



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

By

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Item 138: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the UN

Item 147: Scale of assessments for the apportionment of expenses of the UN PKO

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- AS DELIVERED –

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Armenia align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, I wish to thank Ambassador Bernardo Greiver, Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, for presenting the Committee's report of its 75th session, as well as the Controller, Ms. Bettina Tucci Bartsiotas, for her presentation of the Secretary-General's reports on multi-year payment plans, and on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 55/235 and 55/236.

Mr. Chairman,

Funding the Organisation is the joint responsibility of the Members in accordance with Article 17 of the UN Charter. As the largest collective financial contributors to the Organisation, we want to reiterate the importance of making the right decisions on the scale of assessments for the regular budget and for the peacekeeping budgets, thereby ensuring the sustainability of the Organisation in line with our vision of a United Nations that must be 'fit for purpose' as well as

* *The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

increasingly more effective and efficient, as reaffirmed by the Foreign Ministers of the EU Member States in their statement of 22 June 2015.

In this context, let me first of all address the Committee on Contributions' review of the scale of assessments for the period 2016-2018.

As we have repeated time and again, the current methodology has resulted in a scale of assessments that no longer accurately reflects the capacity to pay principle, and this was expressly recognised by the GA in resolution 67/238 of 24 December 2012.

In that resolution of three years ago, when the Assembly agreed on the methodology and the scale of assessments for the period 2013-2015, it also requested the Committee to review and make recommendations on the elements of the methodology of the scale in order to reflect the capacity of Member States to pay, and to report thereon to the Assembly by the main part of its seventieth session.

Since then, the Committee has undertaken this task in an incremental way, and its work has spanned over three years. At each session, it has provided us with a detailed analysis of the methodology and its salient technical weaknesses, as well as an overview of the main areas where it could be enhanced. We are grateful for the valuable contribution that this thorough and comprehensive review has brought to our discussion.

The Committee's work culminates in this year's report. At a time when our Committee is tasked to prepare a decision on the methodology for the scale for the

next three years, the Committee's report, also thanks to the further refinement of some of its previous observations and to the abundance of data in the annexes, provides us more than ever with a valuable technical basis for our work, and helpfully reinforces our understanding of some of the issues that are preventing the methodology from better reflecting the capacity of Member States to pay. As an example, while we agree that the Low Per Capita Income Adjustment should remain an essential element of the methodology, the report makes it clear from a technical point of view that this element is formulated in a way that does not fulfil the function for which it was designed, that is to provide targeted relief to the countries with low per capita income that are in real need of the adjustment.

In other words, there is still room to improve the methodology if it is to reflect a more equitable and balanced distribution of the financial responsibilities among Member States according to their capacity to pay, and the Committee's analysis merits our fullest attention in our efforts to find ways to enhance the methodology.

We look forward to further discussing ways to achieve this goal, in the common interest of the Organisation, and we are willing to work constructively in negotiations in order to reach a consensual conclusion on this matter.

It would, however, be fruitless to use the Committee's time on proposals that would deviate from Article 17 of the Charter and the capacity to pay principle.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me continue by addressing the issue of the requests for exemption under Article 19 of the Charter.

The EU Member States have constantly stressed that the payment of assessed contributions in full, on time and without condition is a fundamental duty of all member states. This position has not changed. Nevertheless, it has to be acknowledged that, for reasons beyond their control, some member states may, at times, face genuine, temporary difficulties in fulfilling their annual financial obligations to the United Nations.

Once arrears have accumulated, multi-year payment plans seem to be an effective tool to help member states to reduce their unpaid assessed contributions.

We are content to endorse the recommendations of the Committee on Contributions permitting the countries that requested exemption under Article 19 to vote in the General Assembly until the end of its 70th session.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me finally move to the issue of the peacekeeping rates of assessments.

The Member States of the European Union actively support and participate in UN peacekeeping operations, contribute with troops, civilian police and other personnel, and remain committed to providing adequate and efficient financial backing for them.

The reform of the peacekeeping rates of assessments in 2000 was aimed at providing an equitable and therefore stable and sustainable financial basis for this essential task of the Organisation. The peacekeeping rates of assessments should reflect the capacity to pay of member states and the special responsibility of the

permanent members of the Security Council. Discounts should be based on each member state's individual capacity to pay, in accordance with objective and comparable criteria.

More broadly, the EU Member States would welcome offers from UN members in all levels to move voluntarily up in their level of contribution, following the precedents of a number of countries among us.

Mr. Chairman,

In concluding, I would like to assure you and the other members of this Committee of our readiness to cooperate and engage positively in the negotiations.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.