

## **Chair's Remarks in 22<sup>nd</sup> Formal Meeting of the Fifth Committee, 10 December 2013**

Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to share with you some reflections about the state of our work.

The Committee has now worked for almost ten weeks. We have made good progress in many areas. Most importantly we have so far agreed on 5 resolutions. By Fifth Committee standards this is not a bad track report. Several other resolutions are coming together under the able leadership of our coordinators. I am also proud that the working atmosphere has remained professional and cordial.

Notwithstanding the progress, we had to ask for an extension for our meeting time from the General Assembly. This is because several key ACABQ reports will only be available to the committee later this week and we have not been able to open discussions on these issues. By submitting significantly more language than in previous years to the budget resolution – we moved from over 500 paragraphs to closer to 800 paragraphs – you set the bar quite high. It will take more time than planned to plough through this single spaced document with 81 pages.

The General Assembly gave us one more week – until 20 December. In less than two weeks we will need to close the books for 2012-2013, agree on the 2014-2015 Programme budget and budgets for Tribunals, make important decisions on UN construction projects and resolve thorny Human Resources issues.

If we were not in the Fifth Committee, I would be quite gloomy. But this is the Fifth Committee. This committee works best under pressure and is used to producing miracles. And now it is the time to work the Fifth Committee magic.

I promise that in order to achieve the results expected from us by the General Assembly, we will spend the better part of the next two weeks in the Committee. You have been distributed the tentative Programme of Work, so you can see the amount of work ahead of us.

We will need to use the time wisely and most importantly engage with each other. It is only through the give and take of negotiations we can make progress. We should also bear in mind that this is not a zero sum game. I have asked the coordinators to push their negotiations forward without mercy. I hope you all support their work.

We have only two weeks to go and the bulk of the work is still undone. From now on I expect everyone to pull their weight and to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.