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Sixty-sixth session

52nd plenary meeting

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Official Records

President: Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 7 (continued)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

Second report of the General Committee (A/66/250/Add.1)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In paragraph 1 (a) of its report (A/66/250/Add.1), the General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that an additional item entitled “Observer status for the West African Economic and Monetary Union in the General Assembly” be included in the agenda of the current session under heading I (Organizational, administrative and other matters).

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this item in the agenda of the current session under heading I?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In paragraph 1 (b) of the same report, the General Committee further recommended that the item be allocated to the Sixth Committee.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to allocate this item to the Sixth Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to inform members that the item entitled “Observer status

for the West African Economic and Monetary Union in the General Assembly” becomes item 175 on the agenda of the current session.

The Chair of the Sixth Committee will be informed of the decision just taken by the General Assembly.

In paragraph 2 (a) of the report, the General Committee recommends to the General Assembly that an additional sub-item entitled “Appointment of members of the International Civil Service Commission” be included in the agenda of the current session, under item 115, under heading I (Organizational, administrative and other matters).

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include this sub-item in the agenda of the current session, under item 115, under heading I?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In paragraph 2 (b) of the report, the General Committee further recommends that the sub-item be allocated to the Fifth Committee.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to allocate this sub-item to the Fifth Committee?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to inform members that the sub-item entitled “Appointment of members of the International Civil Service Commission” becomes sub-item (l) of agenda item 115 on the agenda of the current session.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.



The Chairman of the Fifth Committee will be informed of the decision just taken by the General Assembly.

Agenda item 122 (*continued*)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Members will recall that the Assembly began its consideration of agenda item 122 at its 51st plenary meeting. We shall now proceed with the list of speakers.

Ms. Leskovar (Slovenia): Let me begin by welcoming your decision, Mr. President, to separate, for the first time, what used to be a joint debate on the issue of the annual report of the Security Council and the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. That separation, given the important substantive connection between the two issues, provides for a more focused debate on the issues addressed under both agenda items.

I would like to thank Ambassador Moraes Cabral, current President of the Security Council and Permanent Representative of Portugal, for introducing yesterday to the General Assembly the report of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2010 to 31 July 2011 (A/66/2). It is evident that the reporting period was once again characterized by an increasing workload and the complexity of the regional, thematic and general issues before the Council.

I also wish to commend the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Tanin, for his efforts and leadership over the past three years, which gave the Security Council reform negotiations the boost they so urgently needed. We welcome his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, and assure him of our full support as he continues to assist Member States in navigating their way through that complex issue in the months ahead.

The reform of the Security Council is long overdue, and progress made at the sixty-fifth session of the Assembly is insufficient. However, the negotiations have gathered positive momentum. It is apparent that the expansion of the Council in both the permanent and

non-permanent member categories has gained broad support among the United Nations membership.

Slovenia remains convinced that the reform of the Council is a necessary structural change in the area of maintaining international peace and security. Reform needs to address enlargement of the membership and improvement of the working methods. Slovenia has been active in addressing both issues.

Regarding the enlargement of the Council, our position is clear. It is a matter not only of fairness, but also of necessity. A reformed Security Council needs to better reflect present geopolitical realities and must be more representative, with strengthened legitimacy and authority. Slovenia believes that the Council should be expanded in the categories of permanent and non-permanent membership. Particular attention should be paid to the representation of African countries. The enlargement of the Council should also increase the possibility for small States to serve on it.

Different proposals made by Member States for the Council's expansion, including one by Slovenia, are well captured in Ambassador Tanin's negotiating text. We believe that the Slovenian proposal would ensure the Council's representation and sufficiently limit its size to allow for its efficient work.

With regard to working methods, there is a broad sense of agreement on the need for improvement. We welcome improvements made in that area, but there remains plenty of room to do more. Better working methods and greater transparency towards the wider membership could improve the Council's efficiency, enhance its legitimacy and strengthen its role as the body entrusted by the Charter with the maintenance of international peace and security.

We have been confronted with an ever-increasing number of decisions with important security, legal and financial implications for each Member State. Implementation without participation in the decision-making process requires greater transparency, inclusiveness and engagement with non-member States on a more frequent and regular basis. Slovenia strongly supports and appreciates the initiative of the group of five small nations in that regard.

The current world is obviously different from that in which the United Nations was established more than 60 years ago, and there is a need for change in many aspects of its organizational structure. The United

Nations of today is an operational Organization that has developed a variety of practical activities, some of which are not even mentioned in the Charter but have resulted from practice. That has changed the United Nations considerably. It needs to change the structure of the Security Council, too. Reform of the Council is a pertinent question that we legitimately discuss. It is something that we must consider and that will have to materialize over time.

In conclusion, we must not fail to take forward the process of negotiation on the question of equitable geographical representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. Slovenia is convinced that your leadership, guidance and wisdom, Mr. President, coupled with the necessary political will, good faith and flexibility of Member States, will bring us to the successful conclusion of the prolonged debates on the issue of Security Council reform.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate on Security Council reform, which Australia welcomes. We also welcome your advice that reform will be a priority matter of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly. The importance of the Council's work has been demonstrated continuously in the past very intensive year, which has underscored the need to move to boost its representativeness and legitimacy into the future. We really must accelerate our efforts to break through the current impasse and achieve reform that actually means something.

Australia's own outlook on reform is founded on the very simple premise that no country should have a monopoly on power. We are committed to a rules-based international order that respects international law, and we believe that the effectiveness of such an order depends on the access and buy-in of all Member States. For Australia, achieving Security Council reform has been a long-standing ambition.

As a founding Member of the United Nations, we were extremely active at the San Francisco Conference in drafting the Articles of the Charter relating to the establishment of the Council. From the foundation, we argued strenuously for limits on the use of the veto, and promoted transparency as integral to the Council's legitimacy. We remain very strongly committed to the importance of those principles today. The complexity and breadth of the Council's agenda, in fact, makes them all the more important. The key to legitimacy into

the future is clearly more balanced geographic representation and openness and transparency in the Council's working methods.

There is an obvious consensus that substantive reform of the Council is long overdue. The last significant reform measure took place nearly 50 years ago, when the size of the Council increased to 15 members. The Council clearly continues to be badly, even dangerously, out of step with the evolution of the world's geopolitics. Australia agrees with the Group of African States that the absence of permanent representation of the Group on the Council is a historical injustice and, of course, an impediment to the Council's operations. Two thirds of the Security Council agenda focuses on the African continent, which must take its rightful permanent place in those deliberations.

During the debate yesterday, some helpful suggestions were offered by delegations to chart the way forward (see A/66/PV.51). They included, for example, the encouragement to put the Group of Four's proposal on the agenda, to explore in depth its application, to test whether it can realistically attract the requisite support and, if it cannot, to identify other workable proposals. Australia itself is not a member of any of the established groups on reform. Our overriding imperative as a country is to find a way to move the reform debate away from sterile discussion. We welcome recommendations such as those made yesterday with a view to gathering momentum at the forthcoming round of the intergovernmental negotiations.

In anticipation of those negotiations, I should briefly reiterate Australia's own position. We support an expansion of the Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories, while balancing the need for enhanced representation on the Council with the practical requirement of maintaining decision-making cohesion and effectiveness. We remain prepared to assist the negotiations by showing flexibility and, hopefully, creativity to find solutions.

Australia is committed to cooperating with other Member States to advance comprehensive reform in all five aspects of the intergovernmental negotiations. We agree, however, with the comments made yesterday by the Permanent Representative of Singapore, on behalf of the group of five small nations, that, without prejudice to the other aspects of Council reform, we

should make early concerted efforts to realize immediate and tangible benefits in improving its working methods. We should try to make progress in that area quickly.

In conclusion, Australia pledges its full support to the ongoing discussions on Security Council reform. We very much welcome the reappointment of Ambassador Tanin as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. We commend his dedication and, above all, his tenacity in leading us through those complex discussions. We are committed to working closely, creatively and pragmatically with you, Mr. President, and Ambassador Tanin, to shift our collective focus to genuine and engaged negotiations, with the overarching objective of early substantive reform.

Mr. Durrani (Pakistan): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's important meeting. Our delegation welcomes your initiative in holding a separate debate on Security Council reform in the formal plenary of the General Assembly.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We share the collective objective of strengthening the United Nations and increasing its effectiveness to enable it to address contemporary challenges. That entails adaptation and reform. We all want United Nations reform to relate to evolving situations and the new realities. War, victors and vanquished were the realities of 1945. Today's realities are rooted in the shared desire for peace, prosperity and democracy and open, inclusive, transparent and accountable governance structures and international institutions.

The reform of the Security Council can only be realized through consensus. Despite obvious divergences, we believe that there is general agreement in three areas. First, comprehensive reform of the Security Council is essential to change its composition and working methods without compromising its legitimacy. Secondly, reform must make the Security Council diverse and manifold in the context of equitable geographic representation, as well as open and accountable to the wider United Nations membership. Thirdly, the reform should be in conformity with the principles of the Charter, such as the sovereign equality of Member States.

Pakistan believes that the modest expansion of the Security Council by adding new elected seats would make it more representative, efficient and transparent, as well as able to address present and future challenges alike. New seats on the basis of periodic elections will also make the Security Council more equitable, diverse and manifold in terms of representation, as well as more open and accountable, in order to reflect the aspirations of the general membership. Such a reform model would enhance Security Council ownership by all Member States and further increase the credibility of its actions.

From various initiatives launched by individual Member States and groups over the past 15 years, it is evident that no single reform model enjoys the requisite support for a credible final outcome. It is therefore essential for us to seek a common middle ground with a view to achieving a win-win compromise solution.

Notwithstanding our original position, Pakistan, along with other colleagues of the Uniting for Consensus group, has put forward dynamic and flexible proposals. Our compromise proposal, known as the Italy-Colombia paper (A/64/CRP.1), is a sincere effort to build bridges and avoid deadlock. We draw satisfaction from the fact that the Uniting for Consensus group is the only group to have offered a compromise formula. The formula reflects the complex global political configuration, which consists of a few large States, a number of medium-sized States and a majority of small States, and is characterized by the emergence of regional organizations, which are playing important roles in international and regional peace and security.

Our proposal reflects the cross-sectoral interests of the large majority of Member States, including a significant number of small States. It can also serve the dual purpose of modestly expanding the Council, while also ensuring wider representation for regional, subregional and cross-regional groups. Some of those groups, such as the African Union and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, have important stakes in the Council. We support their quest for adequate representation.

