opportunity to establish a framework for a resolution of the conflict in Darfur. We are also cognizant that Security Council in its resolution 1679 (2006) of 16th May 2006 commended the efforts of the African Union for the successful deployment of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS), despite exceptionally difficult circumstances, and AMIS's role in reducing large-scale organized violence in Darfur.

On our part, we join the Security Council in commending the efforts deployed by Member States, regional and international organizations to assist AMIS in this venture. We hope that we can

continue to count on Member States' unflinching support, as it is only through our concerted effort that we can succeed in this crucial endeavour.

Further, the Group wishes to express its satisfaction with the latest development in Darfur where the factions that earlier in May did not sign the Darfur Peace Accord, have now signed a pledge to abide by its principles. There is every reason for the Mission to seize this window of opportunity to intensify efforts that would provide a solid basis for the people of Sudan and a fighting chance they need to be able to begin anew, the journey of rebuilding their country to be a great nation that it is designed to be. Its sheer size and geography present a daunting challenge to those who are charged with the responsibility of managing this complex Mission. These and other vital facts would guide the African Group's consideration of the Secretary-General's budget submission.

The Group is pleased to re-echo the sentiments expressed by both the Advisory Committee and the delegation of Australia on behalf of the CANZ Group in welcoming the remarkable progress recorded in this budget presentation. As this is the second budget, for the second year of implementation of the UNMIS mandate, we are confident that subsequent presentations would be even further enhanced and reflect lessons learned from the assumptions made for this budget. The results-based budgeting framework should be further enhanced to facilitate efforts in this regard.

The African Group has examined the various components of the proposed budget and would like to make a few preliminary comments. It is commendable that from the last period, there was only an unencumbered balance of \$3.2 million or 1.4% of the appropriation, which shows that there was no overbudgeting. However, we would appreciate receiving an update on the status of payments to Member States in respect of troop reimbursements and contingent-owed equipment.

On the 2006-2007 proposed budget of \$ 1,081, 659,300, there is an 11.6% increase over the \$969.5 million appropriated for the 2005/2006 budget. Further, cognisant that both the African Union and the Security Council have recognized the need for concrete steps to be taken to effect the transition from AMIS to a United Nations operation and that to this end not only has the United Nations already sent a technical assessment team to Darfur, but there is a possibility that the costs for the financing of UNMIS for July 2006 to June 2007 might be reviewed, we reiterate the Advisory Committee's comments that any such revised estimates should be submitted to the Assembly as quickly as possible.

Meanwhile, we would appreciate a preliminary analysis of the impact of the Advisory Committee's recommendations on the already submitted budget proposal. There is an urgent need to ensure that at this crucial stage, no impediment be placed on the Mission as it proceeds with full deployment. Consequently, what extra efforts will be deployed to facilitate speedy filling of all the posts, including the national posts? It is clear that the sheer size of the territory covered by the Mission has its challenges and added difficulties. In this context, the Group requests an elaboration of the effort made to streamline the structure, reporting lines and coordination by the Mission to eliminate or reduce any duplication to the barest minimum.

The Group wishes to underscore the need to make adequate provision for the security and safety of the lives of staff and property. Despite the seemingly increased number of posts proposed under component 2: security, the Group wants assurances that these concerns have been properly factored into the budget proposal before us and how this component would possibly be reconfigured in light of the Advisory Committee's recommendation on the addition of a Deputy Force Commander post.

On disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, though the request for \$49,775,000 would seem significant, there is no doubt that in the case of Sudan, the budget was formulated in response to the Mission's mandate and in accordance with the criteria established by the Assembly. In this connection we noted that the \$550 per ex-combatant would cover expenses related to disarmament, demobilization and reinsertion only. Also we noted that the mission in conjunction with UNDP and UNICEF have established a joint DDRU unit which coordinates with the North and South DDR Commission. This is a good mechanism for the programme and we hope that it will progress smoothly. Consequently, we expect to receive information regarding progress so far made in this cooperation and the programmes the Mission is responsible for including in the context of the larger cooperation programme handled by the North-South Commission. The Group also wants to ascertain that the Mission is carrying out its mandate regarding de-mining in collaboration with UNOPS, so as to speedily open up the areas where UNMIS would deploy

The Group would appreciate receiving assurances that the Quick Impact Projects (QUIPS) would proceed as planned in the 2006-2007 cycle. The positive impact such projects have on the population cannot be over-emphasized. They should be accorded priority attention. We expect to receive a comprehensive assessment of the impact of QUIPS in the context of the 2007-2008 budget submission.

Similarly, we wish to receive further information on the concept of national volunteer programme started recently and trust that after one full year of its implementation, it would be reviewed to assess its impact. The African Group supports all efforts geared towards capacity building that would enrich the lives of the local population.

All the new dispositions taken by the Mission to improve efficiency are welcome. In this regard we note the increased use of riverine transportation but would also request an update on the overview of the challenges facing the Mission in its employ of both the air and riverine modes of transportation. There is also an additional need to know what plans are envisaged by the Mission on the possibility of entering into a cost-sharing arrangement with other UN Agencies operating in the area for the utilization of its air assets.

Mr. Chairman,

There is no gain saying the fact that the mission has made commendable strides overall. We look forward to discussing these and other issues during our informals. Thank you.