

**Statement of the Chairman**

**Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions**

**13 November 2019**

**Activities of the Ethics Office**

*(ACABQ report: A/74/539; related Secretary-General's report: A/74/78)*

Mr Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report on the Activities of the Ethics Office for 2018.

In terms of the voluntary disclosure initiative, the Committee welcomes the increased participation and trusts that the Secretary-General will continue to encourage senior officials who have not yet publicly disclosed a summary of their assets to do so in future cycles.

As regards the requests for advice concerning honours, decorations, favours, gifts or remuneration, the Committee notes the increase in requests for advice, the continued absence of a consolidated online Gift Registry and the need for an analysis of the benefits, lessons learned and developmental requirements of the pilot registry at headquarters prior to its development and roll-out across the global Secretariat.

In terms of the proposals of the Secretary-General, the Committee reiterates its previous view that any revisions to the stature, reporting line and governance structure of the Ethics Office would have significant consequences for the Secretariat and for the Organization as a whole. Should the Secretary-General wish to make a fully justified proposal concerning the independence of the Ethics Office, a detailed report would need to include such matters as the workload, structure and functions of the Office, as well as implications for other offices in the Secretariat and United Nations funds and programmes.

Thank you, Mr Chairman