



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

By

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Madame 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 Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Let me begin by congratulating you upon your election as Chair of the Fifth Committee. We would also like to congratulate all members of the Bureau upon their election. We have a difficult task ahead, but we are confident that with your experience and under your leadership, our important negotiations will reach a fruitful and timely conclusion.

We also want to extend our deep appreciation to the Chair and the Bureau of the 72nd session. We are pleased to be able to draw on the extensive experience of the Secretariat of the 5th Committee, as well as on that of other Secretariat officials and of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). Your work and contributions are crucial for the successful conclusion of our programme of work.

Madame Chair,

The Fifth Committee must continue to support and implement the necessary reforms undertaken by the Secretary General. Instead of being seen as an obstacle, we must be part of the solution: strategic, open-minded to change, honouring the trust we have put in the Secretary General and his team and steering the Organisation towards more effectiveness.

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

As we approach a particularly heavy workload this session, we need to use the limited committee time wisely. We should resist the temptation to micro-manage, and work in the shared interest of the Organisation, in particular the delivery to the field and to people in need, in support of reform and a more nimble and agile organisation.

We should therefore continue to look at the work of the committee. Simplification is needed, duplication has to be avoided and our processes should be streamlined to the maximum extent possible. We should aspire to need less conference time, less documents and fewer resolutions. Simplification is at the heart of the reform agenda and should be at the heart of our working methods.

Madame Chair,

Please allow me to highlight a few points that are particularly important to our group.

First: all documents should be submitted on time, sufficiently long before the official closure of work of the committee and in all official languages. This is key to the much needed inclusivity and transparency that will help us reach a successful negotiated outcome.

Second: this committee should be able to reach decisions by consensus during normal working hours, with proper conference facilities and without having to resort to working during weekends or nights. Working outside normal conference hours should be the exception and can no longer be the rule of doing business in this committee. The budget committee has a key role to play in steering the organisation towards more transparency, effectiveness and efficiency.

Madam Chair,

We will express our views on individual items when they are introduced. However, there are a few general principles we would particularly like to highlight today.

First: the Member States of the European Union believe that principles of stability, effectiveness, efficiency and financial sustainability are crucial to the proper functioning of the Organisation, especially now that important reforms impel new functions and a new way of working. We must stress the importance and responsibility for each Member State to fulfill its obligations and pay its contribution in full, without conditions and in due time.

Second: we note the importance of the discussion on scale of assessments and we will continue to recall the principles of capacity to pay in line with Article 17 of the Charter. We also believe that a well-functioning system of human resources management is at the core of the functioning of the UN and that more than ever the UN should invest in its greatest asset, its workforce. We look forward to more detailed discussions in this regard.

Finally, allow me, Madame Chair, to make clear the wish of the EU Member States to work with you and all members of the Fifth Committee in a spirit of constructive cooperation, consensus and collegiality.

I thank you, Madam Chair.