



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE  
ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN  
NATIONS BY AMBASSADOR KAREN TAN,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED  
NATIONS, AGENDA ITEM 132: PROPOSED  
PROGRAMME BUDGET BIENNIUM 2014-2015  
– SPECIAL POLITICAL MISSIONS,  
17 DECEMBER 2014**

1 Thank you, Mr Chairman.

2 I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). I thank Mr Chandramouli Ramanathan, Officer-in-Charge, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, and Mr Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for introducing their reports. ASEAN fully supports the role played by Special Political Missions (SPMs). SPMs are often deployed to address challenges which other actors are unwilling or unable to deal with. They fill a gap in the maintenance of peace and security, helping many who would otherwise be neglected.

3 ASEAN is deeply concerned that this Committee has failed to take action on the recommendations of the Secretariat and ACABQ on a holistic reform of the funding and backstopping of SPMs. This is the fourth consecutive year we are considering the problems associated with the lack of a separate account for SPMs. The facts which call for a holistic reform of SPMs remain unchanged and increasingly pertinent. Let us address them plainly once again.

4 Fact one: the regular budget has not grown in real terms for the last few bienniums, while the budgets for SPMs continue to grow exponentially. In every biennium, the Security Council creates more SPMs than the Secretariat budgets for.

5 The latest development does not augur well. The Secretariat has informed this Committee that the preliminary estimate for the 2016-2017 budget will follow the same trend. The Secretariat projects that the regular budget, excluding SPMs, will decrease by 0.1%. However, the budget for SPMs is expected to increase by a large margin percentage of 15% or \$160 million from the previous biennium.

6 Fact two: If the overall budget level is essentially frozen, every increase in the mandates of SPMs means that other parts of the budget, such as the development pillar, are affected. ASEAN Member States are of the view that it is not reasonable to expect the Secretariat to, as the Secretary-General described it, “cut flesh” and compromise mandate delivery in other areas just to accommodate growth in funding SPMs. This is untenable and unhealthy for the Organisation.

7 Fact three: SPMs are created primarily through the decision of the Permanent Members in the Security Council. In fact, 33 out of the 35 SPMs currently operating were created by the Security Council. ASEAN Member States believe that the Permanent Members of the Security Council must bear the primary responsibility to finance SPMs. The General Assembly in numerous resolutions has reaffirmed that “the special responsibilities of the permanent members of the Security Council for the maintenance of peace and security should be borne in mind in connection with their contributions to the financing of peace and security operations”. As such, we must also look at the financial needs of SPMs in a similar fashion to the scale of assessments on peacekeeping operations.

8 If those who have the most influence over SPMs find the modest costs of an appropriate scale of assessments too onerous to bear, serious consideration should be given to the expansion of the permanent membership. This will allow responsibility and power to be distributed in a way that is more equitable for everyone. The general membership of the UN should not be unduly taxed if they have inadequate representation in the creation and mandate-setting of SPMs.

Mr Chairman,

9 For ASEAN, we cannot continue ignoring the facts that have been presented before this Committee for the past four years. We will continue to recall these facts until the holistic reform of SPMs funding and backstopping is achieved. ASEAN looks forward to a thorough discussion on this issue. Thank you.