

United Nations General Assembly
Seventy-second Session

Fifth Committee
General Debate

5 October 2017

Organization of Work

Statement by H.E. Ms. May-Elin Stener
Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative, Norway

I heartily welcome Your Excellency Mr. Tommo Month as chair of the 72. Session of the Fifth Committee.

Mr. Chair

Norway hopes that the 72. General Assembly will turn out to be a session for change. The Secretary-General has recently presented his bold, ambitious and broad agenda on reform of the UN. In the coming year, the role of the Fifth Committee will be key in supporting changes and enabling new ways of working.

Norway is a long-standing campaigner for UN reform. We see reform as a way to make better use of available resources in delivering on the organization's mandates.

(Check against delivery)

Changes often hurt, but they are necessary to achieve a more effective, flexible, stronger and more responsive organization. We plea to all groups and member states to embark on the challenging issues of change with an open mind and in a consensual spirit.

We are looking forward to discuss the Secretary-General's proposal on reform of the budget process. Norway supports a simplified, integrated and transparent budget proposal as well as a shorter budget circle. In our view, this is critical to uphold the General Assembly's real authority and oversight of the organization's budget.

Mr. Chair

We encourage all member states to facilitate the Secretary-General's agenda for change by giving him the (action) space he needs to carry out necessary reforms. Norway also encourages the Secretary-General to make full use of his administrative authority to advance reform.

We, as Member States, need to ensure that adequate resources are available to cover the mandates we have given, including in the Human Rights Council. The UN also has a particular responsibility to secure sufficient funding for the UN organization for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA.

For us, a core value of the Fifth Committee is to work tirelessly towards consensus also in matters where we start far apart. Unfortunately, the Committee is carrying along a few issues that has reached an impasse.

Norway urges our fellow committee members to let this be the session we reach an agreement on the restructuring of the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights for a more decentralized organization, positioned to better assist member states and regions.

(Check against delivery)

Norway still holds the opinion that the Secretariat's financing of its share of the Resident Coordinator system is a matter of principle.

This principle also stands for the 2018-2019 budget, even in view of a reform of the development system, and maybe even more so now.

Finally, Mr. Chair

Norway is looking forward to the budget proposals for the new peace operations in Haiti and Colombia. These missions are examples of how the UN can work effectively, by being flexible and adapting its response to support the host country to sustain peace and prosperity obtained with great efforts.

Thank you.