I would like to reiterate our respect and support for the common African position, as set forth in the Ezulwini Consensus. Africa's just demand for a permanent presence in the Security Council is made on

behalf of the entire continent, and therefore differs from the demands of those countries seeking a permanent seat for themselves. We see enough room in the Uniting for Consensus reform model to accommodate the African position and to treat it as a special case. We strongly believe that any solution excluding Africa or African participation will be incomplete, and is therefore unacceptable.

Our delegation would also like to take this opportunity to take stock of the present state of the intergovernmental negotiations, which are now in their fourth year. In that regard, no negotiation meetings have been held since April. It is not a mere coincidence that that date corresponds with the launch of a unilateral piecemeal initiative by one group. That initiative contravenes decisions 62/557, 63/565, 64/568 and 65/554, and has effectively stalled the negotiation process. If a single issue of choice is picked for a showdown, it will stultify comprehensive negotiations on all of the five issues identified by the Assembly, as evidenced by the breakdown in the intergovernmental negotiations over the past seven months.

A critical lesson learned from the current state of the intergovernmental negotiations is that initiatives rooted in individual national objectives and based on the parochial paradigms of power politics can never garner any meaningful support. Such initiatives only divide the membership and stall the negotiation process. Another lesson is that ignoring interlinkages among the five key issues and focusing on only one issue of choice creates more problems than solutions. Finally, any attempt at artificial acceleration by making whimsical claims of majority or minority is a recipe for deadlock.

In view of those obvious realities, let me reiterate that identifying a compromise solution is the only way forward. We will therefore encourage other colleagues to show a spirit of compromise and flexibility by moving towards a compromise solution in the true spirit of multilateralism.

I will conclude by acknowledging your role, Sir, as President of the General Assembly, in steering forward the process of Security Council reform. We value your decision to hold a separate meeting on Security Council reform. We are certain that your close engagement will help us to move closer to our collective objective.

Mr. Bodini (San Marino): I would like to thank Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral of Portugal for introducing yesterday (see A/66/PV.50) the report of the Security Council (A/66/2) and to congratulate you, Mr. President, on having reappointed Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan as facilitator of the Security Council reform process. Ambassador Tanin's efforts over the past few years have been very professional in the face of such challenging tasks, and are highly appreciated by all of us.

I am sure that, under your very able and experienced leadership, the intergovernmental process can resume with renewed vigour and at an accelerated pace so as to finally reach an agreement with broad consensus on the reform of the Council. After so many years of effort, it is obvious to all of us that this reform can be achieved only through a compromise solution.

I believe that the enlargement of the Council from 15 to 25 members is not only necessary, but also achievable. Some of the 10 new seats should be allocated to the existing two-year category and the remainder to a new longer-term category, the details of which we must agree upon. In so doing, we would provide a better chance of representation to medium-sized and small States, as well as to much larger Member States whose contributions to world peace, financial assistance, peacekeeping forces and democratic leadership are very relevant.

Those countries rightfully deserve to have a longer-term presence in the Council, but they should be elected from time to time by the General Assembly, not only on the basis of their aspirations but also, and more importantly, on the basis of their merits and performance. I believe that the States that compete for and win Security Council membership in the longer-term category can greatly improve and stimulate the work of the Security Council.

We also believe that more equitable representation of the various geographical areas, especially the African continent, must be ensured. Enlarging the Council to a manageable number and creating a new category of longer-term seats will, without a doubt, increase transparency and improve working methods in the decision-making process of that important body of the United Nations.

San Marino is once again ready to help you, Mr. President, and Ambassador Tanin in advancing such delicate and difficult reforms, which are so

essential to the future of the United Nations as the pre-eminent global leader in world affairs.

Mr. Diallo (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Egypt and Sierra Leone on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of African States, respectively (see A/66/PV.51). I would like to make several comments in my national capacity.

Allow me, at the outset, to express to you, Sir, my delegation's appreciation for your decision to convene a debate devoted exclusively to the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. That laudable initiative offers eloquent proof, if there were still any need to do so, of your intention to make the question of Security Council reform one of the priorities of your mandate.

I also welcome the efforts made over the past few years by the facilitator of the reform process, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, to find a consensual solution that is satisfactory to all stakeholders. Despite his commitment and determination and the active participation of all Member States in the various stages of the negotiations, much more must be done to move this sputtering case forward.

This unfortunate situation requires us to adapt the Organization's working methods to the needs of our time, particularly in view of the upheavals and multiple crises that have rocked the world over the past two years, which have helped make the issue of ensuring greater legitimacy for the Council's decisions even more urgent.

The fact is that, almost 50 years since the last time that important organ was reformed, the status quo looks anachronistic and calls for a special effort of imagination and action on our part. Without that, how are we to understand the fact that a continent like Africa is not represented in the permanent member category when it occupies 70 per cent of the Council's agenda? We cannot say it often enough — this historic injustice deserves to be rectified.

Even if the underlying arguments sometimes differ, belief in the principle of, and the urgent need for, reform of the Council is shared by the Member States as a whole. After more than two decades of discussion, however, we have not succeeded in

gathering the momentum needed for a solution that is acceptable to all interested parties. This regrettable fact should move us to contemplate a different approach that, based on decisions 62/557, 63/565, 64/568 and 65/554, would enable us to create the conditions for a dynamic dialogue that could result in genuine consensus.

To that end, we believe that we must reach agreement on the principles that should guide negotiations and ensure that the meetings dedicated to Security Council reform do not consist merely of affirmations and reaffirmations of well-known positions. With this in mind, all groups should engage in constructive, inclusive and transparent discussions in order to find ways to bring the Security Council into line with current international realities. Such efforts should specifically address the case of Africa, as many Member States and international stakeholders have already acknowledged.

I would like to conclude by expressing the hope that under your leadership, Mr. President, this session of the General Assembly will mark a decisive stage towards the hoped-for Security Council reform.

Mr. Tatham (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom is pleased to make a statement in this annual debate on Security Council reform. We are grateful this year to be discussing the issue separately from the Security Council annual report (A/66/2). Reforming the Security Council so that it is more representative of the modern world is an important task and merits specific consideration by members of the General Assembly.

The United Kingdom welcomes Ambassador Tanin's reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. We appreciate his commitment to working with all Member States to make progress. While insufficient steps forward have been taken in recent months, we look forward to the resumption of negotiations under the Ambassador's skilled chairmanship. It is vital that we all show our clear support for Ambassador Tanin through this process. Security Council reform is a complex issue about which there are many competing views. Nevertheless, we must keep in mind that our efforts derive from a shared belief that reform is necessary to reflect twenty-first-century realities. Ambassador Tanin is to be commended for his ongoing commitment in pursuit of that goal.

The United Kingdom's position on Security Council reform has been clear for some time. We continue to support permanent membership for Brazil, India, Germany and Japan, and permanent African representation. At the same time, it is our firm view that reform must not reduce the Council's ability to act decisively when called on to address threats to international peace and security. Events this year have demonstrated beyond doubt that the Council must retain its capability in that regard.

It is certainly important that the Council work in a manner that is as transparent, open and effective as possible. The United Kingdom has been at the forefront of efforts to improve Council working methods. To that end, we welcome a number of positive developments over the past year. We commend the greater interaction between Council members during consultations. We strongly support the introduction of forward-looking, horizon-scanning briefings, which have become an established part of the Council's work each month. These are valuable meetings and enhance our collective ability to anticipate and manage emerging crises. We have consistently encouraged the Council's annual report to be as analytical and honest as possible about the Council's successes and failures.

We will continue to promote the reform of the Security Council. The United Kingdom is pleased to support Ambassador Tanin as he leads this very important process. We encourage all Member States to work constructively towards that collective goal.

Mr. Chipaziwa (Zimbabwe): We join our colleagues in welcoming the reappointment of Ambassador Tanin, and we hope his efforts will be crowned with success. We welcome the opportunity to participate in this debate on the important question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. This meeting offers us a timely opportunity not only to take stock of and monitor our progress, but also to express and exchange views that may facilitate greater understanding of various positions. Zimbabwe's position on the issue is guided by the general African position, as laid out in the Ezulwini Consensus.

The Security Council, as is evident from its wide-ranging agenda, is increasingly assuming a larger role in formulating relevant responses to developments in international relations. It is therefore evident that all Member States have a direct and vital interest in the

work of the Security Council and its decision-making, and therefore an equally crucial stake in reform of the Council.

Like many other States, we have always advocated comprehensive reform of the Security Council. The Council must be democratized, and that means re-examining its composition and the way power is distributed and exercised in that crucial body. We have underscored time and again the need for the Council to reflect current political realities, with special emphasis on granting developing countries, in particular those of the African continent, their long-overdue and deserved representation in both categories of the Council.

My delegation is therefore greatly encouraged by the growing acceptance of the need for expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of the Council's membership. An expanded Council would enjoy fresh perspectives in its deliberations and broader alliances in its decision-making, which are, after all, the purposes of our intent to make the Council more representative, legitimate and credible.

Expansion in both categories is essential to meet the needs and accommodate the views of the preponderant majority of Member States. It is essential to maintain a balanced ratio between the two categories of Council membership.

In that regard, I wish to reiterate my country's support for Africa's unwavering demand for two permanent seats, with the same powers and prerogatives as the current members, and five non-permanent seats in the expanded Council. We are convinced that those are reasonable demands based on the principle of democratic representativity on a proportional basis among the United Nations regions.

It is our strong view that United Nations reform without Security Council reform is incomplete. Reform of the working methods of the Council alone is, again, not enough, and structural reforms are therefore needed to complete the exercise. A less skewed and more balanced power structure in the Council, coupled with more democratic global governance institutions, is what the international community needs to be able to deliver credibly in the important areas of security and economic and social development.

The key lesson from the past session is that no reform proposal designed to serve the interests of a few

can expect to win the support of the required majority of Member States. Restricted initiatives with partisan agendas will only further divide us. Our efforts should be aimed at bridging, not creating, divides and promoting inclusivity. It is important that the interests of all countries and regions on this sensitive reform issue be seriously taken into account. In this regard, transparency and consensus are quintessential in order to retain mutual trust and confidence on this issue.

Zimbabwe is committed to participating constructively and to working together with all Member States in the sacred and collective endeavour of reforming the Security Council's structure, all of this contributing to a holistic United Nations reform acceptable to all.

Mr. Borg (Malta): The agenda item which we are considering continues to be of topical interest and importance to the majority of United Nations members, especially to small and medium-sized States.

