



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations

74th Session of the General Assembly

**Fifth Committee
First Resumed Session**

Closure of Work – Written Statement

This statement is on behalf of the Member States of the European Union. The Candidate Countries the Republic of 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.

Last month, the Fifth Committee went through unprecedented challenges as COVID-19 restrictions were put in place halfway through our negotiations. Despite the circumstances, we were able to agree on the adoption of exceptional working methods and to adjust our internal procedures in order to continue negotiating remotely through VTCs and enhanced use of silence procedures, which allowed us to reach consensus on some of the crucial items of this session. We would like to thank the Chair of the Committee and the Bureau for remaining steadfast and determined in ensuring continuity and focus on the most important and time-bound outcomes. We would also like to thank the Fifth Committee Secretariat for their hard work during this session, as well as all other UN Secretariat staff - in particular staff working on IT-related issues and technicians - who did an outstanding job in ensuring business continuity. This allowed us as Fifth Committee to be an example in remote working and it demonstrated once again the significance of the work we do. We would also like to thank ACABQ and recall that in the current circumstances, more than ever, good collaboration and coordination between ACABQ, Secretariat and the Fifth Committee is of the essence to allow for timely outcomes that keep the Organization running.

The Member States of the EU are pleased that consensus was reached on 3 important items on our agenda, namely: the financing of the mission in Darfur (UNAMID), Accountability system of the UN and the construction of a new UN facility in Arusha. Adopting a budget for the UN mission in Darfur (UNAMID) until June 30 2020 was crucial and we commend the Committee, the Secretariat and the Bureau for their flexibility and determination in making such an adoption possible. We would like to thank all negotiators who worked day and night to ensure a consensual and substantive outcome on Accountability of the UN. We attach great importance to the roll-out of a strong and robust accountability framework as an integral part of the management reform of the UN. We believe that the Organisation needs to continue working towards a culture of ethics and transparency, also to prevent and address any type of misconduct. In this regard, we are very pleased to see a positive step in the right direction.

Nevertheless, we regret that once again no agreement was reached on the item of "Human Resources Management". As EU, we have continuously expressed the need for making progress on this agenda

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

item, which would lead to more modern and more effective UN Human Resources policies, to bring them in line with the wider reform agenda. We hope that next year the Committee will be able to conclude a resolution that will pave the way for the years to come. We call upon the Secretary-General to carefully assess all reports we have currently on the table and to withdraw those that are outdated and obsolete.

The Second Resumed session is a new opportunity to reach an agreement on the issue of seconded active-duty military and police personnel. However, the committee absolutely has to agree on a viable solution early at its next session as the exceptional measures put forward by the Secretary-General exempting seconded personnel from disciplinary measures related to conflicts between national legislation and the UN staff regulation and rules expire on June 30 2020. We therefore believe that extending the exceptional measures until the end of December 2020 would have offered the Secretariat, as well as the member states affected, a reasonable time to implement any changes and possible future arrangements. We call upon the Bureau to schedule this item as early as possible in May and we also call upon all Groups and Member States to address this issue in a timely manner.

We look forward to further discussing issues aiming at enhancing the effectiveness of the police capacity of the UN under relevant agenda items of the Fifth Committee, as appropriate.

Finally, we would like to underline that in these difficult times, consensus is more important than ever and both pragmatism and flexibility are needed for all of us to work in the interest of the Organisation. The agenda of the Second Resumed session will be challenging and hence, timely issuance of documents and timely preparation will play a crucial role. In May, the Organization depends on us to take a number of time-bound decisions that pertain to the financing and functioning of peacekeeping operations across the world. We call upon all groups and delegations to continue working in the spirit of constructive cooperation, consensus and collegiality - to allow for a timely conclusion of these important items.