Proposals for Enhancing the Contribution of the First Committee to the Maintenance of International Peace and Security

As delegations are aware, the United States in recent months has discussed with other UN Member States various measures for streamlining and modernizing the work of the First Committee. The following list contains proposals from the United States, as well as from other governments:

A. Rotate consideration of most resolutions/agenda items on a biennial or triennial basis, rather than consider each one every year.

B. Combine related resolutions/agenda items.

C. Retain the existing mix of resolutions/agenda items, but apply them only to one geographic region each year. This would permit in-depth discussion of all subjects as they pertain to a given region.

D. Pursue draft resolutions that provide only technical updates to previous resolutions as decisions, rather than as resolutions.

E. Remove from the agenda subjects on which no resolution has been introduced over three consecutive years.

F. Limit the number of studies commissioned by the First Committee for the Secretariat or other UN bodies to conduct to no more than one per year.

G. Set a numerical limit on the number of draft resolutions and decisions tabled each year.

H. Institute automatic "sunset" provisions for all UN activities generated by the First Committee, requiring periodic review by the Committee.

I. Authorize the Secretariat to merge reports initiated by the First Committee with other reports on
related issues that the Secretariat is required to produce during the same UNGA session.

J. Designate specific days during thematic debate for specific agenda items.

K. Resolutions that have been adopted without a vote, as well as draft resolutions whose content is substantively the same as those of the corresponding resolutions from the previous year, should not be reintroduced for a period of X years.

L. The Chairman of the First Committee should convene informal consultations during each week of the Committee’s annual session to discuss one specific item on the Committee’s agenda, to be determined in consultation with the Bureau of the Committee.

The United States looks forward to discussing these proposals further with other UN Member States, and encourages delegations to circulate additional suggestions for improving the operation of the First Committee.