Mr. President, my delegation therefore highly appreciates the role that your predecessors have played in trying to bridge the wide gap that still exists in order to define and agree on an approach which would do justice to all States Members of the United Nations. The fact that you, Sir, are continuing the search for an equitable solution to this long-standing issue is a credit to your understanding of and insight into the position of the majority of States Members of the United Nations. While we all recognize that we have not succeeded in finding a formula that will garner the widest possible acceptance, the report submitted by the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Zahir Tanin — to whom I would like to extend my delegation's thanks for his efforts and dedication in guiding our deliberations — is clear testimony of the complex and difficult nature of our endeavour to allow the Security Council to work in a more representative, effective, efficient and transparent manner.

Mr. President, your task in guiding our deliberations for the next 12 months will not be easy. However, my delegation would like to thank you for giving us this opportunity to focus on this issue by specifically dedicating a stand-alone exchange on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. We feel that by separating this agenda item from that of the consideration of the report of the Security Council, you have given us the opportunity to

deliberate on this issue in one of the principal organs of the Organization, where all Member States of the United Nations, large and small, have an equal voice in addressing the new challenges on the international agenda, as well as the reform of the United Nations.

Throughout the whole process, especially during the deliberations in the intergovernmental negotiations, Malta has insisted on the interlinkage of the five key issues agreed to in decision 62/557, of 15 September 2008. In maintaining these five key issues as one component, we are ensuring that Security Council reform will be conducted in a coherent and cohesive manner that will, in turn, safeguard the interests of all States Members of the United Nations and give a reformed Security Council the much-needed ownership of the whole United Nations membership.

The question is often asked as to what the Security Council needs in order to be more representative, efficient, transparent and effective. My delegation believes that the answer to that question is to increase representation on the Council. Indeed, it is a recognized fact that Security Council membership has to be more reflective of present-day realities. Therefore Malta, like many others, strongly believes that Council membership should be increased, since the current number serving on the Council is not representative of the majority of States Members of the United Nations, especially small and medium-sized States. It must be recalled that since the last enlargement, in 1965, 76 countries have joined the Organization as new States Members, and that it is therefore logical that one of the main key issues that needs to be resolved is the question of an enlargement of a reformed Security Council that takes into account the larger membership of 193 States.

The position of small and medium-sized States in an expanded Security Council should figure prominently in our discussions. The intergovernmental negotiations have clearly shown that there is agreement on an increase in the non-permanent category. Yet this position has been in some measure diluted by a number of countries that have proposed, for different reasons, an increase of six or seven seats in the permanent category.

If we were to accept such a proposal, taking into consideration the proposal to expand the membership of the Council to the mid-20s, that would mean that, if we included the current five permanent members, the

new, expanded Council would have 11 or 12 permanent members out of a total of 25 or 26 Security Council members. Such a situation would raise another logical question: how many seats would be left to be filled by the majority of United Nations Members? The answer would be just four additional members for the remaining 168 Member States. Surely such an increase in the non-permanent category would not be reflective of the United Nations membership.

As to the effectiveness of the Security Council, it is crucial that the Council be able to respond more rapidly to emerging situations as a result of an improvement in its working methods. There is, for example, a need to accelerate the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Council, including that of the Sanctions Committees and Working Groups, especially by giving greater attention to cases presented to them by States Members of the United Nations. My delegation believes that, in order to be effective, the Security Council must deal with issues, especially those of a long-standing nature, in a fairer and more balanced way; make less frequent use of the right of veto; and consider the interests of the wider United Nations membership in the decisions it takes. It is recognized that many of those issues depend on the political will of the Council's permanent members themselves, as they have the veto power to approve or not approve any changes to the working methods of the Security Council. That notwithstanding, many of us believe that improving its working methods would, in turn, have a direct and positive effect on the question of the transparency and efficiency of the Security Council itself.

On the issue of transparency, my delegation believes that all States Members of the United Nations should be given the possibility of knowing more about the issues and should receive prompt, relevant and current information on matters brought to the attention of the Security Council. In addition, there should be fewer closed meetings and more open briefings and consultations. Perhaps what is necessary is to encourage the Council's permanent members to work more closely with the majority of the United Nations States Members and to take the appeals and valid suggestions for improvement in the working methods more seriously.

Without a doubt, a question in the minds of many is what can be done in the short term to achieve Security Council reform. A possible answer lies in the

Italy-Colombia proposal, which, in my delegation's view, is a compromise proposal that bridges the divide and offers a basis for a possible breakthrough, which has eluded the intergovernmental negotiations for a number of years now. The proposal is not one based on financial or any other criteria that block the aspirations of the majority of United Nations States Members to serve on the Security Council, but rather a proposal that would give rise to a more equitable, democratic and accountable Security Council.

In that regard, my delegation is therefore not in a position to accept the attempts by some delegations to interpret Article 23 of the Charter as laying the basis for Security Council membership on, among other things, financial contributions of Member States to the Organization. Such an interpretation and criterion would work against small States, which can never reach the necessary capacity. In that context, I must continue to stress that Security Council membership must be based on the sovereignty and equality of States and their pledge to contribute to peace and security. Indeed, the record shows that small countries have made very valid contributions when they have served as non-permanent members of the Security Council.

Decision 62/557 lays the basis for a negotiated solution on the five key issues it sets forth. The text prepared by the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations contains all the proposals introduced so far. The smooth transition of the discussions and negotiations during the sixty-sixth session augurs well for our future deliberations. Much was achieved during the sixty-fifth session. My delegation therefore believes that it is important to preserve what has been achieved. I appeal to all to safeguard that achievement by refusing to take unilateral initiatives or follow piecemeal approaches.

Mr. President, as you rightly pointed out in your remarks at the opening meeting of this session,

“Let us build on previous efforts to reform the Security Council and, harnessing the collective will of the membership, let us advance them further” (A/66/PV.1, p. 2).

Mr. Errázuriz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): My country, Chile, attaches particular importance to the agenda item before the General Assembly today. We welcome the priority that you given to this issue, Mr. President. We also commend the decision to retain the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador

Zahir Tanin, as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council and his intention to resume negotiations over the next few weeks. He can rely on our support and respect.

In 2008, as the Assembly is aware, the General Assembly adopted decision 62/557, in which it agreed to consider the issue of Security Council reform through intergovernmental negotiations. As a result of that decision and other successive decisions on the same issue, inter alia, agreement was reached on five key issues: the categories of membership, the question of the veto, regional representation, the size of an enlarged Security Council and working methods of the Council, and the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

My country firmly believes in a larger Security Council and reiterates its position that the composition of the Council must be based on equitable representation. We therefore support an increase in the number of both permanent and non-permanent members, with particular emphasis on developing countries, without, however, extending the right of veto to new members.

We bilaterally support the aspirations of Brazil, Germany, India and Japan to be included in the Security Council as permanent members. We also believe that the matter of the underrepresentation of the African continent in the current form of the Security Council must be addressed. The number of African countries — and the fact that the majority of issues on the Council's agenda deal with situations arising in those countries — makes it necessary for them to have a greater presence on the Council. In addition, we reiterate our commitment to the need to use working methods that are more transparent and enjoy a greater degree of participation in order to strengthen the capacity and legitimacy of the Council and the Organization.

My country believes in the fundamental nature of this discussion. We therefore reiterate our commitment to the holding of a serious and comprehensive discussion in order to garner the views and aspirations of Member States in a democratic and respectful manner.

The commitment to achieving Security Council reform, together with the willingness to make headway on this issue, necessarily implies abandoning entrenched hard-line positions. On the contrary, if we aspire to specific results to that end, we must focus on

achieving the broadest possible consensus, making possible a true reform of the Security Council so that it can be more democratic, inclusive and transparent.

Mr. Körösi (Hungary): Hungary welcomes the convening of this debate of the General Assembly as an opportunity to relaunch meaningful discussions on the reform of the Security Council. The sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly succeeded in keeping the momentum of the process of intergovernmental negotiations going, but to our regret, again failed to produce a breakthrough. Unfortunately, our aggregated skills proved once more to be sufficiently effective to prevent any reforms from being implemented. Changes will not occur unless we start implementing them. One day we will have to face the question of why we failed to act once we had all agreed that changes in the world were calling for changes in the Security Council.

Some colleagues have cautioned against setting deadlines. For two decades, we had no deadlines. How much did that help? Some representatives argued against a step-by-step approach, but during the past 20 years, did we ever agree on a comprehensive solution?

The composition and the working methods of the Security Council should reflect the changes that have come about in the international political and economic scene. The enlargement of the membership in both categories is a measure necessary for reinforcing the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council.

We therefore welcome the initiative of the Group of Four and the draft resolution attached to their letter addressed to the President of the General Assembly dated 23 June 2011. That initiative has garnered wide cross-regional support and could be considered as the basis for starting real negotiations.

The process of reforming the Council brings with it an important opportunity for adopting a series of measures aimed at the improvement of the Council's working methods. The proposals of the group of five small nations contain important elements to be pursued in further negotiations. The reform process also offers us the possibility — and necessity — to think about a code of conduct that we should adhere to during election campaigns as well.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate Hungary's steadfast support for quick action on reform of the

Security Council and our hope for significant progress by the end of the sixty-sixth session.

Mr. De Vega (Philippines): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for prioritizing Security Council reform in the General Assembly's busy agenda. I also wish to congratulate Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, on his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council for the sixty-sixth session. It is indeed a tribute to Ambassador Tanin's outstanding leadership in steering that challenging and complex task that you have retained him, Sir, in that capacity.

I also wish to thank Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral, Permanent Representative of Portugal, who currently holds the presidency of the Security Council, for introducing the Council's annual report (A/66/2) yesterday, and express our thanks to the delegation of Germany for its important contributions to that report.

The Philippines fully concurs with the statement made yesterday by the Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. My delegation wishes, however, to stress a number of key points.

The Philippines remains a staunch supporter and promoter of Security Council reform. Our position has been consistent since the inception of the United Nations, inasmuch as the Philippines, as a founding Member State, was among the first to voice the need for the Council to be more responsive and effective in carrying out its mandate.

At present, the Philippines is actively and constructively engaged in the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations. In fact, we were again among those who strongly urged the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations to put down the diverse views and positions in writing, so that they could be recorded and compiled as the process moves forward. We are therefore very satisfied that the chair heeded our call and ably produced a text that reflects all proposals on key issues. Some may prefer to call it a compilation text, while others may want to call it a negotiation text. Whatever may be the preference, it is clear that we now have a working draft, which can serve as a basis for meaningful and substantive negotiations in the course of which amendments or revisions may be introduced.

The Philippines is pleased that its proposals on key issues are all reflected in the text. Obviously, I will not go through the details or elements of our proposals, owing to time constraints. But suffice it to say that our delegation believes that, if we are given the opportunity in future negotiations to expound on our position on those items, our position will be given due consideration and a favourable response by other delegations.

