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Strengthening of the United Nations system

Letter dated 22 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention a statement of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 128.

(Signed) Vassily Nebenzia



Annex to the letter dated 22 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Statement of the State Duma on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations

The deputies of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation consistently support measures to strengthen the coordinating role of the United Nations in international affairs and to ensure equitable cooperation among States within this universal Organization. This topic is particularly relevant in the context of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, given that some of the fundamental principles guiding the work of the United Nations are being dismissed as obsolete or are misinterpreted, while the historical truth and memory of the events of the Second World War have become the targets of criminal revisionism.

Hiding behind seemingly “noble” slogans regarding the need for a more effective United Nations and promoting initiatives for its reform, a number of Western countries, led by the United States of America, often seek to reshape this unique Organization to serve their own vested interests. The assertions increasingly repeated by those countries regarding the “sinister” activities of Russia, China and other geopolitical rivals in the United Nations are nothing but a means of exerting further pressure on the Organization and a clear attempt to bring to fruition a “rules-based world order” aimed at undermining and revising the existing international legal framework.

The deputies of the State Duma believe that the policy currently pursued by Washington in respect of the United Nations is yet another example of the destructive behaviour of the United States on the international stage, as it exerts pressure on States not in its favour and unilaterally imposes illegitimate extraterritorial sanctions against them. All of this runs counter to the principle of cooperation that underpins the work of the United Nations.

Attempts to discredit the Russian Federation and other members of the Security Council, to limit their representation in the United Nations and to divide countries into “bad” and “good” countries according to how well they serve American interests are counterproductive and contravene the foundations and principles of the work of the United Nations. These destructive actions are entirely in keeping with the United States policy of undermining multilateral cooperation within the United Nations.

Recalling General Assembly resolution [153 \(II\)](#) of 1947, the State Duma rejects the overrepresentation of Western countries in leading positions in the United Nations Secretariat, which has been achieved through the appointment of citizens of the United States and of States loyal to Washington.

The deputies of the State Duma consider any interference with the immunities and privileges of the United Nations and the Permanent Missions to the United Nations, including with their property, to be unacceptable and call upon the United States to strictly observe the agreement between the United Nations and the Government of the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations of 1947 and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 1946. Actions contrary to those international agreements, for example, the failure by the United States to grant visas to members of the delegations of a number

of countries, including Russia, and the seizure of premises belonging to the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, must be stopped.

The deputies of the State Duma believe in the central coordinating role of the United Nations in international relations and advocate strict adherence to the goals of the United Nations and the principles of international law based on the Charter of the United Nations, including the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in their internal affairs, equal rights and self-determination of peoples, the resolution of international disputes by peaceful means and the fulfilment of international obligations in good faith.

The State Duma considers that the United Nations must be strengthened as an effective multilateral mechanism for fostering mutually respectful cooperation in ensuring human rights on the basis of international law. Attempts to politicize the human rights agenda, impose unilateral approaches and issue ultimatums under the pretext of protecting human rights and moral values are unacceptable.

The deputies of the State Duma greatly appreciate the extensive efforts to improve the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery and condemn any attempts to revise or undermine it.

The State Duma believes in the key and coordinating role of the World Health Organization (WHO) in combating the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. In these times, WHO has served as the cornerstone of the global public health response and the foundation for multilateral cooperation in this field. The deputies of the State Duma therefore consider the decision of the United States to withdraw from WHO and its attempts to blame it and the People's Republic of China for the spread of COVID-19 to be counterproductive, and believe the accusations of passivity and non-transparency against WHO to be groundless.

The deputies of the State Duma urge steadfast commitment to finding collective consensus-based solutions within the United Nations and to preserving an indispensable system for the maintenance of international peace and security based on the Charter and the many years of experience of the Organization which will continue to play a central role in the global architecture of the twenty-first century.

V. V. Volodin

Chair of the State Duma of the
Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation