Mr. President,

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

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

I would like to thank the previous Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly, the Permanent Representatives of Slovakia and Thailand for the excellent work done. I would also like to thank the current President of the General Assembly for his appointment of the Permanent Representatives of Croatia and Namibia, to serve as Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group. We wish them success and express our support.

Mr. President,

The European Union and its Member States are strongly attached to effective multilateralism with the United Nations at its core. Strengthening of the UN, based on effective and sustainable

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* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
funding - in line with real capacity to pay, and increasing the efficiency of its functioning - on which there is scope to do more, remain our top priorities. In this context, we continue to be committed to revitalization and to supporting efforts aimed at strengthening the role and authority of the GA, in line with the UN Charter and relevant resolutions. Indeed, we wish that the GA, as the only intergovernmental body with universal membership and given its broad mandate with far-reaching responsibilities, is able to take up the challenge of conciliating legitimacy and efficiency in a context of emerging global challenges. At the same time, we wish to reiterate that it is imperative that concrete steps are taken, at all levels, to spend more wisely, to deliver in new ways, and to ensure that the Organisation lives within the agreed budget levels. This applies to all activities of the UN, from peacekeeping, to construction, to the regular budget. An unceasing effort to find new and creative ways to work is essential to achieve more effective delivery of mandates and sustainable use of resources.

We believe that revitalization can be ensured only when the GA takes relevant action on issues of common concern to the international community and produces results. By doing so, it lives up to its role as one of the principal organs of the UN.

The EU and its Member States welcome the adoption of resolution 68/307 with important provisions such as the earlier election of the non-permanent members of the Security Council and the members of the Economic and Social Council. We welcome the reiteration of the interim arrangement on the rotation pattern of the chairs of the Main Committees adopted in General Assembly decision 68/505, in connection with guidelines for future arrangements in the annex of resolution 68/307. Also, we would like to stress the importance of the implementation of all resolutions of the General Assembly, including on the revitalization of its work, and note its impact on the authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly. Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is clearly interlinked with the overall reform of the United Nations.

The GA revitalization process has already led to positive developments. Such as, for example, the thematic debates which facilitate more in-depth discussions on current issues of critical importance to the international community. The EU and its Member States especially value the interactive character of thematic debates allowing closer engagement of the General Assembly with other stakeholders, international and regional organizations and groups outside the United Nations system. We look forward to the continuation of this practice and invite the President of the General Assembly to consult with Member States on the possibilities, where appropriate, in the spirit of partnerships engaging a broad range of stakeholders and achieving result-oriented outcomes in such debates. We also recognize the importance of the interaction between the GA and international or regional fora and organizations dealing with global matters of concern to the international community and the benefits to be drawn from such interaction.

We appreciate the continued practice of holding periodic informal briefings by the Secretary-General on his priorities, travels and most recent activities, including his participation in international meetings and events organized outside the United Nations, and encourage him to continue with this practice.
As to the relationship of the General Assembly to other principal organs of the UN, the EU and its Member States believe that improving transparency and cooperation remain important goals. The General Assembly should benefit from information about the meetings between the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Security Council, ECOSOC, as well as with the Chairs of subsidiary bodies. Periodic briefings by the President of the General Assembly on his recent activities, including official travels continue to be an appreciated practice and are valuable source of information.

On the issue of working methods, we wish to recall the need to consider and take steps towards the rationalization of the agenda of the General Assembly and of the ECOSOC with a view to eliminating duplication and overlap and promoting complementarity in the consideration and negotiation of similar and related issues. In this context, it is important to point out General Assembly resolution 68/1. We are of the opinion that it would be appropriate to examine further biennialization, triennialization of items, as well as their clustering or elimination, including through the introduction of a sunset clause, with the clear consent of the sponsoring State or States. In this regard, leadership of the Chairs and the bureaus of the Main Committees is of particular importance. We look forward to the briefings of the Chairs of the Main Committees on the working methods to the Ad Hoc Working Group. Although each Main Committee has its own authority over the rules of procedure, we believe that streamlining and standardizing some would lead to more efficient work of the Committees. We would like to stress as well the importance of making full use of e-services provided by the Secretariat. The widespread use by Main Committees and Member States alike of such e-services, including the PaperSmart portal, has had a positive impact on the work of the General Assembly during its main session, while it has also saved considerable amount of resources, energy and paper. We have to continue to work in that direction.

We look forward to an active role of the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly, including in his capacity of the Chair of the General Committee, and the Chairs of the Main Committees, in consultation with Member States, to enhance the coordination of the scheduling of high level meetings with the view to optimizing their number and distribution throughout the year while bearing in mind the need to preserve the integrity of the General Debate. We believe that the General Committee could play a useful role in this process.

Finally, let me emphasize the important role the Ad Hoc Working Group on the revitalization of the work of General Assembly plays. I would like to assure you that the EU and its Member States will continue to engage in a constructive manner in the proceedings of the Ad Hoc Working Group. We look forward to receiving a work plan soon.

I thank you.