The Philippines strongly believes that Security Council reform is a work in progress and will not yield to a quick fix. However, that must not be construed to mean that the intergovernmental negotiations should just proceed with no end in sight. Yes, it is imperative to reflect on all our views and positions — after all, that is part of the democratic procedure — but we should all agree on when to stop talking and start negotiating. After four years of intergovernmental negotiations, perhaps we have now done sufficient talking. In essence, we have to move from rhetoric to action, so that we can produce the desired results that we are all anxious to achieve.

In that regard, the Philippines delegation proposes to the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform that he set a workplan or a timeline for negotiations and the modalities by which common and opposing views will be reflected in a text for negotiations. Let us be realistic. We do not expect to have agreement on all issues all at once. The Philippines believes that a general agreement on Security Council reform can only be achieved by incremental steps. Only after reaching the agreed points and views can we then agree on its totality.

The task of putting forward our ideas on how best to reform the Security Council is a delicate one, and the Philippines urges all Member States not to lose sight of our primary objective of making the Security Council more representative, more accountable, more democratic, more transparent, more responsive and more efficient.

It is indeed a painstaking and difficult task. But we all have a stake in making it happen in the foreseeable future. We must keep our faith and enthusiasm with regard to Security Council reform intact. No achievement of such magnitude will be attained if it is not fuelled and sustained by enthusiasm and the belief that success is possible.

Mr. President, we are encouraged by your good leadership and genuine desire to push Security Council reform forward. There will be obstacles and difficulties ahead, but we assure you that we stand ready to support you and Ambassador Tanin in carrying out this monumental task.

Mr. Beshta (Ukraine): Let me start by highlighting some elements at the heart of Ukraine's position regarding the subject of today's debate. As pointed out by the President of Ukraine in this Hall this past September (see A/66/PV.12), today's world presents the United Nations with new, complex and increasingly difficult tasks. In that respect, improvement of the effectiveness of our joint work is not possible without a comprehensive reform of the Organization and its principal organs, and indeed without modernization of the Security Council.

That is why Ukraine considers the reform of the Security Council to be an issue of exceptional international significance. Making the Security Council more representative and balanced and its work more effective and transparent, especially with regard to the decision-making process, is vital for adapting the United Nations to the global realities of the twenty-first century.

Security Council reform should be implemented in strict compliance with United Nations principles and purposes. Ukraine considers as a priority both aspects of the reform — an increase in the membership of the Security Council and improvement of its working methods. We believe that achieving progress in either of those spheres will bode well for the strengthening of the Security Council and the Organization as a whole.

Because my delegation had a chance yesterday to sketch out some ideas vis-à-vis reform of the working methods of the Security Council, I would like to confine my remarks today mainly to the issue of its enlargement. We support increased representation in the Security Council of developing countries from Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. We also strongly believe that an overall enhancement of the Security Council composition should be based on the existing regional groups.

In his address to the General Assembly, the President of Ukraine also underlined another important element. That is that my country is open to discussing all progressive concepts of Security Council reform that can lead Member States to the broadest possible

agreement. Taking into account the interests of all regional groups in this process is a *sine qua non* condition. In that light, any increase in the membership of the Security Council should entail an enhanced representation of the Eastern European States by allocation to it of one additional non-permanent seat.

We look forward to substantive negotiations on those and other aspects in resumed intergovernmental negotiations, with the aim of achieving early progress on Security Council reform. My delegation stands ready to do its share through active and constructive engagement in an open, transparent, inclusive and comprehensive negotiating process.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): I wish to thank the President for having convened this meeting in order to continue our deliberations on the long-standing and unresolved issue of reform of the Security Council, with the emphasis on the question of the membership of the Council itself. Malaysia is fully committed, in its contribution to the debate, to ensuring that the question of the membership of the Security Council, although a difficult one, will continue to be discussed, as we move to reform the Security Council.

I also wish to align my delegation with the statement delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. My delegation wishes, in addition, to extend our appreciation to Ambassador Zahir Tanin, chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, for his stewardship and good work. Malaysia will continue to cooperate and support him in this important task.

The developments that we have witnessed in New York this year concerning a proposal by some Member States on the question of the membership of the Security Council show that the international community is deeply divided on that question. While there is general agreement that the membership of the Security Council needs to be expanded, we have not been able to come to an agreement on how to move forward towards achieving that goal, which was already enunciated in resolution 47/62, adopted on 11 December 1992.

We have to admit that the failure to move forward on the substance on this pertinent question is symptomatic of the paralysis that has beset us for years. We continue to argue that the reform of the United Nations — and in particular the Security Council — is of the utmost importance to Member

States, but we have failed to show flexibility. On the contrary, some groups have hardened their positions, and today we are still where we were in 1992. We need to rise above our well-known positions and, as much as possible, reach out to other groups and Member States to ensure that Security Council reform, especially on the question of membership, will see some positive developments at this sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

Since the early days of the debate, Malaysia has consistently attempted to bridge the gaps among the many competing voices in the United Nations on the issue of Security Council reform. Our views have been based on the contemporary geopolitical and economic realities, a perspective that we have consistently brought to the discussion of reform of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions. Malaysia believes that the Security Council needs a major overhaul, both in its working methods and on the issue of expansion of its membership. Malaysia also supports the expansion of both categories of membership.

More importantly, Malaysia wants to see an end to the veto power among members of the Security Council, as it is undemocratic. Until such time, Malaysia will continue, as it has in the past, to urge the permanent members of the Security Council, in their exercise of the veto, to ensure that those actions be regulated, so as to prevent the veto from being used unjustly — and, more importantly, against the interests of the majority of Member States.

Malaysia is also sympathetic to the concept of permanent regional representation in the absence of clear and undisputed candidates for future permanent seats allocated to certain regions. That step would help regions facing difficulties in selecting candidates to represent them in the Security Council.

I would now like to address the question of the size of the enlarged membership of the reformed Security Council. In 1963, through the adoption of resolution 1991 (XVIII), amending Articles 23 and 27 of the United Nations Charter, the Assembly decided to expand the membership of the Security Council, admitting four more new members, making the 15-member Security Council that we have today. That expansion came against the backdrop of a United Nations that had 114 Members at the time.

Today, we have 193 Member States. The question that has arisen is: “What is the right number for a

reformed and enlarged Security Council?” Malaysia believes that we should look at the number of Member States and the corresponding number of the membership of the Security Council then and now, so as to be able to determine the optimum size for a reformed and enlarged Security Council. That is not mere math. The number will reflect the ability of the Security Council today to represent the interests of all Member States in ensuring the maintenance of international peace and security.

The time has come for all Member States to seriously consider areas of reform that we can all agree upon so that we can move the process forward. We have no choice but to show positive leadership in bringing about a final and agreed text. Flexibility and compromise are the only way forward. We have to work closely to ensure that more brackets in the negotiation text can be removed. We owe our people a solution to the prolonged stalemate in the discussion of reform of the Security Council. Not to reach one will affect the credibility of the United Nations as an effective Organization in meeting and addressing the current challenges that we face today.

Mr. Kapambwe (Zambia): I am grateful, Mr. President, for the opportunity to speak on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

Today, yet again, we have an opportunity to make progress in a process that began almost 20 years ago. It is an important process. It has been difficult; it has been frustrating. Just as has been the case so many times in the past, we have another opportunity — the opportunity to pretend that we are negotiating, when we know that we are not. We shall reiterate our positions ad nauseam. We shall criticize each other's proposals ad nauseam. We shall walk in, read our statements, and then walk out, no one bothering to listen to the other, no one bothering to speak with the other. It will be another missed opportunity, like the many others before.

Are we really ready this time to seriously discuss and negotiate the reform of the Security Council? Or are we still engaged in a war of attrition, hoping to tire one another into submission and grind one another into the ground until the other gives up, trying to outlast each other into the defeat of the other?

If we are not ready to engage in serious negotiations, I am ready to repeat, ad nauseam, Zambia's position on the reform of the Security Council. If anyone thinks that the war of attrition will wear us down into giving up and accepting an outcome that fails to address the mandate entrusted to us by our leaders at the Millennium Summit, I would like to state clearly that Zambia is much more resilient than that. Africa is much more resilient than that.

Our endurance stems from the fact that the struggles and experiences that we have gone through as a continent and as a people have been much more difficult than these negotiations. We are the continent and people that history has grudgingly acknowledged as a footnote. As a necessary, but inconvenient presence, we are the invisible continent and people's voice that the world could afford to ignore without consequences, but it can no longer do so. We are the continent and people that is always at the bottom of the pile. We are determined to demand our rightful place at the table.

It is understandable that there should be concerns about the efficiency and effectiveness of a larger Security Council, but it is not understandable why anyone can conclude that the addition of two African countries to the permanent category and another two African countries to the non-permanent category could erode the Security Council's efficiency and effectiveness.

It is understandable that there should be concerns about extending an undemocratic instrument like the veto. However, it is not understandable why anyone, particularly those who have extolled the virtues of democracy, should still want to retain it for themselves, while denying it to the two African permanent members of the Security Council. We do not understand. We do not demand equal treatment in the United Nations as an appeal to the benevolence of others. We demand equal treatment because we are entitled to it as a continent and a people.

Coming to the process itself, my delegation looks forward to the convening of the next round of negotiations by the facilitator, Ambassador Tanin. However, we hope that this time, we will have real negotiations and will master the necessary political will to make real progress. Zambia and Africa are ready.

Mr. Aquino (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the convening of this meeting of the General Assembly to continue discussing one of the key issues linked to the reform of the Organization: the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

Thanks to the faultless stewardship of our work by Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, it has been possible to conduct an open, transparent and inclusive process. We are therefore pleased that we can continue to count on his assistance in leading the intergovernmental negotiations in informal plenary on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

The important and substantive discussions that we have held on the Security Council reform process demonstrate the urgent need for the Organization to adapt to the current international context and adequately reflect the changes in the global arena. In that regard, Peru believes that we must take advantage of that significant momentum to achieve a renewed and reformed Security Council so as to turn it into a more democratic and representative body that is effective and efficient.

With that in mind, Peru believes that we should give fresh impetus to the negotiations and move towards the informally structured drafting exercise that will lead to a negotiating text with clear alternatives that has the support and, in particular, I stress, the political commitment of the membership. While we welcome the compilation of proposals by the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, in the light of what the membership has stated to date, Peru would prefer a basic negotiating text that goes beyond the consolidation of positions and identifies and analyses the options before us so that we can move on to negotiations that achieve tangible, balanced and representative results — always on the basis of the principle that it must be an inclusive and transparent process seeking prompt Security Council reform.

