



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

By

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Counsellor

Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations

at the Sixth Committee

on the Agenda item 161:

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

United Nations

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– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

Mr. Chair,

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

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

We wish to thank the Committee on Relations with the Host Country for the Report on its activities conducted during the reporting period (A/78/26). The Committee remains an efficient, open, and transparent forum of discussion of all issues arising in connection with the implementation of the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations.

The primary purpose of the UN Headquarters Agreement is to enable the United Nations, fully and efficiently, to discharge its responsibilities and fulfil its purposes. Delegations and missions accredited to the UN, enjoy under the Headquarters Agreement and the 1946 Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, privileges and immunities in order to function efficiently and independently. As this year's Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country indicates, once again, the observance of privileges and immunities is an issue of great importance and cannot

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

be subject to any restrictions arising from the bilateral relations of the Host Country.

During the reporting period, the Committee examined several important topics, including issuance of visas and travel restrictions by the Host Country, the security of premises of Missions and safety of their personnel. We acknowledge the progress made by the Host Country on the issuance or renewal of entry visas to representatives of certain Member States, during the reporting period. We stress the importance of the full participation of all delegations in the work of the UN, and the 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. We would further like to highlight that the Headquarters Agreement and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations apply only to the exercise of functions in connection with the United Nations.

Concerning travel regulations, we welcome the easing in 2023 of travel restrictions on two Missions as well as the modification of restrictions for Secretariat staff by increasing authorized ports-of-entry by the Host Country. We further take into consideration the long-standing position of the Committee that there is no room for the application of measures based on reciprocity in the treatment accorded to permanent missions accredited to the United Nations in New York.

We note the view of the Host Country and some Member States that the Committee has made significant progress on outstanding issues this

year, including on visas, as well as the view and concerns of some other members of the Committee and affected Member States.

Mr. Chair,

For a fifth consecutive year, the Committee engaged into extensive and difficult negotiations for the adoption of its Recommendations and Conclusions. We welcome the successful conclusion of this year's consultations and the adoption of a compromise text as a result of the constructive engagement of all the members of the Committee, despite serious challenges. We commend the Chair of the Committee for its continued and hard efforts to reach this result.

We express our support for the continued commitment and actions of the Office of Legal Affairs to find solutions to issues that have arisen under the Headquarters Agreement affecting certain Permanent Missions and personnel of the Secretariat. In this regard, we welcome the increased active engagement of the Legal Counsel with the authorities of the Host Country and concerned Permanent Missions, as well as of the Secretary General himself.

We also acknowledge the commitment of the United States, to engage on all matters related to its status as Host Country and to uphold its obligations under the Headquarters Agreement. We encourage all concerned parties to engage bilaterally with the host country in a timely manner to find solutions in an expedient manner.

Mr. Chair,

The EU and its Member States encourage the Committee, together with the Secretariat and the Host Country to continue to discuss and identify solutions on outstanding matters, in a spirit of compromise and in full regard for the interest of the United Nations. We urge the Secretary General and the Legal Counsel to continue engaging, in consultation with the Permanent Missions of the concerned countries, and the Chair of the Committee, with the authorities of the Host Country. We believe that dialogue, in a spirit of good faith and in full regard for the interest of the Organisation, on the full range of issues discussed in the Committee, remains the best avenue for finding acceptable solutions in line with international law.

Thank you.