



**Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States**

**at the Sixth Committee**

**on the Agenda item 171:**

**"Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country"**

**United Nations**

**New York**

**22 October 2020**

**– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –**

Thank you, Mr./Madam Chair,

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

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

We thank the Committee on Relations with the Host Country for the report on its activities conducted during the reporting period. The Committee continues to be an open and efficient forum of discussion of matters arising in connection with the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement.

We express our support for the work and engagement of the Office of Legal Affairs, in its role of secretariat for the Committee, in addressing those matters, and we welcome the increased involvement of the Legal Counsel to this end. We also recognize the commitment of the United States to engage on all matters related to its status as of host country. We are well aware of the challenges the Covid-19 pandemic pose and appreciate the efforts of the mission of the United States to the UN to respond to specific requests from the diplomatic community.

Mr./Madam Chair,

The primary purpose of the 1947 Headquarters Agreement is to enable the United Nations, as well as the Permanent Missions and their staff, to fulfil their tasks in the host country. Under the Headquarters Agreement, but also under the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, the United Nations, the delegations and missions accredited to the United Nations enjoy privileges and immunities. The observance of these privileges and immunities cannot be subject to any restrictions arising from the bilateral relations of the host country. This is in the interest of the United Nations and of all its Member States.

In this context, we take note of the statement of the United Nations Legal Counsel during the 74<sup>th</sup> session where he confirmed the legal position expressed in 1988 regarding the host country's obligations with respect to the issuance of visas to persons covered by the Headquarters Agreement. According to this position, "the Headquarters Agreement makes it clear that there is an unrestricted right of persons mentioned in section 11 to enter the United States for the purpose of proceeding to the Headquarters district."

We also note that there has been no change to the long-standing position conveyed to the host country on travel restrictions, namely that there is no room for the application of measures

---

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

based on reciprocity in the treatment accorded to permanent missions accredited to the United Nations in New York.

The EU and its Member States are strong supporters of a multilateral rules-based order, with the United Nations at its heart. We are concerned that issues related to the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement may affect the work of the United Nations. As the Committee noted in its Recommendations and Conclusions in this year's Report, there are issues that remain unresolved and the Committee expects those issues to be duly settled expeditiously in a spirit of cooperation and in accordance with international law.

We therefore encourage the Committee together with the Secretariat and the representative of the host country to continue to discuss and identify solutions to those issues. We urge the Secretary-General and the Legal Counsel to continue engaging, in consultation with the Permanent Missions of the affected member states and with the assistance of the Chair of the Committee, with the authorities of the host country, at a high level, in order to resolve outstanding issues in line with the Headquarters Agreement.

Thank you, Mr./Madam Chair

\*\*\*