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Agenda item 161

Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 7 December 2023

[on the report of the Sixth Committee ([A/78/447](#), para. 8)]

78/116. Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country,¹

Recalling Article 105 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations,² the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations,³ the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations⁴ and the responsibilities of the host country,

Recalling also that, in accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution [2819 \(XXVI\)](#) of 15 December 1971, the Committee should consider, and advise the host country on, issues arising in connection with the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement, and noting that bringing issues to the attention of the host country may in some cases help to have them be expeditiously resolved,

Recognizing that effective measures should continue to be taken by the competent authorities of the host country, in particular to prevent any acts violating the security of missions and the safety of their personnel,

Recognizing also that the Headquarters Agreement provides that it shall be construed in the light of its primary purpose to enable the United Nations at its headquarters in the United States, fully and efficiently, to discharge its responsibilities and fulfil its purposes,

Emphasizing that the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations does not distinguish between permanent and visiting representatives,

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-eighth Session, Supplement No. 26* ([A/78/26](#)).

² Resolution [22 A \(I\)](#).

³ See resolution [169 \(II\)](#).

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 500, No. 7310.



1. *Endorses* the recommendations and conclusions of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country contained in paragraph 146 of its report;

2. *Considers* that the maintenance of appropriate conditions for ensuring normal functioning of the delegations and the missions accredited to the United Nations and the observance of their privileges and immunities, which cannot be subject to any restrictions arising from the bilateral relations of the host country, are in the interest of the United Nations and all Member States, notes the efforts made by the host country to this end and also notes with concern that numerous issues raised before the Committee continue to remain unresolved, takes seriously concerns raised by permanent missions regarding the normal performance of their functions, notes that the Committee expresses its readiness to effectively address them and expects that all issues raised at its meetings that remain unresolved will be duly settled expeditiously, in a spirit of cooperation and in accordance with international law, notes that the Committee encourages Member States to bring issues to the attention of the host country and the Committee as soon as they occur, requests the host country to continue to solve, preferably through negotiations, problems that might arise and to take all appropriate steps to protect the premises of missions against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any disturbance of the peace of missions or impairment of their dignity, and urges the host country to continue to take appropriate action, such as the training of police, security, customs and border control officers, with a view to maintaining respect for diplomatic privileges and immunities, and to continue efforts to ensure that diplomats transiting to and from United Nations Headquarters are treated respectfully, and, if violations occur, to ensure that such cases are properly investigated and remedied, in accordance with applicable law, and in this regard that the Committee notes the serious concerns raised by a Member State expressing the inappropriate treatment and screening of certain of its high-ranking officials by host country Customs and Border Protection officers and requests the host country to carefully investigate these concerns and take the necessary preventive and remedial action, as appropriate;

3. *Recalls* the privileges and immunities applicable to the premises of the permanent missions to the United Nations enjoyed under international law, in particular the instruments listed in paragraph 146 (a) of the report of the Committee, and the obligations of the host country to observe such privileges and immunities, takes note of the alleged ongoing violations thereof by the host country and of the repeated concerns expressed thereon, urges the host country to remove without delay any restrictions applied to the premises of a Permanent Mission inconsistent with those privileges and immunities, and in that regard to ensure respect for such privileges and immunities, expresses concern regarding the lack of resolution of these matters, remains seized of these matters, and anticipates that they shall be duly addressed in a spirit of cooperation and in accordance with international law;

4. *Also recalls* that, prior to the institution by the host country of any proceedings that require any person referred to in article IV, section 11, of the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, including representatives of a Member State, to leave the host country, article IV, section 13 (b) (1) of the Headquarters Agreement, inter alia, requires the host country to consult with the Member State, the Secretary-General or other principal executive officer, as appropriate, and considers that, given the seriousness of any such measure being exercised by the host country, the consultation should be meaningful;

5. *Notes* the problems experienced by some permanent missions to the United Nations in connection with the implementation of the Parking Programme for Diplomatic Vehicles,⁵ and notes that the Committee shall remain seized of the matter,

⁵ A/AC.154/355, annex.

with a view to continuing to maintain the proper implementation of the Parking Programme in a manner that is fair, non-discriminatory, effective and therefore consistent with international law;

6. *Strongly urges* the host country to remove all travel restrictions imposed by it on staff of certain missions and staff members of the Secretariat of certain nationalities, and, recalling privileges and immunities enjoyed by the representatives of Member States and staff members of the Secretariat under applicable international law, notes the easing in 2023 of travel restrictions on two Missions as well as the modification of restrictions for Secretariat staff by increasing authorized ports of entry and recalls the lifting in 2021 of the more stringent travel restrictions applicable to one Mission, while remaining concerned about the more stringent travel restrictions applied to a Mission in 2021 and additional restrictions applied to the same Mission in late 2022 and extremely narrow implementation thereof, and the statements of affected delegations that travel restrictions impede their ability to carry out their functions and negatively impact their staff and families, and notes the positions of affected States, as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General, of the host country and of the Legal Counsel, as set out in document [A/AC.154/415](#), according to which, inter alia, “there is no room for the application of measures based on reciprocity in the treatment accorded to permanent missions accredited to the United Nations in New York”;

