



United Kingdom
Mission to the
United Nations

Statement by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations on the Closure of the First Resumed Session of the Fifth Committee of the 74th General Assembly

03 April 2020

We have faced an unprecedented and challenging situation this session due to COVID-19. The United Kingdom wishes to thank the Chair of the Fifth Committee, members of the Bureau and the Fifth Committee Secretariat for guiding delegations through these challenges. We wish to recognise the tireless and pioneering work of colleagues across the United Nations Secretariat to ensure that this Committee, by employing new technologies, could continue its important work during this time. Finally, we would like to thank all delegations and groups who have demonstrated the resilience and adaptability of this Committee. Through embracing these new ways of working and our usual hard work and consensus-based approach, we have achieved outcomes, despite extraordinary circumstances.

The United Kingdom is pleased that we reached a timely consensus to ensure funding for the UNAMID peacekeeping mission in Darfur, and adopted resolutions on the Arusha construction project and on Accountability. As one of the strongest proponents of a strengthened, effective and efficient United Nations, the United Kingdom welcomes the Committee's strong support for strengthening the culture of accountability throughout the Secretariat, the implementation of management reform and efforts to eliminate sexual harassment. This is central to a more effective Organisation.

A vital part of the United Nations' strength and effectiveness is its staff, demonstrated especially during these unprecedented times. The United Kingdom would like to commend the staff of the United Nations for their continued commitment and hard work, including in response to the challenges of COVID-19. It is disappointing that the Committee once again failed to reach agreement on improving human resources management policies and practices. We must learn the lesson from this session to ensure that this Committee will reach a timely consensus next time we consider human resources management.

We regret that the Committee could not discuss issues around seconded personnel this session due to the Advisory Committee's report issuing so late. This creates unnecessary uncertainty in relation to the important work of these personnel, including in Peacekeeping missions around the world in support of protection of civilians activities. We stress that the timeliness of documents is crucial when issues are time-bound, and encourage the Bureau to schedule this item early in the Second Resumed Session.

The United Kingdom looks forward to working with all colleagues again in the Second Resumed Session, in which we will continue to support efforts to ensure this Committee completes its work on time, even against the current backdrop of challenging circumstances. In these uncertain times, it is imperative that we work collaboratively to provide financial certainty to Missions.