

Opening of the First Resumed Session of the Fifth Committee

Thank you Mr Chair,

At your request, I will not make the usual long list of thank yous, but would like to congratulate Guyana for assuming the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China and Mr Abdallah Bachar Bong on your appointment as Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. We trust that under your leadership we will receive the high quality, technical advice we need from the Advisory Committee to inform our discussions.

Mr Chair, The United Kingdom has left the European Union. We will therefore be negotiating from now on in a national capacity. We will remain an active member of this Committee and one of the strongest proponents of a strengthened, effective and efficient United Nations. 2020 is the UN's 75th anniversary. We want a United Nations that can respond effectively and agilely to challenges and deliver for the people it serves over the next 75 years. We have an opportunity to take decisions this session that will equip the United Nations in that regard.

The United Nations' success depends on its people – its most valuable asset. It needs therefore to invest in its people, including through effective performance management and developing the capabilities and knowledge they need to deliver – and to be an inclusive workplace where all staff feel valued, safe and motivated. The

United Nations' workforce should truly represent and understand the people it serves. That means looking beyond a definition of diversity based simply on nationality and gender. We hope the Committee will give strong support to the Secretariat's efforts to improve its human resources management policies and practices.

A strengthened culture of accountability throughout the Secretariat is central to a more effective United Nations. We welcome therefore the operationalisation of the Business Transformation and Accountability Unit.

Mr Chair, United Nations Police play a crucial role within UN missions, and complement the work of military and civilian personnel, including on Protection of Civilians. We look forward to discussing the Secretariat's review. It is crucial that we address issues around seconded personnel this session, to avoid putting at risk their important work. We want to see adequate and cost-effective resourcing for the UNAMID Peacekeeping mission in Darfur.

Finally Mr Chair, A cornerstone of this Committee is that on issues which fall within its purview we make sincere efforts within the Committee to strive for the broadest possible consensus. Sadly, in January we saw this principle undermined on ACABQ enlargement, despite the UK and others'

commitment to engage in good faith in the Fifth Committee. There is no justification for such actions, which served simply to erode trust within this Committee. We hope to see a sincere effort to rebuild that trust.

Thank you