



Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

By

**Mr. Francesco Presutti
Minister Counsellor at the Delegation of the European Union
to the United Nations**

**68th Session of the General Assembly
Fifth Committee**

**Item 134
Special Political Missions**

United Nations

New York

December 2013

– Check against delivery–

Mr. Chairman,

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

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, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset let me thank Controller/Assistant Secretary-General, Ms. Maria Eugenia Casar, for introducing the report of the Secretary General and the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, for his introduction of the related report of that Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

We continue to recognise the importance of Special Political Missions in preventing, controlling and resolving conflicts and in post-conflict peace building. We must therefore regret again the late introduction of an important item such as the budgets of the Special Political Missions. In spite of the limited time in front of us, we will also continue to scrutinise these budgets with our usual close attention.

As Special Political Missions represent a significant part of the regular budget, we underline the importance that we attach to the realistic forecasting and budgeting of these missions. We commend the Secretary-General and UN staff for all the efforts made to manage the Special Political Missions budgets in an increasingly effective and efficient manner, which is reflected in the budget proposal for 2014/2015 where the provision for Special Political Missions has decreased by 130 million dollars against the expected outturn for 2012/13. We are however mindful that this amount is indicative at this stage.

The present agenda item also gives us the opportunity to resume our discussion of the report of the Secretary-General on the funding and backstopping arrangements for the Special Political Missions. We recognise the importance of effective and efficient support arrangements for the missions and we believe that a positive response to the Secretary-General's long-standing concerns relating to the funding of the start-up and the expansion of the missions and of their backstopping is long overdue.

We therefore state our commitment to play a constructive role during this session and encourage Member States to focus their efforts exclusively, recognising the limited time available, towards finding concrete solutions to improve the operational effectiveness of Special Political Missions.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

* 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.