Mr. Chairman,

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

The Acceding country Croatia*, 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, as well as Ukraine, align themselves with this statement.

The Member States of the European Union are concerned that no consensus could be reached during the negotiations of this draft resolution; we furthermore regret that political elements have been introduced in the work of the Fifth Committee.

The Member States of the European Union, **abstained** during the voting on preambular paragraph 4 and operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 13 of draft resolution A/C.5/67/L.37, because we consider the text, as drafted, inappropriate in the context of the resolution dealing with financing UNIFIL.

In our view, the broader political aspects of the events to which the draft resolution refers, including the incident in Qana, were extensively debated in the General Assembly in April 1996, resulting in resolution 50/22C of 25 April 1996. At that time, the Member States of the European Union made their position on the broader political aspects clear in a plenary statement and in the voting procedure on that specific resolution.

The Member States of the European Union furthermore wish to underline that we would have wished that consultations in the Fifth Committee could have been confined only to the budgetary aspects of the financing of UNIFIL. The Member States of the European Union have however voted **in favour** of the resolution as a whole, since it provides UNIFIL with the adequate resources to fulfil its important mandate.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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* *Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilization and Association Process.*
† *Ireland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.*