



United Kingdom  
Mission to the  
United Nations

## **Statement by Richard Croker, Minister-Counsellor of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Mission to the United Nations at the Opening of the Main Session of the Fifth Committee of the 76<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

**Monday 4 October**

Mr Chair,

Let me first congratulate you and your bureau on your appointment. We are confident that you will guide this Committee towards a successful and timely conclusion of our programme of work. I would like to assure you of my delegation's full support in doing so.

Let me also offer our sincere thanks to the members of the United Nations Secretariat, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and the Committee on Contributions, for their continued support to this Committee. And to the Fifth Committee Secretariat and support staff for everything they do to make possible our deliberations, especially faced with the continued uncertainty arising from the COVID19 pandemic.

COVID continues to present significant challenges. Unfortunately, at the moment, we must continue to carry out the bulk of our work online. We know that this is not ideal. Yet, we have done it before, and so we are confident we can do it again where necessary.

Once again, we have before us many important issues, perhaps even more important as the United Nations seeks to respond to and build back better from the COVID pandemic.

We will consider for the third time an annual programme budget ahead of the review next year. There are discussions taking place in other parts of the General Assembly about how to deal with the absence of recommendations from the Committee on Programme and Coordination on some programmes. Decisions about programmes of work sit with the respective committees and their membership to take forward as they see appropriate. What we must not lose sight of as the Fifth Committee, is that we have a responsibility to the United Nations and the people it serves to ensure that we give the Organisation a budget in good time, so that it can carry out the

mandates given to it by Member States. That means moving ahead expeditiously with our own work. Last year, significant delays in completing our work and adopting the programme budget threatened mandate delivery. Such an approach borders on irresponsible. We do not want to see that happen again.

Mr Chair,

Alongside the budget, there are other important issues that the Committee will consider. We look forward to working with all Member States to reach an appropriate and timely agreement on the scale of assessments. It is important that we continue to refine the methodology so that it is based firmly on the principle of capacity to pay. We also look forward also to engaging on the International Civil Service Commission's latest proposals for the Common System, important questions about the UN pensions and After Service Health Insurance schemes, as well as on strengthening accountability and transparency in the Organisation and on special political missions. We will make further detailed statements on several items when they are introduced.

We remain confident that through our collective commitment, constructive engagement and genuine efforts towards consensus-based decisions we will reach a good, timely outcome.

Thank you