

## **69th Session of the General Assembly Fifth Committee**

**1st Meeting: Organization of Work  
New York  
3 October 2014**

### **Remarks by the Chair of the Committee**

**Distinguished delegates,**

Allow me, at the outset of this formal meeting, to **express to you my gratitude** for the honor you bestowed on me and my country, in electing me Chair of the Fifth Committee during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. I am grateful to the **Group of Eastern European States** for endorsing my candidature to this important and challenging position and for the confidence placed in me to preside over the deliberations of this Committee.

As you are all aware, the Committee elected its bureau for the sixty-ninth session on 18 June 2014, at its 45th meeting of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly. In this regard, I am pleased to be joined in the task of presiding over the work of the Committee by the **members of the Bureau for the sixty-ninth session:**

Vice-chairs:

**Ms. Paula Coto-Ramirez** of Costa Rica,

**Ms. Aline Mukashyaka** of Republic of Rwanda,

**Ms. Chamithri Rambukwella** of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, and

Rapporteur: **Mr. Matthias Dettling** of Switzerland.

I wish to express my sincere congratulations on their election. I have no doubt that with the spirit of cooperation that prevails, we, as members of the Bureau, shall work together and strive to complete the tasks given to us, successfully and in a timely manner.

I should also like to take this opportunity **to thank to my predecessor**, His Excellency **Mr. Janne Taalas**, Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations, and to the Vice-Chairs of the Committee: **Mr. Carlos Alejandro Funes** of El Salvador, **Ms. Joanna Fiodorow** of the Republic of Poland, **Mr. Kodjovi Dosseh** of Togo and to the Rapporteur, **Mr. Ken Siah** of Singapore, for their dedication and excellent manner in which the work of the Committee was conducted during the sixty-eighth session.

Furthermore, I would like to welcome the Chair of the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions, **Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu** and look forward to working closely with him and all the members of the Advisory Committee in ensuring the success of the work of the Fifth Committee.

Let me also **appreciate** the following great colleagues:

**Secretariat of the 5<sup>th</sup> Committee** – over a short period of time I had a privilege to assure myself of their highest professionalism, impartiality and positive approach;

**Coordinators** – many of you have volunteered to facilitate and coordinate issues we have to handle. There are issues of different gravity and weight but I am sure that under the coordination and guidance we will be bond for successful outcomes;

And last but not least – all of you, **experts of your national missions** to the 5<sup>th</sup> Committee.

Now, let me bore you with some statistics: So far our **Program of Work** consists of approximately 84 sessions.

- If we lose 15 minutes at each session – all together we will be short of 1260 minutes. This is if I calculate properly – 21 hours. In this time almost 300 000 babies are born, and 136 000 people die.
- 21 hours means 7 full sessions. 7 sessions we may use for deliberations and discussions. Saving this we could finish 3,5 days earlier. Wouldn't you think this be a nice contribution to our task to improve the efficiency?
- In this time we can make 315 statements each 4 minutes long.

- Another example – if we all – 193 member states and 2 observers make 5 minute statement on one issue only once – it makes 975 minutes. 16 hours and 15 minutes. If we make a statement one minute shorter – we save each time 195 minutes – 3 hours and 15 minutes. It is approximately one session. Let's think about it.

I know, that is statistics. We are humans and individuals. Not numbers. There are lots of factors that influence our activities. But I wanted to bring these numbers just to kindly remind you **to observe**, as a show of respect to others, **the time of beginning of the sessions**.

As well you may wish to adjust the **length of your statements** having in mind numbers mentioned above.

Program of work: our plate is full – we have provided you with all documents and it is my intention to do so in the future. We will be seeking effective **communication between Secretariat, ACABQ and the Committee** in sake of identifying possible delays, discussing prioritization and looking for timely distribution of documents.

We have created a special **e-mail address of the Presidency**, which was communicated to you. Please use it for our communication and contact.

I also wish to make our work **transparent, inclusive and effective**. But I cannot achieve it without your help. Please, if you have any questions, concerns, or you may wish to express comments – contact me or communicate it through the members of the Bureau. Bureau is going to meet regularly every Tuesday at 13:15, so we have enough time to circulate document among constituencies before their meetings;

Having said that - our work and discussion may require **ad hoc consultations in smaller format**. But this, if happens, will not mean exclusivity. It will happen with full transparency and with the aim to look for possible solutions within most concerned member states on that specific issue.

I have full trust and confidence in our **good will and professional approach**. All of you have excellent experience – so let us work together to be proud of results we may achieve.