



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

Statement delivered by

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Mr. President,

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

The Acceding country Croatia*, the candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland* and Serbia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, I would like to express our gratitude to the two previous Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly, the Permanent Representative of Lithuania, H.E. Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, and the Permanent Representative of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, H.E. Mr. Camillo Gonsalves for the excellent work they did.

I would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly for the appointment of the Permanent Representative of Gambia, H.E. Susan Waffa-Ogoo and the Permanent Representative of Georgia, H.E. Alexander Lomaia to serve as Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group established by GA Resolution 65/315. We welcome their expressed commitment to perform their task with great responsibility to promote confidence, spirit of cooperation and openness to achieve a fruitful and satisfying outcome. We also commend their intention to build upon the results achieved so far. We are looking forward to working with them in a constructive manner with a view to achieving our common objectives.

Mr. President,

I would like to share some general ideas on revitalization of the work of the GA that will guide our approach during the upcoming thematic meetings and subsequent negotiations.

The European Union and its Member States remain strongly attached to effective multilateralism with the United Nations at its core. Strengthening the UN based on effective and sustainable funding – in line with real capacity to pay, and increasing the efficiency of its functioning – remain our top priorities.

We believe that the General Assembly should focus on topical issues relevant to the entire membership of the United Nations and the international community. In this context, 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. As the only intergovernmental body with universal membership and a broad mandate with far-reaching responsibilities, the GA should be able to increase its efficiency in a context of emerging global challenges. Revitalization can only be ensured when the GA takes relevant and appropriate action on issues of common concern to the international community, as it did in an unequivocal manner in the case of Syria.

We welcome the adoption of resolution 65/315. In this context, we would like to stress the importance of the implementation of all resolutions of the General Assembly, including those

* 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.

on its revitalization, and note its impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly.

For us, revitalization means a more streamlined, more accountable and more effective General Assembly at dealing with the issues currently on its agenda. We note that the activities of the PGA have increased markedly in recent years and also note that the revitalization process has already led to positive developments: for example, holding thematic debates on main current topics facilitates more in-depth discussions on issues of critical importance to the international community. The interactive character of these debates allows closer engagement of the General Assembly with other stakeholders, including civil society, other international and regional organizations and groups outside the United Nations system. We welcome the continuation of this practice initiated by former President Deiss and followed by President Al-Nasser. We also recognize the importance of the interaction between the GA 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. We appreciate the continued practice of holding periodic informal briefings by the Secretary-General on his priorities, travels and most recent activities and encourage him to continue with this practice.

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, 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.

Mr. President,

On the issue of working methods, we would like to stress the need for further rationalization and streamlining of the agendas of the GA and its Main Committees with a view of ensuring higher efficiency and effectiveness. It would be appropriate to examine further biennialization, triennialization of items, as well as their clustering or elimination. In this regard, leadership by the Chairs and the bureaux of the Main Committees is of particular importance. We look forward to the briefings of the Chairs of the Main Committees on the working methods to the Ad Hoc Working Group.

We would also like to stress the need for further enhancing public and media awareness of the work and decisions of the GA.

On a more technical level, electronic voting systems, documentation management and timely translation merit further attention by the Working Group. A briefing on technical aspects related to the conduct of electronic voting would prove useful for the discussion of this matter.

We understand that in line with the Capital Master Plan, plenary meetings of the General Assembly will take place in the North Lawn Building already during UNGA 67. We trust that the important work to be performed by the GA will not be hampered by the temporary move in any way.

Finally, I would like to assure you that the EU and its Member States will continue to engage in a pragmatic manner in the proceedings of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

Thank you.

