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Statement by Cherith Norman Chalet
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At the Opening of the Main Session of the Fifth Committee, 73rd General Assembly
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[As Delivered]

Thank you, and good morning Madame Chair.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as Chair of this Committee. My delegation looks forward to supporting you and the new bureau members in your important role of guiding the Committee and its work as well as your efforts to improve its working methods. Starting our meetings on time is a good first start.

I would also like to thank Amb. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the General Assembly, for addressing us today. My delegation would like to additionally welcome and thank Mr. Chandru Ramanathan, Acting Controller, Mr. Christian Saunders, Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chairman, ACABQ, for also being with us today and for the invaluable support they provide to the Committee. We also recognize the dedicated Secretariat staff, ably led by Ms. Sharon Van Buerle, for their service and dedication, as well as all of the support staff who help facilitate this Committee's work.

Madame Chair, we embark today on this main session after world leaders gathered here to discuss some of the world's biggest challenges and the United Nations' role. As Secretary-General Guterres noted in his address to the General Assembly, we must continue to demonstrate the added value of international cooperation by delivering peace, defending human rights, and driving economic and social progress in responding to the needs and aspirations of "we the peoples". The United States has been at the forefront of calling for the United Nations to be the best that it can be, so we must also continue to ensure this Organization is optimally positioned and configured to best support the goals outlined by the Secretary-General and achieves results.

Madame Chair, we made historic decisions during the 72nd session on the Secretary-General's UN reform agenda and in support of fiscal discipline. We must continue these important efforts and see through the last of the Secretary-General's reform proposals. We must also ensure that resources match mandates and ensure that the Organization finds more efficient ways of working. We thank the Secretary-General for his continued efforts in pushing the UN reform agenda forward. We look forward to learning the benefits of the decisions we took in July in the coming weeks and months.

Madame Chair, the negotiations this main session may be challenging. We have a heavy agenda with important items under consideration, including the remaining elements of the reform agenda, scales of assessment, human resources management, the budget for special political missions, and major construction-related items. It nevertheless remains our hope that we as a Committee can keep the broader vision of a better, more effective UN. We know that with your able leadership, we can remain focused and complete this session in a positive manner and in a timely fashion. We pledge to remain engaged and keep the lines of communication open regardless of any differences that we may encounter. We as member states share a common interest to ensure that the Organization lives up to the noble principles upon which it was founded.

Thank you, Madame Chair.

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