

## **Statement of the Chairman of the Fifth Committee on the Closing of the First Part of the Resumed Session of the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly at its 74<sup>th</sup> Session**

Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to each and every one of you for your hard work and zealous efforts, thanks to which we managed to successfully conclude the first resumed of the 74<sup>th</sup> General Assembly session, while working remotely during these difficult and uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic. A sense of collective responsibility, realism and serenity prevailed that allowed the Fifth Committee to continue its work via video conferencing tools (VTCs) and to gain praise for its efforts under these exceptional circumstances.

Undoubtedly, it was very challenging - and at times even frustrating - for the Fifth Committee to work without the possibility of physical meetings or face-to-face interaction. However, with a sense of pragmatism, the Committee adapted its working practices temporarily, in order to cope and ensure business continuity. It is truly commendable that delegations managed to conduct informal meetings via VTCs, advance discussions on all items and reach consensual outcomes.

Despite the extraordinary practical constraints, the Committee managed to adopt three resolutions by consensus. More specifically, the Committee has secured critical funding for African Union - United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in order to enable the mission to continue its operations; adopted an important resolution on the progress towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat; and a resolution on construction of a new facility for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Arusha branch. This said, reaching an outcome about the way forward on certain items, which yielded no resolution, had admittedly proven to be challenging and caused delays in closing the session.

With this opportunity, I would like to reiterate my thanks to the Bureau members for their outstanding work and their great team spirit. Also, I am deeply grateful for the tireless efforts of the Fifth Committee Secretariat and their indispensable support to the whole Committee. Moreover, I would like to thank the wider Secretariat staff for their hard work on preparing reports and written answers, even while working remotely. Special thanks are due, particularly in these difficult times, to the Office of Information and Communications Technology (OICT) and the technicians who have been working from the UN premises in New York and Brindisi, Italy for providing the necessary support to make our VTCs possible.

In the same vein, I am thankful to the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), Mr. Abdallah Bachar Bong, for our excellent cooperation and

collaboration, in a joint effort to assist both of our Committees to continue working remotely as seamlessly and efficiently as possible.

Furthermore, I would like to express, once again, my sincere gratitude to the President of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, as well as to his Office, for the continuous and vigorous support to the work of our Committee.

As affirmed in my recent letters to the President of the General Assembly, whereby I transmitted the Fifth Committee's decisions of the first resumed session for the initiation of the subsequent General Assembly procedure, the process followed while working remotely was of exceptional nature due to the current situation related to COVID-19. As such, the process followed applied only to the first resumed part of the 74<sup>th</sup> session and shall not set a precedent. Furthermore, the Committee shall take note of the decisions that emerged during the first resumed session at its first subsequent formal meeting.

In closing, I wish and hope that all of you and your families stay healthy and well. These times, more than ever before, call for world unity, empathy and solidarity.