7. *Recalls* article IV of the Headquarters Agreement, notes the concerns expressed by some delegations concerning the denial and delay of entry visas to representatives of Member States, and further notes a relative decrease in the percentage of visas not issued and at the same time that the Committee remains seized of a range of visa issues that should be expeditiously resolved in a spirit of cooperation and in accordance with international law, including the Headquarters Agreement;

8. *Expresses serious concern* regarding multiple cases of denial and non-issuance of entry visas, including in particular to delegates participating in high-level events and in the work of the Main Committees at the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly, emphasizes the importance of the full participation of all delegations in the work of the United Nations, and takes note of the statements of the Legal Counsel at the 297th and 298th meetings of the Committee, reiterating his statement at the emergency, 295th, meeting of the Committee, set out in document [A/AC.154/415](#), where he confirmed that the legal position regarding the host country’s obligations with respect to the issuance of visas to persons covered by the Headquarters Agreement remains unchanged from that which was provided by the then Legal Counsel to the Committee in 1988, set out in document [A/C.6/43/7](#), according to which, inter alia, “the Headquarters Agreement makes it clear that there is an unrestricted right of persons mentioned in section 11 to enter the United States for the purpose of proceeding to the Headquarters district”;

9. *Anticipates* that the host country will ensure the issuance of entry visas to all representatives of Member States and members of the Secretariat pursuant to article IV, sections 11 and 13, of the Headquarters Agreement, in a timely manner, to enable persons recruited to serve in the Secretariat or assigned as members of permanent missions to take up their assignments as promptly as possible and to enable representatives of Member States to travel, in a timely manner, to New York on United Nations business, including to attend official United Nations meetings, and notes that the Committee anticipates that the host country will continue to enhance efforts, including visa issuance, to facilitate the participation of representatives of Member States in other United Nations meetings, as appropriate;

10. *Notes* that a number of delegations have requested shortening the time frame applied by the host country for issuance and renewal of visas to representatives of Member States and members of their families, since the present time frame poses

difficulties for the full-fledged participation of Member States in United Nations meetings, and invites the host country to inform the Committee, as appropriate, of efforts to address such difficulties, and while acknowledging that action taken in 2023 led to a relative reduction in processing times for certain Missions, remains seriously concerned that other Missions and Secretariat staff members of certain nationalities continue to be adversely impacted by processing times, and also notes that the Committee calls upon the host country to review its differing processes of granting visas to the personnel of certain missions, including single-entry visas, and the waiting time for issuance, with a view to ensuring that delegations are able to participate fully in the work of the United Nations;

11. *Notes with concern* the difficulties experienced by some permanent missions to the United Nations in obtaining suitable banking services, and welcomes the continued efforts of the host country to facilitate the opening of bank accounts for those permanent missions;

12. *Stresses* the need for the permanent missions and the United Nations to benefit from appropriate banking services, and anticipates that the host country will continue to assist the permanent missions accredited to the United Nations and their staff in obtaining such services;

13. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts made by the United States Mission to the United Nations, including to respond to requests from the diplomatic community in the challenging circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic since March 2020, and expects that the issues raised at the meetings of the Committee will be resolved in a spirit of cooperation and in accordance with international law, including the Headquarters Agreement;

14. *Affirms* the importance of the Committee being in a position to fulfil its mandate and meet on short notice to deal with urgent and important matters concerning the relations between the United Nations and the host country, and in that connection requests the Secretariat and the Committee on Conferences to accord priority to requests from the Committee on Relations with the Host Country for conference-servicing facilities for meetings of that Committee that must be held while the General Assembly and its Main Committees are meeting, without prejudice to the requirements of those bodies and on an “as available” basis;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to remain actively engaged in all aspects of the relations of the United Nations with the host country at various levels in order to resolve the issues raised in the report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, and to more actively engage in the work of the Committee with a view to ensuring the representation of the interests concerned, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2819 (XXVI), and in this regard recalls the statements of the Legal Counsel at the emergency, 295th, meeting of the Committee, as set out in document A/AC.154/415, and also at its online informal meeting on 17 September 2020, recalls the position of the Committee as set out in paragraph 144 (p) of its previous report⁶ and that of the General Assembly as set out in paragraph 15 of its resolution 77/114 of 7 December 2022, notes the resourceful engagement of the Legal Counsel and the Secretary-General in discussions that have been formalized since the inclusion of subparagraph (p) in chapter IV of the report of the Committee in 2019⁷ with the competent authorities of the host country regarding unresolved issues and the Legal Counsel’s reports on the outcome of these discussions, most recently at its 309th and 310th meetings, and further notes with concern that serious issues still persist without effective resolution, recalls in this regard, once more, that serious

⁶ Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-seventh Session, Supplement No. 26 (A/77/26).

⁷ Ibid., Seventy-fourth Session, Supplement No. 26 (A/74/26).

consideration should be given to taking steps under section 21 of the Headquarters Agreement if certain issues raised in the report of the Committee remained unresolved following a reasonable and finite period of time, and accordingly once again reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to now give the most serious consideration and take any appropriate steps under section 21 of the Headquarters Agreement and intensify efforts to expedite resolution of the issues;

16. *Requests* the Committee to continue its work in conformity with General Assembly resolution [2819 \(XXVI\)](#) and, in this framework, to continue to consider additional appropriate measures to enhance the work of the Committee and its effectiveness and to make recommendations in its report to the Assembly at its seventy-ninth session;

17. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-ninth session the item entitled “Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country”.

*45th plenary meeting
7 December 2023*