



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

By

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At the outset let me join others in extending our deepest condolences to the relatives and loved ones of all those who died in the terrible air crash that happened yesterday, on behalf of the EU and its member states. Heartfelt thoughts go out to all those affected, including our colleagues from the United Nations family, who were coming from all countries of the world but with a shared spirit of service for the values and the work of the UN. Our thoughts are with them.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, North 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 and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Madam Chair,

Let me thank you for your continued support and engagement in the work of the Fifth Committee. We are confident that under your guidance, our negotiations will once again reach a timely conclusion. During the Main Session, we were able, together, to reach a good consensus that enables the Organization to continue improving its functioning. We should continue the good work in the spirit of collegiality and consensus, under your leadership.

Allow me also to thank all members of the Bureau for their guidance, the Secretariat, as well as the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). The Member states of the EU would like to congratulate Mr Cihan Terzi upon his election as chair of ACABQ. We look forward to a fruitful collaboration.

I would also like to congratulate the Palestinian Chair on assuming the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China and express our readiness to work together constructively. We would also like to thank and congratulate our Egyptian colleagues for their successful chairmanship in 2018.

Madam Chair,

2018 was a very important year for the 5th committee. Since January 1 2019 UN Reform is being implemented. We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his continued engagement with Member States on the topic and congratulate him for the progress made so far on the implementation of the three reform strands. We continue to believe that these reforms will steer the Organisation towards more effectiveness and we look forward to the results they will bring about.

During this session, we will once again consider important items for the efficient and effective functioning of the United Nations.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The service and support processes of the United Nations have grown complex, making it difficult for us to respond to today's challenges in a flexible and agile manner, based on the principles of effectiveness and efficiency. The concept of the Global Service Delivery Model, as part of the SG's reform agenda, is an important component for better service delivery and we are looking forward to discussing this issue in a transparent manner. We support the goal of creating a truly global Secretariat that is fit-for-purpose and able to deliver on its mandates and is supported by shared administrative services that provide what is needed, when needed and where needed.

Madam Chair,

The Member States of the European Union believe that resources for official travel could and should be used more carefully. We note with concern that the overall costs related to air travel increase year after year. As we aim at a more efficient UN, the accountability of managers to secure a more judicious use of funds for air travel must be strengthened.

Accountability of staff and managers is a cornerstone of the Secretary-General's reform process. We believe that the Organisation should uphold the highest standards and continue working to prevent and address misconduct. In this regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's report on the progress that has been achieved so far on accountability.

The European Union and its Member States are strong supporters of the Secretary-General's system-wide strategy on gender parity in the context of necessary reforms. We therefore look forward to engaging constructively on this important human resources agenda item this session.

We encourage the Secretariat in its efforts to deliver procurement services across the Organization more efficiently, cost-effectively and transparently, in line with competition and best value through a new procurement management strategy, and we believe that UN procurement activities should reflect a global sustainable development policy, compatible with and supportive of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We will comment on these issues, and other items like the Special Political Missions in more detail when they are introduced.

Madam Chair,

We continue to attach great importance to the working methods of the committee. We believe there is still ample room for improvement. The working methods and timely consideration of items by the 5th committee is the shared responsibility of the secretariat, ACABQ and the members of the committee. We stand ready to improve this partnership under your guidance.

We believe that this Committee should be able to reach decisions by consensus during normal working hours, with proper conference facilities. All documents should be submitted on time and in all official languages. We should all resist the temptation to micro-manage and instead work in the shared interest of the Organisation, in support of reform and a more nimble and agile

organisation. The fifth committee has a key role to play in steering the organisation towards more transparency, effectiveness and efficiency. We look forward to the informal consultations later this month.

Madam Chair,

We would like to extend our thanks to the Secretary General for providing a comprehensive briefing to the General Assembly on the financial situation of the UN. Reform of the budget process has been a long standing priority of the EU Member states. In previous statements we have highlighted the need for more results-oriented budgeting, within fixed envelopes and less variables such as add-ons, PBIs and the cumbersome process of recosting. Such a budget review will result in more predictability for the member states and more flexibility for the SG to manage for results. We look forward to receiving and discussing comprehensive proposals in due course.

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

Thank you very much.