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**Statement  
by the Representative of the Russian Federation in the Sixth Committee  
on agenda item “Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country”**

**2 November 2017**

Mr. Chairman,

We should like to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, Permanent Representative of Cyprus Mr. Kornelios Korneliou for his report.

The past cycle of the Committee’s work has been marked by an unprecedented case of violation by the host country of its obligations to respect privileges and immunities of the permanent missions to the UN. To be more precise it is a matter of gross violation of immunities of their premises. As a result, since last January the Committee has been compelled to deal with this problem at every meeting it had.

On substance the problem is as follows. In late December 2016 the authorities of the host country actually seized the real estate in Upper Brookville (Long Island) whose title belonged to the USSR since 1953 and in 1994 was reregistered to Russia. This property is a part of the premises of the Permanent Mission of Russia to the UN and has been used as such exclusively for official purposes including as residence for the Permanent Mission’s staff.

For decades the US authorities have granted relevant privileges and the immunities to this property without any objections or claims.

By its note dated 29 December 2016 the US Department of State announced to the Permanent Mission the denial of access to this property. The note also indicated that this property could no more be used for diplomatic purposes which meant the loss of its privileges and immunities. No justifications besides the references to local legislation were provided by the US side in its note. It did not indicate either the reasons for such actions.

The Department of State established the procedure for visiting this facility by permission with written consent of the Foreign missions affairs office. About twenty times we requested such consent for at least check the state of our property and ascertain the absence of any technical failures. Each time the Department of State responded by refusal without explanation of the reasons or indication when such visit could take place. That means that we had been actually denied any possibility to access our own property.

It stands to reason that under these circumstances the authorities of the host country bear the full measure of responsibility for the damage that has been already brought or may be brought to our property during the application of unjustifiably introduced restrictions as well as for any losses that can be incurred in this connection.

We also sent a request for authorization to hold the annual protocol event at our facility in Upper Brookville that for many years had been organized by the Permanent Mission in May on the occasion of the Victory Day with the invitation of a number of delegations of the UN member states. To this request the answer was also negative.

Summing up, the non-compliance by the host country with relevant obligations with regard to our Mission has created serious difficulties in ensuring its proper functioning. These actions are openly arbitrary and discriminatory and follow

in line with the general policy to deliberate deterioration of relations with Russia and abuse of the status of the host country of the UN for these purposes.

Mr. Chairman,

Since last January the Russian delegation has undertaken in good faith the efforts to convince the host country on the need to resume implementation of its international legal obligations. We should like to thank the Committee on relations with the host country for its attention to this problem.

We are compelled to note that despite this requests the unprecedented behavior of the US authorities has continued unfortunately.

The Committee in its recommendations has reacted to this situation and urged the host country to lift all restrictions from the premises of the Permanent Mission inconsistent with its privileges and immunities and ensure for their respect in a future.

We expect that violations of international law will be discontinued and the host country provide guarantees that they will not be repeated in the future. It is necessary to ensure strict compliance with international legal norms in their entirety that regulate privileges and immunities of real estate facilities used for diplomatic purposes by the permanent representatives of UN member states. We refer to the UN Headquarters Agreement and relevant provisions of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and other documents applicable to the issue of the status of permanent missions to the UN.

It is important that the Committee confirms the inadmissibility of abuse by the host country of its status. The practice of applying any restrictions arising from the US interpretation of its bilateral relations with that or another country with respect to permanent missions to the UN, their premises and property is absolutely inadmissible.

Mr. Chairman,

We still expect that the authorities of the host country will rectify as soon as possible the current situation. However, if this does not happen, it will establish an extremely dangerous precedent for the UN on the whole. No UN member state will be safe from unexpected demand to vacate the office, residence or any other premise of the permanent mission, the denial of access there or its employees suddenly thrown out in the streets.

In accordance with its report the Committee will continue to deal with that matter. It is our understanding that the Committee will work on substance in order to unwind the situation with the premises of the Permanent Mission of Russia in Upper Brookville until all illegal restrictions are lifted.

We are grateful to Mr. Korneliou for his active mediation and will welcome any steps of the Chairman of the Committee going in this direction. We also expect that the issue of diplomatic property of the Permanent Mission of Russia will remain in focus of the Secretary-General.

We believe that the General Assembly through its Sixth Committee and Committee on Relations with the Host Country with the assistance of the Secretariat should strengthen the monitoring of compliance by the US authorities with their obligations with respect to privileges and immunities of permanent missions including their property and premises in order to properly react to any violations and abuses.