Peru once again reiterates its conviction that, in order to adapt the Security Council to new realities, we must add new members, permanent and non-permanent alike, thereby promoting fair and balanced regional representation that alters the current status quo.

With regard to the issue of the veto, Peru has consistently held a position of principle whose ultimate goal is the veto's elimination. However, in a constructive spirit and in order not to paralyse the negotiating process, my delegation believes that a commitment should be made to assess, as a first stage, a restricted use of the veto, thus making use of the idea of the rule established by Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter. In addition, Peru believes it important to reach a consensus that makes it possible to set precise limits on the use of the veto, removing the possibility of exercising it in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity and repeated flagrant violations of human rights.

Any process should lead to us taking a decision. The constant repetition of our national positions only delays a cross-cutting decision supported by the majority of the membership. In a word, if we wish to reform the Council, as we unanimously declare here, we must turn that desire into concrete commitments.

At the same time, it is important that the Security Council make progress in a serious and comprehensive self-evaluation of its work. That must be done in order to determine the new actions that must be undertaken to increase its legitimacy, as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of its work.

In that regard, my delegation believes that it is very important to advance concrete reform of the Council's working methods so as to make them transparent and efficient. To that end, we think it essential that more open meetings be held, that there be more meetings updating members on the subjects under discussion and that they be substantive and timely. We also believe it important to consolidate the Council's practice of holding consultations with troop-contributing countries ahead of discussions of relevant issues in the Council, as well as to include regular self-assessment and reviews of the implementation of the Council's decisions.

My delegation commends the open consultations on the Security Council reports that are held before the reports are drafted. Such a practice encourages transparency, better coordination with the General Assembly and the responsibility that falls to the Council to take members' criteria into account when it hears and heeds them. We would therefore like that to become a regular practice.

The Secretary-General's reports and the practice of holding open debates on matters before the Council — such as, for instance, the situation in the Middle East and the Secretary-General's reports on post-conflict peacebuilding or the role of women in peacebuilding — are initiatives that we appreciate. If such practices are to have genuine added value, they cannot amount merely to a pro forma stage after which presidential statements are issued immediately or, worse, a stage where the Council's conclusions are already known before the proceedings are over.

Inasmuch as the debates should reflect the opinion of the Members of the Organization on areas for which they are responsible, it is essential that every position expressed be taken into consideration, including the possibility that Council members make listening to non-member States a priority as a demonstration of the Council's desire for openness and inclusivity, both of which we feel are essential to the work of such a significant organ.

Allow me to conclude by reaffirming my country's full willingness to continue to participate constructively in this new phase of intergovernmental negotiations in the informal plenary on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

Mr. Rishchynski (Canada): At the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, the membership took an important decision to launch intergovernmental negotiations on the comprehensive reform of the Security Council. After several years of discussions, and in the light of last year's experience — where there were several attempts, not all of them happy, to push initiatives forward — we believe that today is an opportune moment to reflect on what has been accomplished so far and on how we should focus our negotiations to ensure progress during the sixty-sixth session.

While the debate of the past year has shown that the membership remains fundamentally divided, Canada strongly believes that convergence among Member States is not out of reach. There is broad agreement on the need for an increase in the size of the Security Council, while keeping in mind the need to ensure that it remains effective. The recent actions by the Council in Libya and Côte d'Ivoire demonstrate the need for, and value of, swift and decisive action by the

Security Council. Those examples stand in stark contrast to the lack of an effective response to the situation in Syria. As we consider reforms to the size and composition of the Security Council, we must not lose sight of the need for unity of purpose among Council members and a willingness to act in the face of such challenges.

(spoke in French)

Canada welcomes the many informal meetings held around the world that have permitted informal, constructive discussions across groups of interests, but it is quite clear that serious disagreements remain on a number of issues, such as categories of membership. Canada's position on this issue is well known. The Security Council cannot be effectively reformed by merely extending the privilege already accorded a few countries to a handful of others simply by adding permanent seats.

My country firmly believes that, in order to achieve democratic, accountable and transparent reform of the Security Council, there must be an increase in the number of elected, non-permanent members. Expanding the number of elected members would allow for better representation of all of the world's regions, particularly traditionally underrepresented regions such as Africa, and would also provide greater opportunity for States to serve on the Council at regular intervals.

(spoke in English)

It is for that reason that Canada wishes to seriously explore intermediate options. For example, reforming the Security Council by adding more elected seats, with the possibility of re-election, or with slightly longer terms of as much as three to five years, might satisfy the need to recognize the special contributions that some Member States make to the United Nations, while maintaining the necessary accountability to the broader membership and ensuring that there is space for small and medium-sized countries to serve on the Council.

While there are still many specifics to be considered, further exploration of the intermediate options currently offers us the best chance of unlocking the current stalemate. In order to achieve substantive progress on Security Council reform, all delegations must be willing to put aside their own preferred options, and engage in serious negotiation aimed at a

compromise solution. For that reason, Canada urges all States to look towards possible compromises. It is our hope that in the coming year we will have constructive, rather than divisive, efforts around the five key reform issues and perhaps make headway on a consensus.

Mr. De Alba (Mexico) *(spoke in Spanish)*: At the outset, allow me to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Tanin, on his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council.

More than two years have passed since intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform began. During that time, while significant progress has been made, such as the drafting of the basic document for the negotiations, we have not been able to realize our common goal of achieving comprehensive reform of the Security Council that addresses the five key points outlined in decision 62/557. Mexico believes that the need for reform is urgent, and is ready to continue to participate actively in the intergovernmental negotiations with the aim of creating a more representative, democratic and transparent Security Council. To that end, we will maintain the constructive, cooperative and flexible spirit that we have shown throughout the seven previous rounds of negotiations.

During the previous session of the General Assembly, intergovernmental negotiations were disrupted by divisive attempts to impose a partial model of reform that, as we saw, did not enjoy the support of the majority of Member States, much less bring us closer to consensus. Those initiatives exacerbate the divisions among States and make comprehensive Security Council reform even more elusive. We hope that they will not be repeated.

Mexico has actively participated in the process of intergovernmental negotiations because we are aware of the urgency of making rapid progress in comprehensive reform by looking for alternative solutions that will narrow the gap between the positions of diverse groups and countries. With that aim, on 18 July we held an international meeting in Mexico City specifically to encourage a more detailed exploration of intermediate or compromise proposals that could help us end the current stalemate.

Mr. Körösi (Hungary), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We took that step because we know that Security Council reform requires the broadest possible agreement among members in order to endow the Council with the necessary political legitimacy to guarantee the effectiveness of its decisions. We are ready to continue to discuss such an intermediate solution within the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations. Along with the other members of the United for Consensus movement, Mexico has already made a specific proposal in that vein. We continue to hope that other groups or countries will show the same flexibility.

Security Council reform should not extend more privileges — much less outdated ones — to a handful of countries, but rather should enhance the Council's representation, effectiveness, transparency and accountability. For that reason, Mexico does not support the creation of new permanent seats, which would limit access to Security Council membership, as well as that organ's ability to adapt to the world's changing realities, and would contravene the basic principle of equal sovereignty among States.

Instead, throughout the negotiations we have proposed the adoption of the principle of immediate re-election of elected members or extending the two-year term, which would reconcile the hopes of all parties. It would adapt the composition of the Council to new regional balances, giving the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean their proper place, while simultaneously offering a longer-term presence to those States that aspire to play a more active role in the Council.

Similarly, we have made specific proposals to enhance regional representation, to reform the use of the veto by the five permanent members, since it cannot be eliminated, and to improve the working methods of the Security Council and its relationship with the General Assembly.

All those proposals are included in the second revised version of the basic text for the intergovernmental negotiations. That document, in our view, is the only one to have so far been recognized by the membership as the basis for the intergovernmental negotiations. A third version of that document, while requiring substantial changes in order to be acceptable to all Member States, should be the task we set ourselves today. We hope that today's debate will allow us in short order to resume the intergovernmental

negotiations, under the leadership of Ambassador Tanin, in accordance with decision 65/554 of 12 September, in order to begin this urgent work.

In conclusion, I would like to point out, as other delegations have already done from this rostrum, that to continue discussing positions we have advanced over the past 17 years will lead nowhere. We will not manage to reconcile our differences by attempting yet again to impose partial solutions outside the framework of negotiations. We will achieve comprehensive Security Council reform only if we can demonstrate the political will to undertake serious negotiations and to seek a compromise solution that is acceptable to all.

Mr. McKay (New Zealand): I thank President Al-Nasser for convening this important debate and for keeping the topic before the General Assembly.

It has been more than two years since New Zealand last spoke in any United Nations forum on Security Council reform. In those two years, we and many others have watched those with a major hand in that debate develop their proposals and counter-proposals. In those two years, we and many others have watched the major players try and fail to promote their ideal version of reform. In those two years, unfortunately, there has been very little progress. We echo what others have said in that regard. In those two years, to be frank, there has been very little negotiation; indeed, with many participants so constrained by their instructions, it appeared that, in effect, some had no mandate to negotiate at all. Again, we echo what others have said in that regard.

Our silence has been quite deliberate. It has been two years during which my Government has reflected on the fundamental questions. Do we want a reformed Security Council? If so, what do we want a reformed Council to look like? What model of reform is in New Zealand's interests? What model of reform is in the interests of the United Nations? Above all, what model of reform is achievable? After two years of silence and reflection, the conclusions are neither novel nor surprising.

Yes, the Council clearly needs to be reformed. As we witnessed with Libya earlier this year, the Council is an extraordinarily powerful instrument for maintaining international peace and security. But, as New Zealand pointed out in its statement in September's general debate (see A/66/PV.29), with extraordinary power comes extraordinary responsibility —

responsibility that must be exercised with regard for the views of all countries, large and small.

Yes, a reformed Council must include a longer-term role for major Powers like India and Japan, and, indeed, for others that, for different reasons, did not merit consideration in San Francisco in 1945. But just as it must recognize the legitimate aspirations of larger and emerging Powers, a reformed Council must also better serve small States. After all, most United Nations Members are not major or emerging Powers; they are small States. It is crucial to the universality of the United Nations and to its legitimacy that small States also have the opportunity to contribute at the Council table.

There are real risks if we do not achieve genuine Security Council reform. Emerging Powers will be denied a role consistent with their global significance. Small States will continue to be squeezed out of positions of responsibility. And the United Nations will suffer as a result. In short, we have reached the hardly startling conclusion that is in the interests of all Members — large and small, developed and developing — that the Security Council be more representative. It must therefore be reformed.

