

**Statement
on behalf of the European Union
by**

**H.E. Mr. Martin Palouš
Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic
to the United Nations**

**on
The Revitalization of the General Assembly**

**at the First Meeting of the Ad-hoc Working Group
on the Revitalization of the General Assembly
New York, April 15, 2009**

(Check Against Delivery)

Distinguished Co-chairs,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Montenegro, the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

The EU wishes to thank you for convening the first meeting of the ad hoc working group on the revitalization of the General Assembly in this session. It welcomes your recent appointment by the President of the General Assembly communicated to the Member State in his letter of March 20. The EU would like to assure you of our full support and, at the same time, would like to express the hope that we can build on what has been done during the sixty-second session and achieve substantive progress during this sixty-third session. In this context, the EU expresses its appreciation to the two previous Co-chairs, Ambassador Eladio Loizaga, Permanent Representative of Paraguay and Ambassador Andrzej Towpik, Permanent Representative of Poland, for their hard work.

The EU continues to be committed to the revitalization of the General Assembly and supports efforts aimed at strengthening its role and authority, in line with the UN Charter and other relevant documents. The revitalization of the GA is an integral part of the reform efforts of the UN and constitutes a priority of the EU. As it is well known, the EU supports effective multilateralism and the central role of the UN in it.

The EU strongly believes that the revitalization of the GA can be ensured only when it engages in issues of genuine concern to all Member State and to the international community as a whole. Doing so, it will live up to its role of one of the principal organs of the UN. At the same time, a number of practical steps could be undertaken that would make the proceedings of the GA more effective and efficient. At this stage, we believe, concrete initiatives at the practical level are *condition sine qua non* for an overhaul of the GA's performance.

However, the EU is of the opinion that the point of departure should be full implementation of the existing resolutions. In this regard we welcomed the elaboration of an inventory chart of all relevant provisions on revitalization organized around three general clusters last year that served as a useful tool during our discussions. Past experience has proven that assessing the situation and examining gaps in implementation could help to identify the reasons for shortcomings and, subsequently, practical proposals on how to make the proceeding more effective. The EU very much hopes that within the next weeks and months we would be able to discuss practical ideas and suggestions in this regard. We believe that useful means in this regard could be thematic debates on specific subjects.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

Let me now touch upon on some issues that have been high on the agenda of the ad hoc working group:

- As we have stated earlier, the full implementation of existing resolutions on revitalization is of crucial importance. In this regard, the EU believes that the SG should, in his annual report, provide information on mandates adopted by the GA throughout the year including the state of their implementation;
- One of the issues, where tangible progress could and should be made, is the documents management and improvement of the voting system that should be better organized by introducing modern technologies while ensuring that all Member State have access to them.
- At the same time the EU insists that all relevant documents of the UN system be distributed in time in all official languages. Their late issuance affects negatively the work of the missions of Member State, namely on important issues.
- With regard to the issue of the process of selection of the Secretary General, that has also been under examination, the EU attaches great importance to the full application of the relevant provisions of the UN Charter and respective resolutions of the General Assembly.

Distinguished Co-chairs,

The issue of the revitalization of the GA has already been on the agenda for years. Most of the issues are well known, many important aspects have emerged from the past debates that have been identified as commonly shared. The EU is ready to engage actively in further dialogue in a constructive spirit in order to arrive at the improvement of the functioning of the GA.

Thank you.