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Statement by Ms. Cherith Norman Chalet

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At the Fifth Committee Opening, First Resumed Part of the 72nd UN General Assembly

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to express my delegation's continued support for you as Chair as you lead us through another session. I would like to acknowledge the Executive Secretary of this Committee, Ms. Sharon van Buerle, and her dedicated team. I would further like to recognize with gratitude all of the staff who make our negotiations possible. We congratulate Egypt for assuming the Chair of the G77 + China, and commend Ecuador for their constructive collaboration over the course of 2017. We look forward to working with all of you this session.

Mr. Chairman,

At the conclusion of the main session in December, the Committee took many important decisions, including on the regular budget and the UN reform agenda. Despite the fact that the Committee received many of its reports late in the session, with the guidance and leadership of you as our Chair, delegations maintained a constructive and collaborative spirit throughout. We hope the Committee can maintain this constructive momentum given our intense schedule ahead this year. We would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the Bureau for already managing our time wisely by starting this session on March 14. We are confident that we can finish this session in a timely fashion by the end of the session, on March 29th. We would like to further thank you, Mr. Chairman, for ensuring that every report from the Secretary General for the Fifth Committee's consideration is reflected on the program of work.

Mr. Chairman,

We have many important issues to consider this session including those that will advance reform of the Organization such as the standards of accommodation of air travel, and the restructuring of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

With regard to air travel, informed member state decisions on this issue can help spur the culture change needed to transform this organization. The United States would like to thank the Secretary-General for his personal leadership on this issue, including limiting the number of staff with whom he travels. As we noted last year, many member states, including my own, have travel policies that reflect the modern-day travel alternatives and budgetary realities. This session

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offers this Committee another opportunity to help the UN adapt and focus its resources to where they can have the most positive impact on mandate delivery.

Mr. Chairman,

While the Committee has a relatively light agenda this session, we all know what awaits us in the second resumed session in May. While it will be a heavy workload, this Committee has an opportunity to ensure the critical reform initiatives that member states have committed to continue to develop and thrive. We cannot lose sight of that goal.

In closing, we look forward to working with all partners this session in reaching a consensus that reflects the best course of action on the matters before us.

Thank you.