

Mr. Chairman, I have the honor to speak on behalf of the member states of the European Union.

At the outset let me thank you and all the members of your bureau for guiding us through the deliberations of the first resumed session of the 5th committee. Let me also thank the fifth committee secretariat under the leadership of Mrs. Sharon Van Buerle for assisting us in our work, as well as all other staff members, interpreters and technicians who facilitated our work.

Mr. Chairman,

We note we managed to finish this session on time. However, the last 4 weeks have also demonstrated that improving the working methods of the 5h committee is a shared responsibility of all actors involved. Improving our working methods is an ongoing issue that continues to require our full attention. Last week, we already elaborated extensively on the role of Member States, the bureau, ACABQ and the Secretariat in trying to issue documents on time. Let us once again reiterate our regret that a number of items did not get the time and attention they deserve. We particularly regret that the committee did not manage, once again, to come to a successful conclusion on the cost sharing arrangements of the resident coordinator. This item is long overdue and therefore it is very regrettable we did not manage to have substantive discussions because of the late issuance of documents.

Mr. Chairman,

We also note with regret that no solution could be found on the issue of implementation of a Flexible Workplace, in spite of the clear information we received that this deferral hampers the wellbeing and productivity of staff and might lead to extra unnecessary costs for the budget of the Office of Central Support Services, inter alia in terms sunk costs and the rental of office space. The member states of the European Union have reiterated these risks throughout the deliberations. We call upon all partners to continue to engage in the spirit of compromise on all items on our agenda, in the interest of the Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

Looking forward to the second resumed session, the member states of the European Union are convinced that you and your Bureau will guide us through the agenda and the programme of work in a way that enables us to finish once again on time. Having said that, we are cognizant of the fact we have a top heavy agenda and we should take into account the reality that for several years now, we did not abide by the time allotted to the committee. Therefore, we think our focus should be on time-bound issues related to the financing of peacekeeping operations and other administrative issues related to peacekeeping and the implementation of its related mandates, including in relation to the recommendations of the peacekeeping review and its subsequent General Assembly Resolution 70/6.

We would also like to highlight that we believe it is neither feasible nor conducive to negotiate without the appropriate conference services during normal working hours and the support of the fifth committee secretariat should we not finish the session on time due to an unnecessarily overloaded programme of work.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.