



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

By

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71st Session of the General Assembly

Fifth Committee

Organisation of Work

First Resumed Session

United Nations

New York

6 March 2017

AS DELIVERED

Madam Chair,

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, Serbia and Albania, the country of the stabilization and association process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the Republic of Moldova and Armenia align themselves with this statement.

Allow me first to thank you for your continued support of the work of the Fifth Committee. We are confident that with your experience and under your guidance, our negotiations will reach a fruitful and timely conclusion. We would also like to thank all members of the Bureau for their support and guidance. We are grateful to be able to draw on the extensive experience of the Secretariat of the Committee, as well as on that of the wider Secretariat and of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), whose contribution is crucial for the successful implementation of our work.

At the beginning of our session, I would also like to congratulate the Republic of Ecuador on assuming the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China. We look forward to working with you, and with all colleagues, in a spirit of constructive cooperation.

Madam Chair,

Before turning to the session immediately before us, we must acknowledge that the UN is under new leadership, which should bring with it new ideas. Secretary General Guterres has been clear about his ambition to see the UN become more effective, efficient and fit for purpose. The Member States of the European Union have always been supportive of these principles and believe that simplification, decentralization and flexibility, in a culture of compliance, transparency and accountability, are very much needed. The Member States of the European Union will work constructively in the Fifth Committee and beyond to support this ambition. Our overall objective should be to concentrate resources on substantive, front-line activities making the Organization leaner and more effective.

Madam Chair,

Allow me to comment briefly on the working methods of the 5th Committee.

First, we would like to reiterate the importance of the timely and simultaneous submission of all required documentation in all official languages. This is key to the much needed inclusivity and transparency that will help us reach a successful negotiated outcome. We will be vigilant on this matter both for this session and for our second resumed session in May. We would therefore urge you to continue to engage with the Principals involved in document production and servicing, as well as with the Chair of the ACABQ, to ensure that our sessions are not hampered by delayed documentation.

Second, the time management of the 5th Committee remains a serious concern to the Member States of the EU. We feel strongly that this committee should be able

to reach decisions by consensus during normal working hours, with conference facilities and without having to resort to working during weekends or nights. Ensuring we work optimally is a shared responsibility.

Madam Chair,

A number of important items are included in our agenda during this session, some of which have been deferred from previous sessions.

- The issue of accountability remains a high priority. Having effective policies, practices, checks and balances in place, is essential if senior UN managers are to be held accountable for the delivery of mandates, for effectively assessing and managing risks, and for ensuring the best use of scarce resources.
- We look forward to discussing the ICT strategy of the Secretariat, which is a key enabler for a more effective Organisation.
- We also believe the procurement rules of the UN should be as transparent as possible. Potential vendors should be able to compete freely to offer the best value for money, taking into account the newest technology available and including principles of sustainability and corporate social responsibility. The reduction of the ecological footprint of the UN is an important priority in this regard.
- As far as the Joint Inspection Unit is concerned, we remain constructively critical of its added value in the current oversight architecture of the UN and

look forward to working together with other groups and Member States in trying to enhance the added value of the Unit.

- Finally, Madam Chair, we believe that a solution to the financing of the Resident Coordinator System is long overdue, especially in light of the latest QCPR resolution, adopted in December 2016. We hope the committee can meet its responsibility in this regard.

Madam Chair,

To conclude, let me reiterate that the Member States of the European Union remain committed to working closely with all partners in a spirit of openness, transparency and sincere cooperation in order to reach decisions by consensus. We are confident that by maintaining open channels of communication and negotiating in an effective and constructive spirit our programme of work can be completed well before 31 March.

I thank you, Madam Chair.