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**Statement by Cherith Norman Chalet,
Minister Counselor for United Nations Management & Reform
First Resumed Session of the Fifth Committee
Closing Statement
70th General Assembly
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is pleased to offer remarks as we conclude the 1st resumed part of the 70th session of the General Assembly within the allotted time. This session, consensus was reached on some key agenda items.

On accountability, the membership recognized the importance of policies that protect whistleblowers from retaliation and safeguard the Organization from fraud. Member states also called for continued action in addressing sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), including through the proper investigation of credible allegations of SEA, and ensuring that those responsible are held accountable for their actions.

On the strategic capital review, the Committee enhanced the Organization's ability to effectively manage capital projects.

With respect to Special Political Missions, a priority for the United States, we strengthened their operational effectiveness and approved additional resources, including for Burundi. Taking note of the decision to defer consideration of SPM funding and backstopping until the main part of the 71st session, we look forward to continuing discussion on a mutually-acceptable solution over the coming months.

Mr. Chairman, those achievements notwithstanding, my delegation is disappointed with some aspects of this session. The Committee's failure to approve the necessary resources for continued progress on building out flexible workplace can only be described as penny-wise and pound foolish. It defers an opportunity to use the Headquarters space in a more cost-effective fashion – space that we know is currently under-utilized with an average daily occupancy rate of under 50%. And it leaves the Organization dependent on expensive commercial leases for staff that cannot be accommodated on the main campus. Worse – it halts a project in mid-stream, leaving staff stranded in temporary offices and risking the dissolution of expertise needed to complete the project. It shows that despite better working practices in the Fifth Committee, sound decision-making can still be trumped by other interests.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your active and constructive engagement during this session, as it was vital to the positive outcomes we did achieve. We remain continually grateful for the sage wisdom and guidance of Ms. Sharon van Buerle and the hard work and dedication of her team. We will continue to look to you, Mr. Chairman, and Ms. van Buerle's team for guidance and support in upcoming sessions.

As we move towards the second resumed session, which begins just a few short weeks from now, my delegation will continue to push for collaborative efforts in ensuring proper and full consideration of the important agenda items related to peacekeeping that come before us, including timeliness of documentation, as we work towards reaching consensus.

In closing, I wish all colleagues a good holiday. Thank you.