

**REMARKS BY**  
**DIRECTOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ECOSOC AFFAIRS**  
**DIVISION, DGACM**  
**&**  
**SECRETARY OF THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP**

**Mr. ION BOTNARU**

**At the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the  
work of the General Assembly,**

**Tuesday 4 March 2014, 3 p.m. ECO Chamber**

Mr. President,  
Distinguished Co-Chairs,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Improving its work through **enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness** has been a matter of concern for the General Assembly from the very beginning of its existence in 1946. Specific outcomes of this preoccupation are reflected in the **annexes to the Assembly's Rules of Procedure**, which list **tangible outcomes of various Special and Ad Hoc Committees** that the Assembly has established over the years.
2. A dedicated item entitled "**Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly**" has been included in the Assembly's agenda as of the 46<sup>th</sup> session and has since been considered in various formats, including in this **Ad Hoc Working Group which has been established annually since the 62<sup>nd</sup> session**.
3. A number of **tangible outcomes have been attained** over the course of these years due to Member States' decisions under this item. These include:
  - Creation of a more than 50-page long **inventory of the status of implementation** of GA revitalization resolutions;

- Enhanced **support to the Office of the President of the General Assembly**, inter alia through the **establishment of additional posts**;
- Provision of dedicated Secretariat staff with responsibility for **coordinating the transition between the President and the Secretary-General** and the **preservation of institutional memory** of the Office of the President;
- A **Trust Fund** in support of the Office of the President;
- **Biennialization, triennialization, clustering and elimination of a number of items** on the Assembly's agenda;
- Convening of **interactive inclusive thematic debates** on current issues of critical importance;
- Holding of **regular meetings of the Presidents of the General Assembly with the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council**, as well as with the **Chairs of subsidiary bodies**;
- **Periodic briefings by the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the General Assembly to Member States on their recent activities**, including official travels;
- **Regular briefings to the media on the work of the Assembly** by the President of the General Assembly – as Director of GA and ECOSOC Affairs Division and Secretary of this Working Group, I also **brief the UN Communications Group each year on the agenda of the forthcoming session of the General Assembly** as well as the media on forthcoming elections;
- Encouragement of a number of measures, including **formal presentation of candidatures for the position of Secretary-General in a manner that allows sufficient time for interaction with Member States**;

- Regular **briefings by Main Committee Chairs** to the AHWG on their discussions on the improvement of their working methods;
- Transmittal of **best practices and lessons learned from the PGA to his/her successor** at the end of his/her tenure;
- Making available **relevant precedents and past practice with respect to the Assembly's rules and working practices** in the public domain;
- Enhanced interaction, as and where appropriate, with **civil society, including NGOs, in particular those from developing countries** and continued cooperation between the GA and **national and regional parliaments, particularly through the IPU.**

4. You even have taken a decision to rearrange **announcements in the *Journal of the United Nations*** so that **listings of plenary meetings and other major events of the General Assembly appear alongside those of the Security Council** and [QUOTE] “in the order stipulated in Article 7 of the Charter.”

5. The main objective of this Working Group indeed is “*to identify further ways to enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the Assembly, inter alia, by building on previous resolutions and evaluating the status of their implementation.*” General Assembly resolution 67/297 also decided that the Ad Hoc Working Group shall **continue its review of the inventory of General Assembly resolutions on revitalization** annexed to the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group submitted at the sixty-seventh session of the Assembly.

6. Among other **specific mandates for the 68<sup>th</sup> session**, the Assembly:

- requested each Main Committee **to further discuss its working methods at the beginning of every session**, and in this regard invited the Chairs of the Main Committees **to brief the Ad Hoc Working Group at the sixty-eighth session**, as appropriate.
- encouraged **exploration of the possibility of electing the non-permanent members of the Security Council and members of the Economic and**

**Social Council earlier than October of each year**, as is currently the practice, in order to foster better advance planning and preparation before the members assume such responsibilities.

- requested the AHWG **to prepare arrangements concerning the election of Chairs and Rapporteurs of the Main Committees of the General Assembly** with the aim of establishing a predictable, transparent and fair mechanism for the elections at an early stage of the sixty-eighth session. In this context, the Assembly, in its decision 68/505 of 1 October 2013, also adopted an interim arrangement on the pattern for the rotation of the chairs of the Main Committees up to and including the 73<sup>rd</sup> session.
- requested the President of the General Assembly, in cooperation with the Secretariat, **to report to the Ad Hoc Working Group on the role, mandate and activities of the President.**
- requested the Secretary-General **to report on sources of the funding and staffing of the Office of the President of the Assembly**, including on any technical, logistical, protocol-related or financial questions, and for more clarification on the budgetary basis for the provision of such support by the Secretariat.
- requested the Secretariat, in coordination with the Office of the President of the Assembly, **to explore the possibility of issuing a compendium of best practices of past Presidents, from within existing resources**, which could serve to strengthen the institutional memory of the Office.

7. As one tangible outcome, I would like to draw your attention to the establishment, from within existing resources, of a **web link devoted to GA revitalization** on the website of the General Assembly. We hope that this **new web tool**, which was **created by DGACM in cooperation with DPI**, will serve both **to better publicize the outcomes of the deliberations under the GA revitalization item** and **to facilitate your work.**

8. The web link provides a **gateway to relevant information from past sessions** as well as **links to documents pertaining to the current one.** We are

looking forward to any comments from Member States with a view **to further improving the site and adjusting it to the needs of the membership**, bearing in mind that this work is done **within existing resources**. A DRAFT Updated Inventory has also been uploaded to the site.

9. In accordance with operative paragraph 3 of resolution 67/297, I would also like to draw your attention to the **report of the Secretary-General** which has been issued as document A/68/774, in which the Secretary-General informs the General Assembly that **all provisions of the resolutions on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly addressed to the Secretariat have been implemented in full**.

10. As the substantive office tasked with **facilitating the intergovernmental negotiations of Member States**, and the **provision of high-level quality conference services** that include **procedural, technical and substantive support to the OPGA**, GAEAD/DGACM, has a direct interest in the success of your deliberations and, as the **keeper and focal point of the institutional memory on the GA revitalization item**, stands ready to provide support, input and guidance throughout your deliberations during the 68<sup>th</sup> session.

11. Thank you.

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