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Statement on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

by

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Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 28 Member States of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, let me thank Ms. Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the restructuring of the United Nations peace and security pillar, as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of ACABQ for introducing the report this Committee.

Mr. Chair,

On 15 December 2017, the Member States of the European Union welcomed the adoption of General Assembly Resolution 72/199 on the restructuring of the UN peace and security pillar. With this clear and short text, adopted by consensus, the General Assembly expressed without any ambiguity its strong support to the Secretary General and his vision to reform the Peace and Security pillar of the Secretariat as a key element of delivering better peacekeeping in the field and contributing to the sustaining peace agenda.

We believe that the comprehensive report presented to us by the Secretary-General is in line with the mandate set out by the General Assembly in December and we welcome its different elements, including on the establishment of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the Department of Peace Operations. We stand ready to endorse the intentions and to positively look at the proposals of this report as they aim to reorganize and integrate existing substantive capacities and resources in key areas of peace and security more rationally.

This institutional restructuring and reshuffling of responsibilities is an important contribution to ensuring a double improvement: that the peace and security pillar as a whole works in a more coherent, nimble and strategic way, and that it works more effectively with the other pillars of the United Nations system. Through such efforts, the Secretariat can improve its ability to prevent conflict, maintain and consolidate peace, with the aim of sustaining peace.

We fully support this approach and we believe the Secretary-General has the authority to act as chief administrator of the Organization, as provided by the Charter. He has our full political endorsement in proceeding with the first steps of implementing his vision. We expect that transition to the new administrative structure will be carried out in a swift and comprehensive manner, with a view to preserve continuity in mandate delivery.

As a technical committee, we should also look at the support structures with the expectation that a restructuring should deliver efficiencies when we keep in mind that our common overall objective is ensuring better and swifter mandate delivery, not least on the ground.

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

We see merit in the single-operational structure to be shared by the two departments as proposed by the SG and we believe that geographically defined regional divisions will be organized so to ensure a more coordinated and integrated response to the needs on the ground in terms of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peace building. We trust the Secretariat to shape the responsibilities between the various divisions in accordance with the complex and sometimes cross-border nature of the situations on the ground. We also see an important role for the Standing Principals' Group in ensuring coherence between the departments and the regional divisions. We attach great importance to the strengthening of the Peacebuilding Support Office as a key component of the SG's focus on prevention.

During the upcoming informal consultations we will request more details on these and other proposals made in the comprehensive report, with a view to concluding this important item in a timely, constructive and transparent manner, on its own merits, but also as an element of the broader reform proposed by the Secretary-General.

Peace is the core value and purpose of the UN. The Charter encourages us to take effective collective measures and to achieve international co-operation to strengthen universal peace. The UN is meant "to be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends". As staunch supporters of effective multilateralism we welcome the UN's ambition to lead the path in our common engagement to build and sustain peace.

Thank you, Mr. Chair