

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY – INFORMAL MEETING
QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND RELATED MATTERS

STATEMENT

BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Facilitator

Security Council reform is topic which has been pending since the World Summit 2005, and in fact even longer. Several times over, we have collectively expressed our determination to reform this main organ of the United Nations. The need for this exercise is therefore unquestioned, and we welcome the commencement of proper negotiations today.

Much discussion has taken place over the last weeks and months concerning the modalities and format of these discussions. We did not participate in these discussions because we were of the view that the General Assembly had given a clear enough mandate last September. We therefore wish to take this opportunity to make a couple of points that seem of particular relevance to us.

1. The Outcome Document of 2005 makes it clear that the reform of the Council has two aspects – enlargement and working methods. This division goes back to the early days of the OEWG, which was equally seized with cluster I and II on these two items. We believe that a comprehensive reform of the Council must address both these aspects. But we also strongly believe that the two tracks are very different in nature – one being a one-off event entailing amendments to the UN Charter, the other being an ongoing process that will not end once a decision on enlargement has been made, and that should not wait for such a decision.
2. While we have not succeeded in enlarging the Security Council so far, the discussions have nevertheless moved forward in significant ways that we must take into account in the framework of our negotiations, both in the fields of enlargement and of working methods.

Mr. Facilitator

The developments on **working methods** have been significant over the past few years. After the S5, of which we are a proud member, tabled a draft resolution in the General Assembly in 2006, the Security Council responded by adopting its Presidential Note 507 in July of that same year. While we did not think that this was sufficient to address the needs, we welcomed it as a step forward. In the following months, we worked closely with the respective Chairpersons of the Working Group on Documentation on the implementation of these measures as well as on possibilities to move the process further. The results have been largely disappointing: The application of the measures in Note 507 has been arbitrary and rather erratic, and the willingness of the Council to engage in a genuine effort to move the agenda forward has been limited. Much still depends on the willingness of individual Council members – and while we thank them for taking positions that can at times be unpopular, we do believe a collective political will is a precondition for tangible progress.

We realize that our positions and proposals can sometimes be viewed as a nuisance. We therefore wish to emphasize that our work is intended to improve the perception of legitimacy and credibility of the Security Council and thus to improve its standing. Likewise, we do not see enlargement as a potentially appropriate remedy to the existing deficiencies in the area of working methods. Much of what leaves to be desired in the area of working methods has to do with the access of non-members to relevant Council processes. Creating additional seats – in whichever category – cannot and will not give a satisfactory answer to these needs.

Our approach to working methods has been very pragmatic, and we will continue to pursue our goals along several tracks. First, we continue to believe that the General Assembly has a role to play in this respect. It seems unnecessary to point this out, since all reform proposals since the Razali proposal in 1997 have included elements on working methods, including the G4, AU and UfC proposals in 2005 and thereafter.

Second, we believe that a direct track with the Security Council on specific issues is necessary. That is the case both with regard to the implementation of the measures on working methods that the Council itself has already decided and with regard to more situation-specific issues. For our delegation, the issue of fair and clear procedures for listing and delisting in the context of counter-terrorism sanctions remains of particular relevance. But there are other areas, which we will pursue together with other S5 members, and to which we will revert at a later stage during these consultations.

Our reading of the political dynamic at this point is that there is increasing support for an equally strong emphasis on working methods – the area we have once called the “ugly duckling of SC reform”. We are encouraged by the positive reactions we regularly receive from other delegations and observe that more and more States realize that enlargement – as essential as it is – will not address their direct national interests.

Mr. Facilitator

As far as **enlargement** is concerned, we have for a long time been on the record as a delegation that supports an **intermediary approach**. This approach has two main characteristics:

- First, the creation of a new category of seats which would allow States to serve for a period of time that is significantly longer than the two years given under traditional non-permanent seats, but which would also be renewable. These States could thus become *de facto* permanent members, provided that they regularly receive the support of the membership as a whole. This would introduce a stronger element of accountability compared to the current SC membership.
- Second, an intermediary approach would be linked to a mandatory review mechanism. After a number of years to be specified, the system would be

subject to a review and thus ensure that possible adjustments in the light of changes in the overall geopolitical situation can be made.

In our view, the word “intermediary” first and foremost denotes a solution that is “in the middle” of the well-known positions that the main interest groups on enlargement have put forward, formally or informally, for a number of years now. We believe that these positions are irreconcilable and each of them unable to command the largest possible political support that we should aim for when enlarging the Council. The choice therefore is to either find a compromise solution that allows for review at a later stage or to further delay and postpone the enlargement of the Security Council. Given this choice, we have a clear preference for the first option.

Mr. Facilitator

We are thankful to you for taking on this highly important task that is not necessarily as gratifying as it is time-consuming. We will support you to the best of our abilities in carrying it out.

Thank you.