



# General Assembly

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Sixty-sixth session  
Agenda item 121

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 September 2012

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/66/891)]

### 66/294. Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

*The General Assembly,*

*Reaffirming* its previous resolutions relating to the revitalization of its work, including resolutions 46/77 of 12 December 1991, 47/233 of 17 August 1993, 48/264 of 29 July 1994, 51/241 of 31 July 1997, 52/163 of 15 December 1997, 55/14 of 3 November 2000, 55/285 of 7 September 2001, 56/509 of 8 July 2002, 57/300 of 20 December 2002, 57/301 of 13 March 2003, 58/126 of 19 December 2003, 58/316 of 1 July 2004, 59/313 of 12 September 2005, 60/286 of 8 September 2006, 61/292 of 2 August 2007, 62/276 of 15 September 2008, 63/309 of 14 September 2009, 64/301 of 13 September 2010 and 65/315 of 12 September 2011,

*Stressing* the importance of the implementation of resolutions of the General Assembly on the revitalization of its work, and noting with concern their lack of implementation and impact on the authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the Assembly,

*Recognizing* the role of the General Assembly in addressing issues of peace and security, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,

*Reaffirming* the role and authority of the General Assembly on global matters of concern to the international community, including global governance, as set out in the Charter,

*Welcoming* the decision of the President of the General Assembly to designate “United Nations reform and revitalization” as one of the pillars of his presidency during the sixty-sixth session,

*Welcoming also* the decision of the President of the General Assembly to designate “The role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means” as the theme of the general debate at the sixty-sixth session,

*Recognizing* the need to further enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly,

*Underlining* the need for full implementation of the resolutions establishing language arrangements for the official languages of the United Nations and the



working languages of the Secretariat, as a basis for an effective, efficient and inclusive General Assembly,

*Reaffirming* the importance for the Secretariat to redouble its efforts for the full implementation of section VIII of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly,

*Noting* the important role and the activities of the Office of the President of the General Assembly,

*Reiterating* that the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is a critical component of the overall reform of the United Nations,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly;<sup>1</sup>

2. *Decides* to establish, at its sixty-seventh session, an ad hoc working group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, open to all Member States:

(a) To identify further ways to enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the Assembly, inter alia, by building on the progress achieved in past sessions as well as on previous resolutions, including evaluating the status of their implementation;

(b) To submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-seventh session;

3. *Also decides* that the Ad Hoc Working Group shall continue its review of the inventory of General Assembly resolutions on revitalization annexed to the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group submitted at the sixty-third session of the Assembly,<sup>2</sup> and, as a result, issue an updated version of the inventory to be attached to the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group at the sixty-seventh session, and also requests the Secretary-General to submit an update on the provisions of the Assembly resolutions on revitalization addressed to the Secretariat for implementation that have not been implemented, with an indication of the constraints and reasons behind any lack of implementation, for further consideration by the Ad Hoc Working Group at the sixty-seventh session;

#### **Role and authority of the General Assembly**

4. *Reaffirms* the role and authority of the General Assembly, including on questions relating to international peace and security, in accordance with Articles 10 to 14 and 35 of the Charter of the United Nations, where appropriate, using the procedures set forth in rules 7 to 10 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, which enable swift and urgent action by the Assembly, bearing in mind that the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter;

5. *Takes note* of recent developments in the General Assembly with regard to responses to emerging challenges and current events of common concern to the international community, and stresses the need for the Assembly to further actively undertake its role regarding those challenges and events and respond effectively;

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<sup>1</sup> A/66/891.

<sup>2</sup> A/63/959.

6. *Welcomes* the initiative taken by the President of the General Assembly for the Assembly at its sixty-sixth session to identify the peaceful settlement of disputes as one of the main areas of focus and select “The role of mediation in the settlement of disputes by peaceful means” as the main theme for the session;

7. *Also welcomes* the holding of thematic debates on current issues of critical importance to the international community and their interactive inclusive character, and invites the President of the General Assembly to continue this practice and to consult with Member States on the possibilities for achieving, where appropriate, results-oriented outcomes in such debates;

8. *Recognizes* the importance and benefit of continuing interaction between the General Assembly and international or regional forums and organizations dealing with global matters of concern to the international community in the perspective of the revitalization of the work of the Assembly;

9. *Welcomes* 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 encourages him to continue with this practice;

10. *Stresses* the importance of ensuring increased cooperation, coordination and exchange of information among the principal organs, and welcomes the holding of regular meetings of the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session with the Secretary-General and the Presidents of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, as well as with the Chairs of subsidiary bodies, and briefings to Member States on the outcomes of these meetings on a regular basis, and encourages the continuation of such practice;

11. *Welcomes* the improvements that have been made in the quality of the annual reports of the Security Council to the General Assembly, encourages the Council to make further improvements as necessary, and takes note of the holding of informal meetings of the President of the Council with all Member States before the preparation of the report;

12. *Notes* that, in accordance with Article 15 and Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter, the Security Council shall submit to the General Assembly an annual report and, when necessary, special reports for its consideration;

13. *Recognizes* that non-implementation of various General Assembly resolutions, in particular those adopted by consensus, may diminish the role and authority of the Assembly, and underlines the important role and responsibility of Member States in their implementation;

14. *Urges* the Secretariat to continue its efforts to raise the visibility of the General Assembly, reaffirms paragraph 15 of resolution 60/286, and decides that the announcements about the work of the principal organs of the United Nations should appear in the *Journal of the United Nations* in the order stipulated in Article 7 of the Charter;

15. *Also urges* the Secretariat to disseminate, in addition to the current practice of e-mail, important official letters and notifications to all Permanent Missions through fax messages;

