



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

By

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Closure of the work of the First Resumed Session

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As delivered

Madam Chair, I have the honour 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, as well as the coordinators for guiding us through the deliberations of the first resumed session of the Fifth Committee. Let me also thank the Fifth Committee Secretariat under the leadership of Mrs. Sharon Van Buerle for assisting us in our work. We also thank all other members of the Secretariat, the interpreters, and technical staff who facilitated our work.

We thank all groups and member states for their engagement and cooperation in concluding items within the scheduled timelines of this session. We commend the Bureau, ACABQ and the Secretariat for the timely issuance of all documentation. However, the last 4 weeks have also demonstrated that improving the working methods of the Fifth Committee is an issue that continues to require our full attention. Consensus is a shared responsibility that demands continued engagement from all sides.

In this regard, we reached a good consensus on a number of important items, in particular the PBI on Migration, ICT and JIU. We welcome the constructive deliberations and the timely closure of lessons learnt on UNMEER. The outcome on Accountability will help the Secretariat in further developing a strategic accountability framework. The Secretary General has made it clear that accountability and transparency are central to all UN policies and activities, including in the field of management.

While we are content that a compromise solution was found on SPMs, we remain concerned that the consensus reached on the Special Political Mission for the DPRK Panel barely meets the staffing requirements of the Panel. We believe that the timely and adequate financing of SPMs is a core function of the Committee and should be guaranteed by the General Assembly. In that regard, we also recognize the political importance of approving the resource requirements for the Security Council mandate on the Joint Investigative Mechanism for Syria.

It is deeply regrettable, particularly following agreement of the QCPR, that the UN Secretariat is the only member of the UN Development Group not paying its agreed share to the Resident Coordinator system. This reflects poorly on the seriousness of the Fifth Committee and may affect implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the country level. We look forward to considering this item again in the next Main Session.

We regret that the Committee was unable to reach agreement on the management of air travel. We believe that the insistence by some delegations on first class travel entitlements for particular groups and resistance to more judicious use of business class

is not fitting for the modern, accountable and efficient UN we aspire towards. We look forward to robust future proposals from the Secretariat in this regard and hope that, in the meantime, the Secretary General might reflect on the use of first class travel by UN staff.

Finally, on procurement, we encourage the Secretariat to promote greater understanding of the benefits of sustainable procurement practices at the UN for the future.

Madam Chair, the agenda of the second resumed session is challenging. The preparations for May should start today, the preparedness of documents should be closely monitored. For several years now, we have not abided by the time allotted to the Committee. We are, of course, committed to finishing on time and by true consensus through continued engagement. We are convinced that you and your Bureau will guide us effectively through the agenda and the programme of work.

I thank you Madam Chair.