

Statement by the U.S. Representative for United Nations Management and Reform on UN80 Workstream 2 – Mandate Review

Co-chairs, colleagues,

The United Nations can be an indispensable part of solving global challenges—but too often its efforts are dispersed across overlapping initiatives, redundant structures, and endless reporting. If we are serious about reform, the UN – we – must be willing to confront duplication head-on. A system that does too much of the same thing in too many places cannot be truly effective anywhere.

The mandate review now underway is our best chance in decades to bring clarity and discipline to how this organization works. With accurate information from the Secretariat about where functions, meetings, and reports overlap, member states can make informed choices that simplify the machinery of the UN and strengthen its results. Done well, this review can reduce fragmentation, focus attention on priorities, and ultimately make the UN's work more coherent and impactful.

We welcome the Secretary-General's proposals as an important start, and we encourage him to go further. The UN80 process should leave behind a leaner organization that directs resources toward outcomes, not bureaucracy. The next Secretary-General's vision for reform will be an essential test of leadership—one that demonstrates a commitment to efficiency, accountability, and measurable impact.

A more integrated, streamlined approach—guided by results on the ground rather than the number of entities engaged—would deliver stronger support to countries and to their people. The measure of success must be progress achieved, not the proliferation of institutions, hours of meetings, or pages of reports dedicated to a given issue. This is true of the development system, of the human rights pillar, and of the peace and security architecture.

Mandates, too, must be seen through the lens of purpose. They are created to solve problems, not to live forever. When a mandate has achieved its goal, it should conclude. That is not failure—it is success. And, for every new mandate decided, at least ten should be eliminated.

To realize this vision, the Secretariat and Member States must work together with ambition and resolve. Reform is not an end in itself; it is a means to make the United Nations credible, capable, and trusted once again.