### **Working methods**

16. *Welcomes* the briefings by the Chairs of the Main Committees who briefed the Ad Hoc Working Group on the discussions on working methods held in their respective Committees during the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly;

17. *Also welcomes* the convening by the President of the General Assembly at the sixty-sixth session of a brainstorming session on the working methods of the Fifth Committee;

18. *Requests* that the General Assembly and its Main Committees, at the sixty-seventh session, in consultation with Member States, continue consideration of and make proposals for the further biennialization, triennialization, clustering and elimination of items on the agenda of the Assembly, taking into account the relevant recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group, including through the introduction of a sunset clause, with the clear consent of the sponsoring State or States;

19. *Encourages* each Main Committee to further discuss its working methods at the sixty-seventh session, and invites the Chairs of the Main Committees, at the sixty-seventh session, to brief the Ad Hoc Working Group, as appropriate, on the discussions on the working methods;

20. *Notes with appreciation* that the high-level meetings held at the United Nations give more visibility to very important topics, while mindful of the need to facilitate full participation of all Member States and to preserve the integrity of the general debate in September, and reiterates its invitation to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the Chairs of the Main Committees, in consultation with Member States, to enhance the coordination of the scheduling of high-level meetings with a view to optimizing the number and distribution of such events;

21. *Encourages* Member States, United Nations bodies and the Secretariat to continue to consult on the consolidation of documentation in order to avoid duplication of work, to exercise the fullest possible discipline in striving for concise resolutions, reports and other documentation, inter alia, by referring to previous documents rather than repeating actual content, and to focus on key themes, and calls upon them to observe existing submission deadlines so as to allow for the timely processing of documents to be examined by intergovernmental bodies;

22. *Recalls* its resolution 66/81 of 9 December 2011, in which it noted the efforts of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat to continue to publicize the work and decisions of the General Assembly and requested the Department to continue to enhance its working relationship with the Office of the President of the General Assembly, and stresses the importance of further enhancing public and media awareness of the work and decisions of the Assembly, including through their timely issuance and distribution in all official languages;

23. *Encourages* Member States to make full use of the e-services provided by the Secretariat, taking into account the cost savings and the reduced environmental impact that may accrue from this exercise, in order to improve the quality and distribution of documents;

24. *Decides* that the Ad Hoc Working Group shall remain apprised of options for more time-effective, efficient and secure balloting, reiterating the need to ascertain the credibility, reliability and confidentiality of the balloting process, and requests the Secretariat to submit an update in case of any new technological

developments, on the understanding that the adoption of any new balloting system in the future will require a decision of the plenary of the General Assembly;

#### **Selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and other executive heads**

25. *Reaffirms its commitment* to continue, in the Ad Hoc Working Group, in accordance with the provisions of Article 97 of the Charter, its consideration of the revitalization of the role of the General Assembly in the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General, and calls for the full implementation of all relevant resolutions, including resolutions 11 (I) of 24 January 1946, 51/241, 60/286, in particular paragraphs 17 to 22 of the annex thereto, and 64/301;

26. *Recognizes* that the process of selecting and appointing the Secretary-General differs from the process used with regard to other executive heads in the United Nations system, given the role of the Security Council in accordance with Article 97 of the Charter, and re-emphasizes the need for the process of selection of the Secretary-General to be transparent and inclusive of all Member States;

27. *Takes note* of the recommendation contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the selection and conditions of service of executive heads in the United Nations system organizations proposing that the General Assembly conduct hearings or meetings with candidates running for the post of Secretary-General of the United Nations;<sup>3</sup>

#### **Strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly**

28. *Welcomes* the views expressed by the President of the General Assembly and the Office of the President of the General Assembly to the Ad Hoc Working Group on the strengthening of the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the Assembly and its relationship with the Secretariat;

29. *Also welcomes* the periodic briefings by the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session to Member States on his recent activities, including official travels, and encourages the continuation of such practice;

30. *Further welcomes* the measures already undertaken to strengthen the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly;

31. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit, in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015, proposals to review the budget allocation to the Office of the President of the General Assembly in accordance with existing procedures;

32. *Notes* that the activities of the President of the General Assembly have increased markedly in recent years, recalls provisions regarding support for the Office of the President of the Assembly in previous resolutions, expresses continued interest in seeking ways to further support the Office, in accordance with existing procedures, in particular rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, and in this context looks forward to the submission by the Secretary-General of his proposals pursuant to paragraph 32 of resolution 66/246 of 24 December 2011;

33. *Underlines* the importance of the contributions of Member States to the Trust Fund in support of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, notes

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<sup>3</sup> See A/65/71.

in this regard that no contributions were made to the Fund during the sixty-sixth session of the Assembly, and invites Member States to consider contributing to the Fund;

34. *Requests* the Secretary-General, at the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, to report on the funding and staffing of the Office of the President of the Assembly, including on any technical, logistical, protocol-related or financial questions;

35. *Notes* the concerns raised on the protocol arrangements in place for the President of the General Assembly, and requests the Secretary-General to further endeavour to ensure, within agreed resources, that the President is provided with proper protocol and security services and adequate office space, with a view to enabling the President to carry out his or her functions in a manner commensurate with the dignity and stature of the Office;

36. *Emphasizes* the need to ensure, within agreed resources, that the Office of the President of the General Assembly is allocated dedicated staff within the Secretariat with responsibility for coordinating the transition between Presidents, managing interactions between the President of the Assembly and the Secretary-General and the retention of institutional memory, and requests the outgoing Presidents of the Assembly to brief their successors on the lessons learned and best practices.

*130th plenary meeting  
17 September 2012*