Mr. Chairman,

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

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland* and Serbia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

Allow us firstly to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election to this important position. Under your leadership we are confident that we will conclude successfully and efficiently the work of this committee. The meeting today is a testimony of your engagement in ensuring that the best working methods and practices are observed under your tenure and would like to thank you for taking the initiative to hold this timely discussion.

Last December, at the closing session of the 2nd Committee, the EU already welcomed the reflection that was initiated by previous Bureaux and we are glad to see now that this issue is

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
* Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.
placed early on in our agenda. The 2nd Committee is an important universal forum for discussion of economic, social and environmental issues and we are eager to consider ways to better organize its work, and thus make it more relevant, effective and efficient.

Firstly, we are ready to support measures that could have an immediate positive impact on our work during the current session. Even what might seem limited changes can make an important difference in terms of improving the effectiveness of our work. We are ready to suggest a few considerations:

- We believe that full compliance with existing rules and an adequate follow-up of recommendations made by the General Assembly, most notably in its resolutions on the revitalization of its work, would already constitute an important step forward. We need a Bureau stronger in ensuring that the committee implements these recommendations.

- Our collective experience in past sessions has proved that missing deadlines, both to introduce resolutions and to finalize negotiations, can seriously hinder our work. In this the role of the Bureau and its facilitators are key in giving a necessary sense of urgency and allow delegations to work efficiently.

- We would also support a Bureau that gives clear guidelines to facilitators on what to do if negotiations are not on schedule. Resolutions could be transmitted to the next session or made procedural if they are not agreed on time.

- In order to allow for a more efficient use of our time, the EU welcomes the steps previously taken to limit the number of special events. In the same vein, we appreciate the contribution that these events bring to our committee’s deliberations.

Secondly, we believe that the quality of our work would improve with more focused proposals. Too often our committee discusses texts that contain many repetitions of previously agreed paragraphs, especially in their preambular section. We wish to recall the recommendations of the general committee that calls for shorter resolutions, in particular as regards the preambular parts and more focused-action oriented operative paragraphs.

Thirdly, we regret that existing General Assembly mandates to rationalize the Committee’s agenda, such as provisions that allow for the biennialisation, triennialisation, clustering and elimination of items, have not been implemented. On the contrary, in the past years, there has been a tendency from delegations to table new draft proposals and create new agenda items, without phasing out any of the old ones. This tendency makes even more pressing the need to rationalize the agenda and improve our working methods.

In the past, we managed to agree collectively to merge or combine a few resolutions. We should pursue this effort more systematically in order to strengthen the policy coherence of the
work of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} committee. In addition to concerns related to policy coherence, the multiplication of resolutions on similar topics also results in practical difficulties for the Bureau and the Secretariat to answer the multiple room-booking requests. We see a stronger role for the Bureau to protect the committee against such proliferation and inconsistency of debates.

Fourthly, we welcome the practice of previous sessions that promoted a procedural nature for resolutions related to items on the agenda upcoming United Nations conferences. We hope that this practice will be continued.

Lastly, this 2\textsuperscript{nd} committee session comes in the aftermath of the review on strengthening the Economic and Social Council. We should not miss this opportunity to continue the good work started under that process seeking to ensure better division of labour and coherence of debates between our committee and those of the Council. Much too often parallel processes and repetition of discussions have created duplications and worked against an efficient management of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Committee's time. We invite the 2\textsuperscript{nd} committee Bureau and that of ECOSOC to start work towards identifying agenda items and debates for which duplication of efforts needs to be avoided and to recommend ways on how best to achieve this. We wish to recall in this regard the relevant provisions of resolution of GA resolution 68/1.

Mr. Chairman,

The EU stands ready to continue working on these issues in the weeks to come, under your leadership and in cooperation with all members of the Committee.

We would like to call on the Bureau to provide for opportunities to continue this discussion during the month of October with the aim of adopting a consensual and positive decision of the second committee under the agenda item devoted to the revitalization of the work of the GA.

We find that the reflections paper that the Bureau of the 67\textsuperscript{th} session has prepared represents a very good starting point for such more concrete steps and look forward to further opportunities to comment on this paper more in detail.

I thank you.