



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR BURHAN GAFOOR,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 168, ON  
THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS WITH THE  
HOST COUNTRY, SIXTH COMMITTEE,  
7 NOVEMBER 2022**

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1 Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. I am delighted to be here as you pursue your very important work. At the outset, my delegation thanks Ambassador Andreas Hadjichrysanthou of Cyprus for his able stewardship of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country and his presentation of the Committee's report.

2 Singapore has followed the work of the Committee closely throughout the reporting period. We have listened carefully to the issues that have been raised in the Committee, including those relating to entry visas. We have also listened carefully to the responses of the host country. In this connection, we wish to make three points.

3 First, my delegation wishes to reiterate that the United Nations is at the centre of the rules-based multilateral system, and that all aspects of the organisation and its work must necessarily be consistent with international law. This includes the relationship that the host country has with the organisation, and that the host country has with Member States. The relevant body of international law, which includes the Charter of the United Nations, the Headquarters Agreement and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, must be fully respected and implemented by all relevant parties, including the host country.

4 Second, my delegation notes the "serious concern" that the Committee has expressed in its recommendations and conclusions with respect to the non-issuance of entry visas to certain representatives of certain Member States. We note that affected representatives have included heads of delegations. We agree with the Committee that full participation of all delegations in the work of the United Nations is of importance. Indeed, that is the essence of the rules-based

multilateral system. In this regard, we note that the organisation's legal position has consistently been, as reflected in document A/C.6/43/7, that, *inter alia*, "the Headquarters Agreement makes it clear that there is an unrestricted right of the persons mentioned in section 11 [of the Headquarters Agreement] to enter the United States for the purpose of proceeding to the Headquarters district".

5 My delegation calls on the host country and other relevant countries to resolve the issues regarding entry visas and other matters raised in the Committee in accordance with international law and in a spirit of cooperation. In this regard, we support the Committee's call for the host country to review its processes of granting visas with a view to ensuring that delegations are able to fully participate in the work of the United Nations. My delegation is concerned that if the visa-related issues are not resolved, and if the participation of delegations at UN meetings is affected, the rules-based multilateral system may be gradually weakened. Such a weakening is not in the interest of any delegation, including the host country. We therefore call on the host country to assume its responsibilities in the context of the rules-based multilateral system and having regard to the collective interest in strengthening and promoting the rules-based multilateral system, which is of critical and vital importance to all Member States.

6 Third, my delegation notes with appreciation that senior-level discussions between the UN Secretariat and the host country on issues raised in the Committee have continued. The Secretariat and the host country should engage in such discussions on a regular basis, as the Secretary-General plays a central and direct role as representative of the United Nations, a party to the Headquarters Agreement, in ensuring the effective implementation of that Agreement.

7 Mr Chairman, my delegation will continue to follow the work of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country very closely. To conclude, I wish to take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation for the assistance provided by the United States Mission to the United Nations to the diplomatic community, and for all the assistance provided to my own Mission in New York.

8 Thank you very much for your attention.

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