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Statement by Ambassador Cherith Norman Chalet
U.S. Representative for United Nations Management & Reform
At the Conclusion of the First Resumed Part of the 74th General Assembly
April 3, 2020

[Delivered in writing]

My delegation would like to express its sincere gratitude to Lionel Berridge and the Fifth Committee Secretariat team for facilitating our first resumed session under unique and difficult circumstances amidst the COVID-19 outbreak. The Committee has never before conducted its session under such circumstances, and your team pulled together. I also want to thank the Fifth Committee chair, the bureau, and the coordinators for guiding and pushing us towards consensus on a number of agenda items, and Member States for their determination to forge consensus in what is historically an exercise requiring extensive in-person discussions.

My delegation is pleased the Committee was able to come to consensus on a number of important agenda items, including the time-bound budget for UNAMID which will ensure the peacekeeping mission in Darfur is adequately resourced and able to deliver its mandate through the end of the June, 2020. I am also pleased to adopt a resolution on accountability, a critical policy directive that lays out expectations for the UN to deliver results on its important work. We proved to ourselves that we can work in new and even more efficient ways and achieve positive outcomes.

My delegation, however, cannot let pass our deep disappointment in the lack of forward progress on human resources management (HRM). HRM is a foundational management tool of the UN and its workforce and a key pillar of the SG's reform effort, and we were unable to push forward these reforms. The Committee has now spent three years debating HRM with no resolution. This year, my delegation joined others to put forward recommendations to address ethics issues, disciplinary matters, UN internships, and mobility, recognizing that the more contentious and complex issues such as changing the formula that determines countries' staff representation range in the UN and changes to staff rules and regulations would take more time. Unfortunately, other delegations were not willing to meet us halfway in compromise, insisting that the most divergent issues must also be considered. I must stress that the spirit of this Committee is consensus and compromise, and we believe this spirit was not honored in the case of HRM. We commend the Secretary General and his senior management for continuing to push forward on the management reform agenda and improve human resources management within their authority and we assure you our continued support for the reforms associated with HRM.

In closing, I wish again to recognize the hard work of many in bringing this session to a conclusion. My thoughts are with all those who are dealing and fighting with this global disease.