

Sixth Committee, 79th Session of the UNGA –
Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country [item 168],
4 November 2024
HCC Chairman's Statement

Mr. Chairperson,

It is my pleasure to address today the Sixth Committee in my capacity as Chair of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country and introduce this year's Report of the Committee contained in document A/79/26, which was adopted on 18 October, by the Committee.

The Report was prepared in accordance with General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/78/116) of 7 December 2023 and follows the structure of previous years. It is divided into four chapters:

- Chapter 1 contains a brief introduction.
- Chapter 2 elaborates on the membership, composition, terms of reference and organization of the work of the Committee.
- Chapter 3 summarizes the discussion on the topics dealt with by the Committee during the reporting period.
- Finally, Chapter 4 contains the recommendations and conclusions of the Committee.

The Report has, also, two annexes containing a list of topics for consideration by the Committee, and a list of documents issued as documents of the Committee during the reporting period.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Committee on Relations with the Host Country is an important forum in which representatives of Member States seek to resolve different problems arising in connection with the implementation of the 1947 Agreement between the United Nations and the United States of America regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, through a frank and constructive exchange of views and cooperation of all concerned.

Since its establishment in 1971, the Committee remains an open, transparent, and flexible body where any interested delegation can participate in it as an observer. Moreover, the Committee is the only body in the UN system which is mandated to consider matters in relation to the host country and then report thereon to the General Assembly and make recommendations.

During the reporting period, the Committee held five meetings and discussed issues important to the UN Membership, regarding the implementation of the UN Headquarters Agreement (1947), as well as the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (1946) and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961). Issues concerning entry visas, travel restrictions, security of missions and safety of their personnel were of particular concern during these discussions.

The Committee will continue its efforts and will remain seized of the issues which are on its agenda in order to resolve them in a spirit of compromise and in full regard of international law, and notably the interests of the Organization and the integrity of the Headquarters Agreement.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Report provides a comprehensive description of the issues raised in the Committee and of the differing views expressed by the concerned Missions and by the host country on these issues and how they should be resolved.

In the Recommendations and Conclusions set out in Chapter IV of the Report, the Committee, *inter alia*, emphasizes the need to **expeditiously** solve problems that might arise for the normal functioning of the delegations and the missions accredited to the United Nations; The Committee urges the host country to continue to take appropriate action, **and notes the actions that the host country consistently takes**, with a view to maintaining respect for diplomatic privileges and immunities (...); The Committee notes the serious concerns raised by a Member State expressing the inappropriate treatment and screening of certain of its high-ranking officials **and its other representatives** by host country Customs and Border Protection officers. The Committee requests the host country to carefully **address** these concerns and take the necessary preventive and remedial action as appropriate and to protect the premises of missions against any intrusion or damage (...) **and to prevent any affront to the dignity and honour of representatives of Member States**; The Committee emphasizes the importance of the full participation of all delegations in the work of the United Nations and expresses serious concern regarding multiple cases of denial and non-issuance of entry visas, including in particular to delegates participating in high-level events, **including the non-issuance of a visa to a high-ranking official of a Member State to the general debate of the 79th session of the General Assembly**, in the work of the Main Committees at the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly, **and of a subsidiary body of the General Assembly**.

As in the previous year, we have witnessed intense discussions on several items of great importance to the affected Member States related to the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement, in particular with respect to entry visas, travel restrictions, security of missions and safety of their personnel. The Committee has continued to grapple with the differing views as to whether progress has been made by the host country in the context of the recommendations and conclusions that the Committee adopted last year, which were endorsed by the General Assembly, in particular that, *“if certain issues raised in the report of the Committee remained unresolved following a reasonable and finite period of time”*, the Committee *“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”*. I believe that the recommendations and conclusions of this year’s Report on which the members

have reached consensus through extensive but constructive negotiations, accurately reflect this situation.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the Legal Counsel for their engagement with the Committee and for their efforts at various levels to address important issues before the Committee, in particular their ongoing bilateral engagement with senior officials of the host country.

Mr. Chairperson,

In line with these Recommendations and Conclusions, I wish to reiterate my personal commitment to help address all outstanding issues in a spirit of compromise and in full regard for the interests of the Organization. I intend to continue to engage with the representatives of the host country, affected Member States and with the Secretary General and the Legal Counsel to find solutions to resolve all outstanding issues in line with the Headquarters Agreement and international law.

Before I conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Members of the Committee, the Host Country Section of the United States Mission to the United Nations, the Mayor's Office for International Affairs, and all observer delegations who participated in the meetings of the Committee during this reporting period, for their support and excellent cooperation. Let me, also, express my particular appreciation to the representatives of the host country and the concerned Member States for their constructive approach. Finally, I wish to express my deep and sincere appreciation to the Secretary of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country and to the UN Secretariat, in general, for their continuous guidance and support throughout the year.

I thank you for your attention.