



**Statement by Ms Charlotte Skerten  
Deputy Permanent Representative to the CD**

**UNGA 74 First Committee  
Explanation of Vote on L.57**

**7 November 2019**

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Mr Chair,

I take the floor to explain New Zealand's position on Decision L.57 entitled "Improving the Effectiveness of the Work of the First Committee".

My Delegation is well able to understand the frustrations that have led to the tabling of this Decision. But, aware of the obligations under the UN Headquarters Agreement, it would be our hope that the issues underlying L 57 could be satisfactorily resolved in an expeditious manner, including if necessary in the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, without this body needing to take up such drastic options as have been put forward in this text.

A decision to move the meetings of the First Committee in 2020 away from UNGA Headquarters would be a very significant one – one with far-reaching implications of a staffing, funding and logistical nature - and we remain concerned that we have not yet had an opportunity to give these potential consequences the thorough consideration that even an 'in principle' decision along the lines of L57 would warrant.

Quite aside from a consideration of the costs which such a change would entail, for example, for the UN Secretariat (and which, unfortunately as we have all experienced in recent weeks, is already in the midst of a financial liquidity crisis), there are key questions regarding the capacity of all the UN membership to be able to participate in First Committee meetings held elsewhere as fully as they do here in New York. This is a consideration which smaller states such as New Zealand must bear in mind. It is a factor even more so for states, including some of our Pacific Island neighbours, who do not have representation at possible alternative venues, including those two specifically mentioned in L 57. A decision to move away from meetings at UN HQ could seriously impact on the ability of such states to participate in and make an effective contribution to First Committee.

For these reasons, Mr Chair, New Zealand has voted against L.57.

Thank you.