



*The
Bahamas*

**59TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

FIFTH COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 109: PROGRAMME PLANNING

**STATEMENT BY H.E. PAULETTE BETHEL
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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak this morning on agenda item 109, entitled *Programme Planning*. We wish to thank the Chairperson of the Committee for Programming and Coordination (CPC), Ms. Nonye Udo, for introducing the report of the forty-fourth session of the committee contained in document A/59/16, the Under-Secretary General for Internal Oversight Services, Mr. Dileep Nair, and the Controller, Mr. Jean Pierre Halbwachs, for introducing the various reports of the Secretary General and of the OIOS under this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

The Bahamas associates itself with the statement by Qatar on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We would like to offer some specific comments from a national perspective. The CPC is the premier UN body that advises ECOSOC and the General Assembly on matters related to coordination, programming, monitoring and evaluation. During its forty-fourth session, the committee did well to make recommendations on the majority of Part Two of the strategic framework for 2006-2007. We regret that it was not possible for the CPC to make recommendations on Part One, and some sections of Part Two of the strategic framework, but it must be accepted that there are difficulties in reaching a consensus in any intergovernmental process. We were encouraged with the fact that the committee was able to come to an agreement on areas that had proved difficult to achieve consensus on in past years, and we fully support the report of the committee and the recommendations contained therein.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like to offer some specific comments in regard to Part One of the strategic framework for 2006-2007. My delegation recalls that the General Assembly requested the plan outline so as to address the concern of many Member States that in order for the strategic framework to be truly *strategic*, it needed to take into account the longer-term objectives of the Organisation.

While we understand that due to the need to be concise, it is difficult to include every topic in such a document, we were disappointed that there was no substantive mention of *drug control and crime prevention* in section II of the plan outline. This area was identified as a priority for the periods 1998-2001 and 2002-2005, and also has been proposed as a priority for the period 2006-2007. It is mentioned in passing in paragraph 22, but given that for a significant number of our membership, efforts to combat drug trafficking and to address other criminal issues constitute a major priority, both nationally and internationally, we felt it deserved more attention.

In regard to Section III of Part One, we took particular interest in the paragraphs on "Lessons learned". Taking lessons learned into account is necessary if we are to truly commit to achieving the objectives of our Organisation.

Concerning part IV of the document, my delegation supports the retention of the current eight broad priority areas identified by the General Assembly *without amendment*, as we agree that they cover the great bulk of substantive activities of the Organisation, and the conditions which led to them continue to persist. We understand the interest of some delegations in making adjustments, but we feel it would be counterproductive to engage in such an exercise, when there clearly is no consensus.

Mr. Chairman,

While the strategic framework would probably attract most of the committee's attention under this agenda item, it is important that we not lose sight of other important aspects of coordination and evaluation that are contained in the CPC's report. My delegation strongly supports the work the CPC has done in following up on United Nations system support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and agrees with the conclusions and recommendations contained in paragraphs 469-476 of the committee's report. The CPC recognised, and we agree, that it is important for the UN system to maintain a sustained effort to engage partners to support NEPAD.

My delegation also took great interest in the CPC's consideration of the annual report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2003. In particular, we welcomed the CEB focus on ensuring coordinated implementation of the Millennium Declaration, and support the CPC's emphasis on the need to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity of efforts between CEB and other interagency bodies, including those of the United Nations Development Group and United Nations Executive Committees, in the follow-up and reporting on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and other United Nations conferences and summits.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation took great interest in the CPC's consideration of several reports by the OIOS, in particular the *In-depth evaluation of the programme on public administration, finance and development*, and the *Triennial-review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee at its forty-first session on the in-depth evaluation of sustainable development*. We encourage the CPC to continue its good work in the area of evaluation, and strongly support the proposal to conduct thematic evaluations, in that they would facilitate the committee's consideration of coordination and cooperation among United Nations programmes.

Mr. Chairman,

Turning to the issue of priority setting, my delegation would like to thank the Secretary General for his report contained in *A/59/87*. The document is useful in terms of providing an historical background on priority-setting in the Organisation, including the difficulties that have been encountered in the designation of priorities. We noted the recommendation of the CPC that it continue its consideration of the report at its forty-fifth session, but we are inclined to agree with the point of view that has been expressed that the General Assembly conclude consideration of this issue at this time.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

Allow us to express some general views on the subject of improving the working methods of the CPC. Looking back at the resolutions that went into the establishment of the committee we have the impression that over the years, the CPC has strayed somewhat from its original intent, i.e., to be a technical body that provides advice on programme coordination, monitoring, evaluation and implementation. This means that at times the CPC's recommendations have been vulnerable to criticism. This is unfortunate, as we maintain that the CPC is a very useful body.

The Bahamas has been an active member of the CPC. Our consistent participation over the years is indicative of the importance we place on the CPC. We regret that the constraints of time did not allow the committee to reach agreement on specific recommendations on improving its working methods. However, there was a fruitful exchange of views, and concrete proposals were tabled that could be built on by the committee during its forty-fifth session. We agree that reform is needed, but we would caution against the General Assembly taking steps to impose reform without allowing the body itself to deliberate further on the issue. As we have seen in other reform efforts, the process is much more successful when it has the added value of the considered recommendations of the organ to be reformed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.