

Unofficial translation

Check against delivery

STATEMENT

by Mr. Vladimir A. Iossifov, Representative of the Russian Federation in the Fifth Committee of the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly, on Agenda item 129 “Scale of Assessments for the Apportionment of the Expenses of the United Nations”

17 October 2005

Mr. Chairman

First of all, allow me to thank Mr. U. Sessi, Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, for presenting the report of the 65th session of the Committee, and Mr. W. Sach, the UN Controller, who has presented other relevant reports.

Under the Charter of the United Nations equitable apportionment of expenses of the United Nations among the Member States is an exclusive prerogative of the General Assembly. In addition, in a number of its resolutions the General Assembly established a fundamental principle according to which the Member States have an obligation to pay their assessed contributions in full, in time and without imposing conditions. The unconditional compliance with this principle by all Member States constitutes, in our view, the basis of financial stability of the United Nations which, in its turn, is the precondition for successful implementation by the United Nations of its global tasks.

The importance of the application of the principle of capacity to pay for the apportionment of the UN expenses can also hardly be overestimated. It is precisely this mechanism for funding the UN activities that allows us to say that the United Nations is a unique global organization where each nation has its vote irrespective of the size of its monetary contribution to the UN budgets.

In this context, Russia attaches great importance to the work on further improvement of the methodology for the preparation of the scale of assessments conducted by both the Committee on Contributions and the Secretariat with a view to ensuring the fairest distribution of the UN financing burden among all the Member States.

The existing methodology for establishing scales of assessments represents the outcome of painstaking and diligent work done by the Member States and the Secretariat throughout the history of the United Nations and, in our view, does not need any substantial changes within the next several years. However, the work on the fine-tuning of certain elements of the methodology with a view to eliminating a number of well-known shortcomings must be continued. The main focus of this work should undoubtedly be on ensuring the maximum correspondence between the contributions paid by the Member States and their real economic situation.

We note with satisfaction the progress made by the Committee on Contributions during the examination of such elements of the future scale of assessments as the income measure, conversion rates, criteria for deciding when the market exchange rates should be replaced, and the use of price-adjusted rates of exchange, and support relevant recommendations of the Committee provided in its report.

We also call upon the Committee on contributions to continue its work on such matters as the debt-burden and low per capita income adjustments, and the search for solutions to the problem of discontinuity in order to ensure the most

equitable distribution of the financial burden of the Organization among all its Members in full compliance with the principle of relative capacity to pay and relevant decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly.

We believe that the current method of constructing the scale of assessments based on both a three-year and a six-year base periods, in general, meets the requirements of reflecting more precisely current capacity to pay and mitigating short-term fluctuations of the GNI level, and at present we do not see any effective alternative to this approach. Moreover, we should not underestimate the importance of stability in establishing the scales and the predictability of assessment of contributions on the Member States for both timely fulfillment of their financial obligations to the UN and the planning by the UN of its expenditures. We, thus, believe that at this stage the existing three-year cycle for the scale review is the most appropriate.

We also take note of the information of the Committee on Contributions on the implementation of multi-year payment plans by some Member States, and taking into account the positive assessment by the Committee of the practice of the use of such plans we expect that the Member States in arrears to the United Nations will make their utmost to steadily reduce their outstanding assessed contributions.

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that the Russian delegation is prepared to engage in substantive and constructive debate in the Fifth Committee on this agenda item in order to take balanced decisions that should safeguard the stability and predictability of the financial situation of the United Nations.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.