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**Statement by Ambassador Chris Lu
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Closing Statement of the Fifth Committee First Resumed Session of the 76th UNGA
March 31, 2022**

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to start by thanking you for your leadership and for the professionalism of the Fifth Committee Secretariat. I also want to thank the members of the Secretariat who diligently answered our questions and guided our work. And I want to give special thanks to all the staff who have worked so tirelessly this month. Their dedication to this organization is inspiring.

I am pleased that we were able to reach consensus on a few issues in this session relating to the Joint Inspection Unit, Organizational Resilience Management, and Flexible Workplace. These are long-overdue changes.

But make no mistake, these changes are not sufficient to move this organization into the 21st century.

For over five years, we have failed to move forward on a comprehensive human resources management resolution that would have expanded professional development through mobility, improved access to internships, enhanced performance management, and strengthened the independence of the Ethics Office. These reforms would have transformed the workforce of the United Nations.

Our failure to act today is notable. Around the world, organizations, large and small, are evaluating how to manage their workforces in a post-COVID world. Meanwhile, the most important organization in the world – the United Nations – is stuck in the past.

In this session, we also failed to reach consensus on reforming the procurement policies of the UN. We failed to stabilize the financial situation of this organization. After 15 years of analysis and review, we failed to take steps to ensure the long-term viability of the health insurance program for the UN staff. And we failed to adopt an accountability resolution to ensure that the UN focuses on results and improves its implementation of mandates.

As we've been negotiating these issues over the past month, we have seen a humanitarian crisis in Ukraine as the result of Russian aggression. We've also been engaged in an important discussion on Our Common Agenda, an ambitious proposal by the Secretary General to "turbocharge" progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

But let's be clear: we cannot expect the United Nations to effectively address emergency situations like Ukraine -- or make meaningful progress on the SDGs -- unless we're also willing to "turbocharge" this organization, its workforce, and its way of doing business.

This month, we had a chance to make a bold step in that direction, and we failed.

I am new to this Committee, so I feel compelled to comment on some of the negotiation dynamics that I have observed this past month. While the vast majority of Member States considered proposals in good faith and on the merits, there is a countervailing temptation among some delegations to link and leverage numerous agenda items, to hold on to nearly complete resolutions so as to extract some advantage, and then in the final hours, make an unreasonable demand that jeopardizes the entire process.

This kind of dealmaking leads to bad policy outcomes. It unnecessarily delays our negotiations, it breeds ill will, and it reflects poorly on this venerable institution where we serve.

Today was a missed opportunity for organizational reform. Nevertheless, the United States will always be committed to strengthening the UN and upholding its founding principles. And we look forward to working with all countries who share this commitment.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.