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Agenda item 121: Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Statement by

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on behalf of the European Union

New York, 26 November, 2007

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Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia¹ and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

Mr. President,

The European Union wishes to thank you for convening this meeting and for providing the membership with an opportunity to look ahead to General Assembly revitalization during the 62nd session.

But before doing so, we would also like to express our appreciation for the efforts undertaken during the 61st session by the former President of the General Assembly, H.E. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, with the purpose of revitalizing the GA, and specifically the convening of thematic debates on issues of particular relevance to the membership.

We are grateful as well to the co-facilitators (H.E. Ambassador Daniele Bodini of San Marino and H.E. Ambassador Paul Badji of Senegal) for their hard work and widespread consultations, which have drawn active participation from the EU.

Mr. President,

The EU supports efforts aimed at strengthening the General Assembly's role and authority, in line with the UN Charter, the principles and objectives outlined in the 2005 World Summit outcome document and the measures adopted in several GA resolutions.

At this stage we believe that efforts at practical level are paramount to ensure an overhaul of the GA's performance.

The EU strongly believes that the GA revitalizes itself, first and foremost, when it takes up issues of genuine concern to our peoples and to the international community as a whole. It is our collective duty to engage in meaningful initiatives, thus living up to the expectations of our peoples and making the work of the GA ever more relevant.

¹ Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

Furthermore, it is the responsibility of each and every Member State to apply in its daily business what has already been agreed by all and considered useful and necessary to revitalize this body. We recall that the revitalization of the GA has been an ongoing process over several years and that numerous resolutions have already been adopted in the past. What was then agreed needs implementation, as was acknowledged by this Assembly when it adopted resolution A/RES/61/292.

Implementation will also be at the core of the proceedings of the Ad-hoc working group to be established at this session, as foreseen in the resolution I mentioned earlier. The mandate given to the Ad-hoc working group is to, *inter alia*, "evaluate and assess the status of implementation of relevant resolutions".

Not all the EU's well known views and positions on GA revitalization are fully reflected in those resolutions. On many occasions we would have liked to see the GA adopt bolder and more ambitious decisions reflecting our positions.

But we believe that fostering the implementation and the consolidation of existing resolutions and decisions will bring real added value and will impact significantly on the way the GA – and the UN as a whole – conducts its work.

At the end of the current session we may well come to the conclusion that some of the shortcomings we recognize in the way the GA carries out its work and in the way the major UN bodies relate to each other can be addressed by means of an effective implementation of existing resolutions and decisions.

To this end we look forward to the timely submission of a comprehensive report of the Secretary-General, as envisaged in operative paragraph 1 of resolution A/RES/61/292 so that it can constitute a valuable basis for an informed and action-oriented discussion in the framework of the Ad-hoc working group.

Mr. President,

We look forward to working with the personalities you have appointed to, under your overall leadership, conduct our work in the current session.

The EU undertakes to engage, in a constructive and pragmatic manner, in the proceedings of the Ad-hoc working group with a view to contributing to a successful outcome of our collective efforts aimed at further revitalizing the GA.