Those reflections are, as I suggest, neither novel nor surprising. Like the debate we are having today and the intergovernmental negotiations that will come yet again in a few weeks, they are unlikely to change the world. However, they do provide us with a foundation from which to assess where this debate is going and to clarify what, in New Zealand's view, needs to happen if that debate is to move forward.

As we all know, despite assertions of progress and movement, and despite the genuine and intensive efforts of those involved, particularly the tenacious work of the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Tanin, the debate on Security Council reform has stagnated. Initiatives to promote expansion in the permanent category have not resulted in change, nor have ideas about possibly expanding only the non-permanent category.

As such, New Zealand, while not a member of any reform group, joins the growing number of countries that think a compromise is needed; that neither the Group of Four nor the United for Consensus models for reform are necessarily the right ones, and certainly might not be achievable; that flexibility is required, as outlined by the Permanent Representative

of Mexico; and that painful concessions must be made if we do not want to find ourselves repeating the same conversations in another two years, and two years after that, and two years after that.

We believe that the basis for that compromise is to be found in the "intermediate model", largely as espoused earlier by the Ambassadors of San Marino and Mexico, in which a new category of longer-term seats would be created, probably complemented by an expansion of the non-permanent membership. We acknowledge that the details of such an intermediate model need to be developed. We deliberately keep our description of it general, because we come here today to express our willingness to work with others in its development and, at this stage, we do not wish to compromise that work by espousing detail that might not be achievable.

For New Zealand's part, our approach will be based on principles that we believe must underlie any reform of the Security Council. Election to the Council should be earned based on performance, not on any presumed sense of entitlement, and Council members must be accountable to the wider Assembly for their decisions.

Above all, in working with others in that task, we will have genuine authority to negotiate, subject only, of course, to final instructions from our capital. We hope that others will be likewise empowered. Rather than sitting on the sidelines, New Zealand wishes now to be actively involved in the Security Council reform debate. We therefore welcome the President's focus on that reform during this session. We look forward to hearing the views of others on the intermediate model. Most of all, we hope that we will not have to wait another two years, and perhaps another two years after that, before we achieve some progress on this critically important issue.

Ms. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): At the outset, my delegation would like to thank the President for having convened this important and most timely meeting, as well as to congratulate Mr. Zahir Tanin, our colleague the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, on his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, for his leadership in guiding these complex deliberations.

New realities prevail in today's world, leading us to recognize with greater awareness the geographical imbalance of the Council's membership and the

limitations on the way in which it operates. Kazakhstan reiterates its commitment to reforming the Council on both those fronts. With a view to enhancing regional representation, my delegation reaffirms its position on increasing the Council's membership from 15 to 25 through the establishment of six permanent and four non-permanent seats, as per the generally agreed principle of regional allocations. This proposal to increase the number of non-permanent seats is based on the principle of fair and equitable representation, with each country in a region having the opportunity to be a member of this important organ of the United Nations. For example, if there is one additional seat for the Asian group, each country in that region, through a system of rotation, would get the chance to serve as a non-permanent member of the Security Council once every 17 to 18 years.

Moving the negotiations forward demands a new understanding among Member States in order to narrow the differences between the vast majority of Member States, which are in favour of an expansion of the Council in both categories, and the Uniting for Consensus group, which insists on expanding only the non-permanent category of seats. Regional tensions need to be overcome so that the Council's mandate can be effectively implemented and for the process, which has been ongoing for more than two decades, to a successful close. Furthermore, the proposals put forward at the most recent round of intergovernmental negotiations should be carefully reviewed, in particular with respect to the right of veto, with all its implications, and a viable solution found.

We thank the group of five small nations for their recommendations on revising the Council's working methods. Kazakhstan sees this as a complementary effort aimed at helping to move the reform process forward. The goal of an improvement in the Council's working methods is not to limit the power of the Council or to try to subordinate it to the General Assembly, but, rather, to strengthen the Council so as to make it more efficient.

Kazakhstan would therefore like to propose some further areas and steps for consideration, such as greater transparency and accountability; fairer participation; access to information through open briefings, thematic debates and consultations with States that are non-members of the Security Council; the involvement of troop-contributing countries in decision-making processes on peacekeeping operations;

and easy availability of its agenda, draft resolutions and presidential statements.

Member States expect the Security Council to develop a greater capacity to respond rapidly and effectively in serious and sudden emergencies, as well as to conflicts and threats to peace. Often, the Council is unable to develop a common position on interventions, which have far-reaching negative humanitarian or security implications for a country or region and even the international community, since we live in an interconnected world.

Those shortcomings in terms of structure and modus operandi make it imperative to strengthen the cooperation mechanism between the Security Council and the General Assembly, which represents the interests of all Member States. The most crucial unresolved Security Council disputes could thereby be discussed in the Assembly to enable the Council to adopt more informed resolutions.

We welcome the measure aimed at increasing the number of open meetings of the Security Council and reducing the number of closed ones. That would ensure greater transparency so that Member States can get direct, accurate information, rather than obtaining it from external sources or the media, thereby allowing for a more thorough assessment of issues related to peace and security.

In conclusion, I reiterate Kazakhstan's commitment to engage in the intergovernmental negotiations in a spirit of full cooperation, with a view to the speedy finalization of the reform of the Security Council so that it can respond to new and emerging global geopolitical realities and socio-economic developments.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): At the outset, let me thank the President for convening this meeting and for his leadership. I also wish to express our appreciation for the decision to identify United Nations reform and revitalization as one of the priority issues of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly. In that connection, we congratulate Ambassador Tanin on his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. We support his efforts.

It has been more than eight months since the seventh round of negotiations was held. We had expected to make some steps forward to overcome the long-standing deadlock. However, we saw no

improvements towards that end. We have also seen some initiatives from various groups of Member States to gain support for their positions.

Nevertheless, today it is more than obvious that all of those initiatives have failed to garner the required support and that the deadlock is unfortunately even deeper. That is why I would like to emphasize, once more, the importance of flexibility by all in order to break the deadlock and ensure more democratic and equitable representation in the Security Council.

I wish to underline the need for consensus and the importance of reaching a compromise in order to achieve some progress in the Security Council reform process. If we all wish to see a more accountable, transparent and effective Council to address the challenges of the future, we should all be prepared to reconsider our positions and take steps forward.

We believe that the experience of being represented in the Council should not be limited to a small group but should be available to all Member States. To that end, together with some friends, we have declared our readiness to support the intermediate approach. We expect the same intention and political will from all Member States.

Finally, I would like to reiterate our belief that the five key issues identified in decision 62/557 — categories of membership, the question of the veto, regional representation, size and working methods of the Council, and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly — should be addressed together in order to reach a comprehensive solution. We hope that the required flexibility will be shown by all Member States and that the Security Council reform process will regain the needed momentum.

Mr. Onemola (Nigeria): My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting. We welcome his commitment to move the reform of the Security Council forward during the Assembly's current session. We therefore welcome the early decision to reappoint Ambassador Zahir Tanin as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. That *démarche* is a demonstrable commitment to sustaining the momentum in the ongoing reform efforts.

Nigeria remains firmly committed to an inclusive, comprehensive and holistic reform of the Security Council in size, scope and composition. As well-

intentioned as the 1965 reform of the Council was, it was carried out at a time when the majority of the current Member States were not part of the process. Moreover, that reform only addressed the expansion of the Council in the non-permanent category. That explains our active participation in the negotiations since the new dispensation — which has led to three text-based revisions — began in 2009.

The current impasse in the intergovernmental negotiations, due to objections raised by certain delegations, is therefore regrettable. The need for inclusiveness, in order to exhaustively consider all the options presented by Member States, should not be used to stall the commencement of real negotiations. We must bear in mind that the vast majority of Member States crave an early reform of the Security Council in accordance with the objectives set out in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) and the 2000 Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2). Similarly, any proposals that seek to jeopardize Africa's legitimate demand to be represented in the permanent-seat category of the Security Council will not meet global expectations.

As we look ahead to a new phase of negotiations, we believe strongly that Ambassador Tanin's September 2009 assessment — that the reform model seeking an expansion in both categories commanded the most support from the delegations taking the floor — should serve as the basis for further negotiations. We commend the lead role of the group of countries that sponsored draft resolution A/61/L.69 to pursue expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent membership categories through a draft resolution. We see their proposal as the most practicable in our current dispensation.

In that connection, Nigeria remains convinced that the reform of the Security Council will not be complete without an increase in the size of the Council in both its permanent and non-permanent categories and a change in its composition to reflect the current global geographical realities.

Since the objective of the reform is to make the Council more democratic, more representative and more transparent and to improve access for non-Council members, Nigeria expects the reform to redress the historic injustice done to Africa, the only region not represented in the permanent-seat category in the Council and which is grossly underrepresented

in the Council's non-permanent category. Africa's demand for permanent seats in the Security Council therefore deserves special consideration. Also deserving singular attention is additional seats for Africa in the non-permanent category. Consequently, Nigeria supports the expansion of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories.

Similarly, the reform must take into account the underrepresentation of developing Member States in Asia and Latin America, including small island States.

With regard to the size of an expanded Council, we support the addition of 11 seats. The new permanent members should be assessed on the basis of Charter-mandated responsibilities applicable to current members.

There must be comprehensive improvement of the working methods of the Security Council.

Lastly, consideration should be given to the top troop-contributing countries (TCCs). Five have already been chosen, as members of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, to sit as observers in the Council's deliberations on a bimonthly rotating basis. They would be responsible for circulating information on the issues affecting TCCs and for making immediate inputs, as the Security Council may require them to do on the spot, on behalf of TCCs.

Like all novel ideas, particularly those that challenge the Council's working methods, it may stand little chance of seeing daylight. Nevertheless, if the Security Council is to meet the twofold challenge of becoming a modern organ whose performance is judged by the speed and quality of service delivery, this creative and innovative idea is worth pursuing.

In order not to lose any further momentum on the reform, the Nigerian delegation will continue to support the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council in the hope that, in due course, we will start real negotiations to determine those proposals that will be met with the acceptance of Member States. We therefore call on Member States to demonstrate the necessary political will and understanding, and to exercise the flexibility required to achieve a reformed Security Council that represents the new global configuration.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to sincerely

congratulate President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser and commend him on his very efficient leadership of the debates of the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session. I also thank him for having convened this plenary meeting in order to debate the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, as well as for making the issue a priority in his agenda.

