



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

by

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at the Sixth Committee

on the agenda item 165

Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

United Nations

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— CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY —

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

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, and the EFTA country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

We would like to thank the Committee on Relations with the Host Country for its report A/74/26 on its activities conducted during the reporting period.

We would also like to express our thanks to the Permanent Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, Ambassador Kornelios Korneliou, and Ambassador Andreas Mavroyiannis respectively for presiding over the work of the Committee during the reporting period, as well as to the other members of the Committee's Bureau, and the UN Secretariat, for their continuous support to the Committee's work.

The observance of privileges and immunities of diplomatic personnel is an issue of great importance, based on solid legal principles. To this end, we underline the need to safeguard the integrity of the relevant body of international law, particularly the Headquarters Agreement between the United Nations and the Host Country, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations.

The Host Country Committee has an important role to play in handling a variety of matters that the diplomatic community may face in the context of the relationship between the Host Country and the United Nations community. The Committee's role is also central in helping to ensure that this relationship is in compliance with the aforementioned relevant body of international law.

During the reporting period, the Committee continued to represent an open and efficient forum for dealing with a range of diverse issues pertaining to the activities of Permanent and Observer Missions to the UN and their staff. In a number of its meetings the Committee had intensive discussions of several items of great importance to the membership of the UN, related to the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement, especially the issuance of entry visas and travel restrictions. These were raised as a matter of urgent and serious concern by a number of delegations. The issuance of entry visas by the host country and travel restrictions on certain diplomatic Missions were also discussed in an emergency meeting of the Committee on 15 October 2019.

The European Union and its Member States stresses the importance of the continued active engagement of the UN Secretary-General concerning the developments in the Committee and take note of the statement of the United Nations Legal Counsel at the emergency, 295th, meeting of the Committee, set out in document A/AC.154/415, where he confirmed that the legal position regarding the host country's obligations with respect to the issuance of visas to persons covered by the

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

Headquarters Agreement remains unchanged from that which was provided by the then Legal Counsel to the Host Country Committee in 1988, set out in document A/C.6/43/7.

Mr Chairman,

The European Union and its Member States would like to commend all the Members of the Committee and the Host Country for their efforts and the constructive spirit they exhibited, which finally led to the adoption of this year's report while preserving the consensus that traditionally prevails in the Committee.

We take this opportunity to underline that multilateralism provides us with the opportunity to come together and work in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation to improve transparency and build trust. At the same time, we underline that the maintenance of appropriate conditions for the delegations and missions accredited to the United Nations is in the interest of the United Nations and all of the Member States. To this effect, we recall the obligations under the Headquarters Agreement and the need to ensure that all delegations are able to fully perform their functions. We also wish to underline the importance of the proper functioning of the Main Committees of the General Assembly, enabled by the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement. The EU and its Member States will continue to follow closely the developments in the Committee in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

The European Union and its Member States fully endorse the recommendations and conclusions contained in the Host Country Committee report and encourages the Committee to continue its work constructively in a spirit of cooperation, and in accordance with international law.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.