



Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly

Statement delivered by

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**United Nations
New York
19 April 2012**

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Co-chairs,

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

The Acceding country Croatia^{*}, the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia^{*}, Montenegro^{*}, Iceland^{*} and Serbia^{*}, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

Co-Chairs

At the outset, I would like to thank you, Ambassador Waffaa-Ogoo and Ambassador Lomaia, for your letter of 11 April, 2012, in which you outlined the timing and sequencing of our thematic debates. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for convening this first thematic meeting with a view of having an in depth discussion on the issue of the role and authority of the General Assembly and its relationship to the other principal organs of the United Nations and other groups outside the United Nations.

Co-chairs,

In the statement delivered by the Deputy Head of the EU Delegation at the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on 27 March, 2012, we already touched upon a number of issues relevant to our discussion today. In this context, let me stress once again: the European Union and its Member States believe that the General Assembly should focus on topical issues relevant to the entire membership of the United Nations and the international community. We continue to be committed to revitalization and to supporting efforts aimed at strengthening the GA, in line with the UN Charter and relevant resolutions. The test of revitalisation is whether the GA is able to take appropriate and meaningful action on issues of common concern to the international community, as it did in an unequivocal manner in the case of Syria.

Revitalization means a more streamlined, more accountable and more effective General Assembly dealing with the issues currently on its agenda. Over the years, the revitalization process has led to many positive developments. Among them, the thematic debates held on main current topics facilitate more in-depth discussions on issues of critical importance to the international community. Thanks to the interactive character of these debates, a closer engagement of the General Assembly is made possible with other stakeholders, including civil society, other international and regional organizations and groups outside the United Nations system. We commend President Al-Nasser for continuing this useful practice.

For us, improving transparency and cooperation between the General Assembly and the other principal organs of the UN remain important goals. The GA should benefit from information about the meetings between the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council, ECOSOC, the Human Rights Council and the Peace-building Commission, as well as with the Chairs of subsidiary bodies. Briefings by the President of the General Assembly on his recent activities are valuable source of information.

^{*} Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

^{*} Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.

We also appreciate the periodic informal briefings held by the Secretary-General on his priorities, travels and most recent activities and encourage him to continue with this practice.

Further enhancing public and media awareness of the work and decisions of the GA and strengthening its visibility would undoubtedly increase the weight and impact of its work. For this reason, we would encourage further interaction with the media and civil society, including by building on the activities of the Secretariat, especially the Department of Public Information.

We believe that one of the ways forward is the swift implementation of existing resolutions on the revitalization of the GA, including the outcome of the 2005 World Summit, and the conduct of the comprehensive review of the inventory contained in document A/63/959 as provided for in OP3 of resolution 65/315. We welcome the interest by the Co-Chairs in this regard as expressed in their letter of 11 April, 2012. As regards the inventory items related to the "role and authority of the GA", we are under the impression that a vast majority of the provisions have been implemented or are being implemented on an ongoing basis. We believe the provisions that could be considered as not implemented on substance should be addressed and analyzed on a case-by-case basis. This exercise could be reflected in the report of the AHWG and, if appropriate, in the resolution.

Let me mention some specific points:

- As to the provisions related to the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the organization, resolution 51/241 mandated the General Assembly to refer sections of the report for more detailed consideration by the Main Committees. However, this provision has never been applied in practice. We believe that feasibility of implementing this provision of the resolution should be further looked into.

- The annual reports of the Security Council have been improved over the years. With regard to the provisions outlined in inventory items 12, 16 and 18, they could be updated taking into account the practice of most recent sessions. In our view, the Working Group on the working methods of the Security Council contributes to further improving the reports as well as the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly in general.

In relation to other groups outside the UN, we remain firmly attached to the GA as the only intergovernmental body with universal membership and a broad mandate with far-reaching responsibilities in the context of emerging global challenges. That is why we deem it important that the GA remain relevant in a fast moving world facing multiple and complex crises. We recognize the importance of the interaction between the General Assembly and international or regional fora and organizations dealing with global matters of concern to the international community and the benefits to be drawn from such interaction. In this context, we welcome the outreach made by recent G20 presidencies to associate as much as possible the GA to its work in a process of thorough consultation and in a spirit of accountability and transparency.

Thank you.