We hope that this very timely debate will provide new impetus to Security Council reform and the momentum needed to resume negotiations so that we can continue this process, which has been under way for, I would say, almost 32 years. The debate on the question of equitable representation in the Security Council and the expansion of its membership began in 1979 at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, at the request of Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Guyana, India, Maldives, Nepal, Nigeria and Sri Lanka. In 1992, at its forty-seventh session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 47/62, pursuant to which the Secretary-General published the report containing comments made by Member States (A/48/264 and addenda 1-10).

As we approach the end of 2011, it would be appropriate for the international Organization that is the United Nations to offer, through its General Assembly, some encouraging signs that this lengthy process will culminate in 2012 with the successful reform of the Security Council.

The United Nations advocates and promotes respect for human rights, good governance and social, political and economic reforms in countries. Those reforms are being carried out by many developing countries, including mine. His Excellency Mr. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, has called a national referendum, to be held on Sunday, 13 November, so that the people can vote on a package of comprehensive reforms to the Constitution of Equatorial Guinea. The proposed reforms include limiting presidential mandates to two seven-year terms, and introducing a senate, an ombudsperson, a council of the Republic, an economic and social council and a court of auditors to encourage greater civic participation in national affairs, fight corruption and give greater impetus to Equatorial Guinea's development programme, *Horizonte 2020*. That being the case, it is inconceivable that the Security Council, one of the main organs of the United

Nations, has spent almost three decades debating its own much-needed reforms.

I am taking part in this debate as Permanent Representative of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, which currently chairs the African Union and is a State member of the Committee of 10 of the African Union. In that regard, as Coordinator of the Committee of 10, I fully associate myself with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representatives of Egypt on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group.

In that regard, I reaffirm the demand of the African continent for full and broad representation in all decision-making bodies of the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, which bears the primary responsibility for making decisions related to international peace and security. Such representation would be achieved by granting Africa at least two permanent seats on the Security Council, with all of the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership, as well as five non-permanent seats.

Assembly members will agree that it is wholly unimaginable and unjustifiable that a continent like Africa — with a population of more than 1 billion and home to more United Nations States Members than any other continent and to the greatest number of issues addressed by the Council — does not hold even one permanent seat on the Council.

In that regard, I note that Africa's call for a seat on the Security Council must be construed not as an inflexible or stubborn stance, but rather as a just demand and an inalienable right in today's modern world and above all, as I just mentioned, in a global Organization such as the United Nations, guarantor of the principles of justice, good governance and human rights. My country reasserts its position, which is that of the African Union, that an agreement must first be reached on the basis of those principles before it participates in any exercise to streamline and consolidate the negotiating texts.

Along the same lines, the common African position rejects any provisional or transitional proposal in the negotiations, given that the main thrust of those proposals runs counter to the provisions of the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. That was the decision reached at the Kampala Summit, held in July 2010; reaffirmed at the African Union Summit

held in Addis Ababa in January; and unanimously reconfirmed at the Malabo Summit in July.

We therefore express our full confidence in His Excellency Ambassador Zahir Tanin and thank the President of the General Assembly for having reappointed Mr. Tanin as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We are also fully confident that all of Africa's partners, friends and allies from all regions and continents will continue to support us as we strive to ensure that our legitimate claim becomes a tangible reality.

My country and my Government generally consider it to be incumbent upon all States, regions and interest groups to align their views on Security Council reform in favour of equitable representation and an increase in the number of members in both categories to make Council reform transparent, objective, impartial and democratic. This is what we want to see — a restructured Security Council in particular and a United Nations system that takes into account the interests of all of the States and geographical regions that make up the international community in the broader sense. That requires that all States continue to make progress and overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of achieving a truly reformed and more representative Security Council.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The issue of Security Council reform is one of the most important on today's agenda. This is largely because in this case we are dealing with one of the principal organs of the United Nations — one that, according to the Charter of the United Nations, bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

How we resolve this issue will largely determine the effectiveness of the work of the Security Council, and the United Nations in general, in the foreseeable future. In that regard, it is not surprising that discussions on Security Council reform are extremely complex. There have been seven rounds of intergovernmental negotiations, and Member States have been able to move forward in some respects with the reform process, but there is as yet no broad-based solution that would satisfy most Member States.

It would not be right, however, to lay the blame on the organizers of the negotiating process. There is something much deeper at work here. Many States are

trying to entrench their positions at the United Nations, and we are seeing new economic and financial centres of power seeking to heighten their profile through inclusion in the Security Council.

Russia, as a permanent member of the Security Council, is in favour of making that body more representative. However, efforts in that direction should not negatively affect the Council's ability to rapidly respond to emerging challenges. That is even more important in conflict situations. We are therefore in favour of retaining a compact Security Council membership; we believe that, optimally, it should not have more than 20 members.

But we cannot accept some of the issues brought up today — regarding the veto power, for example. We also need to remember that the veto is an important factor that impels both the permanent and non-permanent members to seek balanced decisions.

We are convinced that the issue of Security Council reform cannot be resolved only arithmetically, by putting various models for voting together and arriving at a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly. We need to be able to strengthen this international Organization. Certain countries and groups of States want only to expand their support base for their initiatives, so in that context we believe that the formula for Security Council reform should have the maximum consensus-based support of the Organization. It is politically necessary to ensure the support of many more Member States than is legally required by the stipulation regarding a two-thirds vote in the General Assembly. We are prepared to consider any logical variation and all compromise solutions if they are broadly supported by the United Nations. At the same time, the level of progress made so far means that we have not been able to devise a universal formula for Security Council reform that would garner broad-based support. The approaches taken by Member States are quite divergent. In those circumstances, there is no alternative but to work patiently to narrow the gap between negotiating positions.

We will continue to support the intergovernmental negotiations held under Ambassador Tanin's chairmanship. We firmly believe that this task should be carried out peacefully, transparently and inclusively, without setting any artificial time limits.

In conclusion, I should like to say that a successful reform of the Security Council will depend

on the political will of Member States and the willingness to find a compromise solution.

Mr. Ovsyanko (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Belarus is a firm believer in the crucial role of the Security Council in the resolution of conflicts and the maintenance of international peace and security. The course that Belarus has taken by participating in United Nations peacekeeping operations is a testament to that belief. Belarus is keen to see Security Council reform lead to a more balanced and equitable composition of the Council that would include both developing and developed countries of various regions.

On that basis, Belarus supports an expansion of the Council, with due consideration given to all regional groups, and strongly advocates the allocation of one additional non-permanent seat to the group of Eastern European countries. Belarus would like to see continued efforts towards a comprehensive reform of the Security Council that takes into consideration all aspects of its current activities.

Belarus opposes any hasty attempts to vote on documents that have not been thoroughly studied and have not yet garnered broad-based agreement, as that could have a negative impact on further negotiations.

Belarus stresses the importance of improving the working methods of the Security Council, in particular with respect to such issues as transparency vis-à-vis the General Assembly and Member States. Much is being done in that area, including enhancing the Council's transparency and the effectiveness of its decision-making, as well as ensuring better access to information concerning the Council's work.

Belarus believes that this process should be continued and should include broader participation in Security Council meetings by non-members of the Council, as well as in decision-making processes when such decisions concern them; broader access by non-members to meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council, including, as appropriate, the right to participate in such meetings; making available draft resolutions and presidential statements to non-members of the Council before decisions on them are taken; continuing the practice of conducting consultations with troop-contributing countries; and continuing to hold briefings for non-members, not only at the beginning of a presidency but also upon its completion, and, as appropriate, during the term of office.

Belarus believes that improving the working methods of the Council is not a one-time exercise but an ongoing process that must adapt to changes in the international area. Therefore, the Council's working methods should be flexible and allow for appropriate and effective responses to present-day challenges. We also note that Belarus is opposed to unwarranted encroachment by the Security Council on areas of competence of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council.

In electing non-permanent members of the Council, we count on close cooperation with them and on their readiness to share knowledge and information on what is happening in the Council.

The delegation of Belarus is grateful to Ambassador Tanin, and we support his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. Belarus is ready to continue constructive participation in the negotiations on the process of Security Council reform, with the aim of reaching the broadest possible consensus among Member States.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to thank the President for having given this matter such high priority on the programme of work of the current session of the General Assembly. We also welcome the reappointment of Ambassador Zahir Tanin to the crucial position of coordinator of the negotiations. We express to him our full cooperation in successfully carrying out his task.

As a member of the Uniting for Consensus group, Colombia's position is well known. We support an intergovernmental negotiations process carried out on the basis of the consensus reached in 2009, which is reflected in the provisions of decision 62/557. We believe that any attempt to ignore or sidestep this consensus or move away from the reference framework agreed upon and incorporated in the decision is totally inappropriate. In particular, we are concerned that there have been arbitrary attempts to emphasize an element, or elements, set out in that decision in order to attribute greater importance to them in the general context of Security Council reform, to the detriment of other elements of no less importance.

We believe that what has happened over recent months clearly shows that the majority of the Members of the United Nations desire transparent, balanced and consistent negotiations. The Uniting for Consensus group has shown considerable flexibility and has

proved by its actions that it is prepared to accept compromise. We invite other groups of States to rethink their respective positions and show greater flexibility and willingness to engage in dialogue as the only way to achieve the necessary consensus.

The reform must be comprehensive, transparent, balanced and equitable and must reflect the needs and interests of Member States, in particular of developing States, which have always been underrepresented on the Security Council.

We believe that the reform of the Security Council should make it more democratic. We firmly believe that it is not appropriate to increase the number of permanent members. We believe that reform is urgent, but we are opposed to the imposition of deadlines. We are aware that the methods and working procedures must be attuned to new situations. The same is true of the issue of categories of membership, the representation of various regions, the Council's substantive agenda and the length of Council membership.

I wish to say that, in our view, invoking Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter should be the exception and not the rule. We share the belief that other provisions of the Charter, such as those contained in Chapters VI and VIII, provide valuable tools of which the Security Council should avail itself more frequently, particularly in cases in which the situation brought before it are not of such seriousness as to constitute a true threat to international peace and security. Invoking Chapter VII should be a tool of last resort, once other options have been exhausted. It should only be used when it is really needed.

As we express our sincere hope that the process of intergovernmental negotiations will resume immediately, we wish to say that the path leading to Security Council reform can only be taken by general agreement, which presupposes a willingness to engage in dialogue in a constructive spirit and to consider the various proposals that may be made. Colombia is prepared to participate fully and with great resolve in that process.

Mr. El Mejerbi (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my delegation would like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly on his wise decision to reappoint Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, as the chair of the

intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform.

I wish to align myself with and support the statements made at the 51st meeting by the representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group and the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

For more than a few years now, we have been trying to undertake a process of reform of the Security Council, which is a sine qua non for the reform of the United Nations as a whole, in response to the current variables to be addressed in the international arena. These variables require adopting modalities and a modus operandi to make the Council more transparent and able to fulfil its primary mission of maintaining international peace and security. That can be accomplished by honing its competence and effectiveness in decision-making and providing speedy responses to threats to international security and stability.

