



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

by

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*at the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of
the Role of the Organization*

United Nations

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— CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY —

Mr./Madam Chair,

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

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro* and Albania*, 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.

At the outset, we would like to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election. We are confident in your ability to guide the Special Committee in its deliberations. We also take this opportunity to thank the staff of the UN Secretariat for the assistance in preparing this meeting.

Mr./Madam Chair,

General Assembly resolution 72/118 of 17 December 2017 requests the Special Committee to continue its consideration of a number of proposals and issues. We hope that the constructive spirit which prevailed during the last session of the last committee will happen again during this session.

With regard to the agenda item "Maintenance of international peace and security", we continue to firmly believe that sanctions remain an important instrument, under the Charter, for the maintenance and restoration of international peace and security. While sanctions should always be used as a part of a comprehensive policy approach, the evidence continues to demonstrate that sanctions can be and are instituted in a targeted way to increase their efficiency and attain the agreed objectives while minimising their impact upon the well-being of the civilian population as well as upon third parties. We are therefore looking forward later this session to the briefing by the Secretary-General on the issues covered by the document contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 64/115 of 16 December 2009 entitled "Introduction and implementation of sanctions imposed by the United Nations." We hope that this annual briefing will foster positive dialogue and better understanding of the need and usefulness of the instrument of sanctions, the recent improvements and developments related to it, as well as the efforts of the Secretariat to support Member States in implementing current sanctions regimes. We also note that over recent years, the sanctions committees have organised meetings and open briefings to provide for a to hear from Member States on their concerns and challenges.

We note that some proposals identified in the report of last year's session have been discussed for several years, but without any substantial progress or any likely agreement on concrete measures to be implemented. Most of the proposals identified in the report of the Special Committee are duplicative of revitalizing efforts taking place within other fora of the Organisation, or don't seem to represent an added value. We reiterate that the relationship between the different organs within the UN system is adequately defined in the UN Charter and does not need further clarification by the Committee.

Concerning Ghana's proposal entitled "Working paper by Ghana on strengthening the relationship and cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements or agencies in the peaceful

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

settlement of disputes", we see possibilities for pursuing the proposals, provided that this work does not duplicate or prejudge discussions in other fora where these matters are already dealt with.

With regard to the agenda item "Peaceful settlement of disputes", we stand ready to contribute to the first annual thematic debate which will focus this year on negotiation and inquiry.

On the question of updating the "*Handbook on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes between States*" prepared by the UN in 1992 and of establishing an UN website dedicated to this issue, we remain unconvinced about the added value of such efforts. Multiple resources and legal tools are already available online and easily accessible through search engines. We therefore call for proper prioritization of the limited resources allocated to the Secretariat so as to avoid a duplication of efforts.

This is also why we continue to urge the Special Committee to implement the 2006 decision on reforming its working methods, as reflected in paragraph 3 (d) of resolution 71/146 of the General Assembly. This is indeed, as stipulated in this provision, a priority issue and we should work together to explore ways and means to achieve a better use of resources and of the meetings of the Committee. This could be done by reviewing all existing agenda items, looking into the usefulness of further discussing them, taking into account their continued relevance and the likelihood of reaching a consensus in the future, before examining proposals for new items, or by re-examining the duration of the sessions of the Committee. This remains a priority issue for the EU and its member States and we look forward to continuing constructive engagement on this matter.

Finally Mr./Madam Chair, regarding the Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs and Repertoire of Practice of the Security Council, we welcome the progress and the efforts undertaken by the Secretariat to reduce the backlog in the preparation of those two publications. We express our gratitude to the State which has made voluntary contributions to the trust fund for the elimination of the backlog in the Repertory, and to the trust fund for the updating of the Repertoire, and encourage other Member States to do likewise.

I thank you, Mr. /Madam Chair.