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**Statement by Ambassador Patrick Kennedy
Senior Advisor for UN Management and Reform
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[Check Against Delivery]

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations on your election as Chair of the Fifth Committee. My delegation looks forward to working with you and the new members of the bureau in your efforts to guide the Committee towards a successful and timely conclusion.

[If USG Pollard / ASG Ramanathan are present: I would like to thank Ms. Catherine Pollard, Under-Secretary General for DMSPC, and Mr. Chandru Ramanathan [RAMA-nay-thin], Controller.]

I would also like to thank Mr. Lionel Berridge [Beh-ridge], the Secretary of the Fifth Committee, and his dedicated and professional team.

Mr. Chairman,

We collectively face unprecedented challenges, including climate change, the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on attainment of the SDGs, the erosion of human rights, the scourge of sexual exploitation and abuse, and growing threats to international peace and security. The United Nations is indispensable to addressing these challenges. But to effectively deliver on its mandates, the organization must strive to become more efficient in its use of resources, to better measure its performance, and to be more transparent and accountable to its member states and the people it is intended to serve.

The main session includes several items with direct bearing on how well the UN achieves these goals. My delegation will comment on individual items when they are introduced, so allow me to highlight just a few overarching priorities:

This fall, we will consider the Secretary-General's 2022 annual budget proposal, including the impact of Covid-19 on the UN's workforce and spending. The United States urges budget discipline across the UN system and will closely examine the increasing demands for assessed contributions. This includes ensuring that only necessary construction is undertaken and that major projects avoid cost over-runs. The UN should also seek to contain increased spending in response to new and expanded mandates by eliminating outdated ones, consolidating duplicative areas of work, and repurposing existing resources. Increased flexibility to respond to shifting

priorities was a goal of the SG's reform agenda. We support efforts to fully realize the intended effects of these changes.

At the same time, there are areas where we must safeguard resources. Special political missions, for one, are a valuable means of upholding international peace and security. The United States supports adequate funding for these missions, and for maintaining full funding for the International Impartial and Independent Mechanism on Syria and the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar.

Mr. Chairman,

Program planning is an essential tool in ensuring that the UN's mission is focused, well-understood, and oriented towards the problems that the UN exists to address. We look forward to reviewing program plans and recall that the Fifth Committee remains the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters.

Staff entitlements and conditions of service comprise nearly two-thirds of the UN's costs. Reestablishment of a unified salary scale remains a priority for the United States, including through addressing divergent decisions by different administrative tribunals across the UN common system, enhancing transparency on compensation costs including by use of commercially available data, and reaffirming the authority of the ICSC, while improving its methodology.

Finally, the triennial negotiation on the scales of assessment will take place this year. As the largest contributor of assessed funding to the regular and peacekeeping budgets, the United States has a significant responsibility for the finances of the organization. We have a shared interest in ensuring that the methodology for assessments is equitable, data-driven and grounded in the principle of capacity-to-pay. In this respect, we are interested in discussing various existing special discounts, including those afforded to certain wealthy member states that receive discounts intended for developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, the Fifth Committee has proven its ability to adapt and to find consensus on critical matters despite the challenges presented by virtual working modalities. I am confident that we can do so again and look forward to working productively with every delegation during this session.