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EU Speaking points
Thematic debate on the revitalization
of the General Assembly
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- The European Union would like to thank the co-chairs (His Excellency Ambassador Camillo M. Gonsalves and His Excellency Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis) for convening this meeting and for inviting the Chair of the Second Committee, the Chair of the Security Council Informal Working Group on Documentation and Procedural Questions, as well as the Secretariat to the Working Group to share the good practices and lessons learned in making work of the respective bodies more effective and efficient. We would also welcome their invitation to our future meetings.
- We must acknowledge that all attempts in our years-long debates about GA revitalization have yielded limited results. We believe that each and every member state bears the responsibility that the GA can fulfil its political functions, that it can make its contribution to achieving the goals and principles of the UN, that its debates are meaningful, and that its decisions are being respected and do make a difference in the world.
- The EU attaches particular importance to the working methods of the General Assembly and its Main Committees under discussion today as **this topic** in our opinion **has the biggest potential to contribute to GA revitalization this year**.
- The EU also holds the view that the best way to meaningfully revitalize the General Assembly is through the implementation of existing GA resolutions, including not only the resolutions on GA revitalization but also the ones related and annexed to the Rules of Procedure of GA. Indeed, **the comprehensive review of the inventory** contained in the annex to the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group submitted at the sixty-third session (document A/63/959) which our Working Group is mandated to undertake this year helps us recognize that the process of GA revitalization might have generated enough ideas. However, according to the non-papers by the Co-Chairs a big portion of them – from 20 to 40 percent - are not or not fully implemented. We, Member States, have to review those ideas, revise and up-date if needed and take determined action to implement them. This inventory should be updated on a regular basis, including an indication of reasons for non-implementation.
- Speaking of the **Rules of Procedure of GA**, we take note that the comments on some Procedural Questions related to precedents and past practice with respect to rules and practices of the intergovernmental bodies of the Organization have been

made available online by the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat in response to paragraph 24 of General Assembly resolution 60/286 as indicated in the updated inventory/chart contained in document A/65/712.

- We also believe that fostering the consolidation of existing resolutions and decisions would bring real added value.
- As to the rationalisation and streamlining of the agendas of the GA and its Main Committees, we are of the opinion that it would be appropriate to examine thoroughly the possibilities for further biennialisation or triennialisation of items, as well as clustering and elimination of items. The Main Committees might facilitate this task through evaluating the topicality and frequency of agenda items allocated for consideration.
- **The EU commends the Second Committee** – its Bureau and Chair, all the delegations and the Secretary of the Committee – for undertaking a substantial discussion and taking decisions on improving the working methods of the Second Committee. Thus the Committee took the lead among the Main Committees in implementing the relevant provision of resolution 64/301. The non-paper of 29 September 2011 by its Chair Ambassador Enkhsetseg Ochir of Mongolia constitutes a good basis for further deliberations in this regard.
- We agree to the Co-Chairs that **sharing experiences and lessons learned in the processes and groups outside our ad hoc Working Group** might be an effective and coherent way in achieving our common goals. The EU is pleased that we had an opportunity to hear remarks by the Chair of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Procedural Questions of the Security Council Ms. Mirsada Čolaković. Indeed, achievements in **improving working methods of the Security Council**, in particular as outlined in Note by its President S/2010/507, could and should be considered as applicable to certain extent by the General Assembly and its Main Committees. One of such areas might be streamlining of agenda following the provisions 51-58 of Note 507. We also find “Handbook on the Working Methods of the Security Council” of December 2010 to be a very useful practical tool for delegations in their everyday business.
- The EU is of the view that **High-Level Meetings** held during the time of the General Debate have undoubted value added. At the same time, organizational and procedural aspects such as scheduling issues shall be looked into very carefully. We thank the Secretariat for the information which they provided us today in this regard. Certainly, the role of the General Committee and the President of the General Assembly could and should be further explored and the Working Group could come up with according indicative guidance in its report to be submitted to the General Assembly.
- The EU attaches great importance to the **improvement of the existing balloting system** and the need to adapt it to modern technologies. Therefore, the EU welcomes today's briefing by the Secretariat.
- Among the **technical measures** aimed at revitalizing the UNGA, the EU reiterates the importance of introducing measures to improve the quality and accuracy of **UNGA documents** in the six official languages, to ensure that they

are systematically produced and translated in a more cost effective way using the texts and speeches as they were written or given in the original language. It is also important for measures to be taken to ensure that more documents are issued on time in the 6 official languages of the UNGA (Commissions, Committees).

- The EU notes with appreciation information provided by the Secretariat today with regard to the **savings** by eliminating distribution of the paper version of the UN documents to the permanent missions, which *inter alia* could be used to improve the quality of these documents and their distribution to the Member States.
- As in previous years, we strongly support a **wider use of internet** in order to timely distribute documents and information taking into account the relevant rules and procedures of the General Assembly and the existing resources.
- Finally, the EU looks forward to the continued discussions of the Working Group with the view of achieving concrete value added results.