Undoubtedly, recent events in different parts of the world, particularly the legitimate Arab revolutions witnessed in the Middle East and North Africa, have proven the need for an immediate United Nations response to events in order to maintain peace and security, shore up global stability and protect thousands of people from imminent danger.

The new Libya looks forward to rebuilding a State torn apart by the previous dictatorial regime, which terrorized and threatened the Libyan people and encroached upon their rights for more than 42 years. We are well aware of the importance of living in peace and security. On that basis, we are determined to buttress all efforts to reform the Security Council. We are committed to positive cooperation with all parties in all efforts designed to achieve real reform of the Security Council, through the African Group, which represents the clear-cut common African position set forth in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

We will try to make the Council responsive to all the missions entrusted to it in accordance with the Charter and to rectify the historic injustice that has befallen Africa — which has never had a permanent seat on the Council — to do it justice through fair representation, especially in the permanent seat category, to acknowledge its historic right and to end its marginalization.

We are of the view that the reform of the Security Council should include actual improvements to its working methods, activities and procedures, as well as bringing transparency and openness to its work, as it garners the effective participation of non-members, particularly on those issues that directly concern them. Many peoples have suffered for decades the scourge of foreign occupation, despotism, repression, coercion, injustice, human rights abuses and an absence of security and stability. They yearn to live in peace and safety so that they can achieve development and prosperity and fight the poverty and ignorance that are a fundamental threat to their security and stability.

All participating delegations should therefore together assume their responsibility and undertake serious action within the framework of the United Nations to ensure that their peoples' aspirations to security and stability are met. Reform of the Security Council is one of the most important ways of achieving that.

Mr. Limeres (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking the President for having convened this meeting. I also welcome Ambassador Tanin's reappointment to lead the negotiations.

The international community depends on a multilateral system with clear and respected rules so that it can adequately protect the positions and interests of each of its members. In that regard, the Security Council plays a central role in maintaining international peace and security. We recognize how important it is that the Council's actions be based on law and legitimacy. To that end, it must be as democratic as possible.

We understand certain countries' interests in occupying permanent seats. We firmly believe, however, that the best way of achieving a more democratic, efficient, representative and responsible Council, accountable to the international community, is by increasing the number of its elected members, not by adding to the privileges that, for historical reasons, the five permanent members hold today — as would be the case if we were to add new permanent members.

Argentina fully supports reform of the Security Council. However, we believe that it must be carried out with the broadest consensus of United Nations Members. Therefore, with the group of countries Uniting for Consensus, we are ready to continue to

work towards viable and realistic reform, exploring intermediate ways of arriving at that consensus. In that regard, we believe that a reform of the Council that envisages longer terms in office for non-permanent members, or their re-election, or a combination of both could, meet with the general agreement that is so necessary for that purpose.

We are against making partial progress on aspects of the reform that do not enjoy broad consensus or accomplish nothing but to take us further from a general consensus. The process of intergovernmental negotiations under the auspices of the General Assembly is under way, and it would not be appropriate to impose specific positions that would set aside our proposals, which have considerable support.

The meetings held by the Italian Government in Rome on 16 May and by the Mexican Government in Mexico City on 18 and 19 July show that there is a broad consensus that Security Council reform is necessary and that the eventual solution should enjoy the broadest possible consensus, well beyond the two thirds majority required by the Charter of the United Nations. At the Mexico meeting it was clear that progress in reforming the working methods of the Security Council, which does not require reforming the Charter, is therefore completely viable.

No reform can succeed if delegations are unwilling to budge from their positions. Argentina and the Uniting for Consensus group have frequently displayed flexibility. We urge every delegation to do the same. My country has full confidence that under the guidance of the President, we will be able to move forward on a path to compromise.

Mr. Sin Son Ho (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation would like to thank the President for convening this important meeting on Security Council reform.

Almost 20 years have elapsed since discussion on reforming the Security Council began. During that time, many constructive opinions and views have been presented, but substantive agreement has yet to be achieved. The Council, which was established 66 years ago, has failed to reflect today's changed international relations. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea wishes to state the following position on Security Council reform.

First and foremost, it is important to ensure the principles of equitable regional allocation and representation of the political forces that so far have been sidelined. In particular, full representation should be given to the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, a political force that constitutes the majority of the United Nations membership.

Although serious negotiations on expanding the permanent membership of the Security Council have been conducted, divergent views still remain in place, going in parallel with no sign of compromise. In that regard, my delegation once again suggests that we should first settle the issue of increasing the number of non-permanent members, a subject on which it should be relatively easy to reach an agreement among Member States. We believe that it would be more reasonable to discuss the issue of expanding the permanent membership on a step-by-step basis after the non-permanent membership is enlarged.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea wishes to take this opportunity to clarify once again its position on the matter of Japan's candidacy for permanent membership of the Security Council. Japan militarily occupied Korea and many other Asian countries for several decades in the first half of the twentieth century and committed the most heinous crimes against humanity in the history of humankind. Moreover, Japan has not yet made a sincere apology or provided compensation for those acts. On the contrary, it distorts history, even beautifying and justifying its crimes. As a result, Japan has no political or moral qualifications to become a permanent member of the Security Council. Japan should follow the example of Germany in clearly repudiating its past and winning the trust of the international community, and should refrain from greedily seeking a seat on the Security Council.

Improving the Security Council's working methods is another important issue in Council reform. Bold interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States and the use of armed force against them are undertaken under the pretext of protecting civilians. The Council is being abused in this area. International law and order are being violated, and certain countries' high-handedness and arbitrariness generate distrust.

The reality prevailing today requires that Member States reaffirm the principle of safeguarding peace and sovereign equality enshrined in the Charter and speed

up the process of reform of the entire United Nations, with the reform of the Security Council at its core. Sanctions and the use of armed force are not appropriate means for the solution of problems. Rather, they obstruct political and diplomatic solutions and have a negative impact on the peace and security of the world. Continued sanctions and use of armed force also discredit the United Nations and the Security Council.

Against that backdrop, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea believes that a mechanism should be established whereby Security Council resolutions on sanctions and the use of armed force that are directly related to peace and security would become effective only with the approval of the General Assembly. By doing so, we would be able to check the arbitrariness practised by certain countries and represent the will of all 193 United Nations States Members.

In conclusion, my delegation expresses its belief that the proposals and suggestions on the reform of the Security Council submitted by the Member States at this meeting will be thoroughly taken into account.

Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation thanks the President for convening this meeting and firmly supports his commitment to the issue of Security Council reform. Above all, we welcome his decision to reappoint Ambassador Tanin as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations process.

Nicaragua associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the group of countries that sponsored draft resolution A/61/L.69/Rev.1, a broad, diverse and representative group made up of many delegations from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific island States.

From the outset, Nicaragua has supported the initiatives and positions of the friendly countries among the African Union States, small island developing States, Arab States and landlocked States that sought to achieve the reforms needed to transform the Security Council into a democratic, transparent and inclusive body with full participation.

As my delegation has previously stated, the democratization of the Council is an essential matter that must be immediately supported. We therefore urge expansion of the Council in both the permanent and the

non-permanent membership categories to 25 or 26 members, including members from developing countries, based on equitable geographic representation.

The new permanent members must hold the same rights and obligations already existing under this category. Only an expansion based on those provisions will ensure progress in the reform process, as has been stated by the overwhelming majority of Member States.

My delegation considers it unimaginable that regions such as Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean would lack permanent seats on the Council. Another important aspect my delegation wishes to stress is the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, which is a matter of crucial importance with respect to ensuring the democratic character, legitimacy, effectiveness and representation of the United Nations. That relationship must therefore be considered and reformed in all its aspects.

We have also stated here, and reiterate today, that the working methods of the Security Council leave much to be desired. The Council's working methods must enable its transformation into a more transparent and inclusive body that incorporates increased participation and is effectively accountable to the General Assembly. Nicaragua supports proposals to that effect.

My country trusts that the intergovernmental negotiations will be resumed as quickly as possible. We appeal to all Member States of the Organization to provide the necessary political will and required flexibility to ensure the immediate achievement of the democratization of the Council, which is absolutely necessary, and to achieve at long last the reforms needed for an effective and legitimate Security Council.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of His Excellency Mr. Osman, Permanent Representative of the Sudan, I thank the President for convening this meeting. My delegation commends the efforts of the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan in the intergovernmental negotiations and discussions on Security Council reform.

We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the statement

delivered by the representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States.

The delegation of the Sudan believes that the recent intergovernmental negotiations achieved no progress that meets the aspirations of Member States on this important and vital issue. The matter of equitable representation on the Security Council has been on the General Assembly's agenda since 1979, without any significant progress.

My delegation considers reform of the Security Council, through intergovernmental negotiations in accordance with decision 62/557 and subsequent decisions, to be of fundamental importance.

In that context, we wish to emphasize the following. First, Security Council reform should be conducted based on a comprehensive, transparent and democratic framework that reflects the significant realities and developments in international relations that have taken place since the Second World War, including the increase in the membership of the United Nations and the interests of developing countries.

Secondly, the reform of the Security Council requires not only the enlargement of both the permanent and non-permanent membership categories, but must also include improvements in the Council's decision-making process and working methods in order to become more transparent and equitable. In that connection, we believe that the reform of the Council's decision-making process should be considered under an enhanced framework of multilateral international cooperation in order to maintain international peace and security and to deal with the current and emerging challenges that cannot be addressed in a unilateral, narrow or limited manner.

Thirdly, it is important either to abolish the veto power outright, or to limit its use.

Fourthly, and lastly, with respect to the enlargement of the Council, we wish to stress that it is important for any enlargement to be based on the principle of equitable geographic representation in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of Council membership. In that context, we support the position of the African Union set out in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration that any expansion of the non-permanent membership category alone is an unacceptable option, for it would neither change the composition and power balance of the Council nor

eliminate the historic injustices inflicted on Africa. Besides, expansion of the membership alone would be tantamount to deforming, not reforming, the Security Council.

Ms. Ome (Bhutan): My delegation would like to commend the President for convening this plenary meeting, thereby enabling us to continue our efforts to bring about an early reform of the Security Council.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the group of countries sponsors of draft resolution A/61/L.69/Rev.1.

Since the 2005 World Summit, the leaders of the world have continued to call for the early reform of the Security Council as an essential element of the overall reform of the United Nations, in view of its important function. Even during the general debate at the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, many leaders reiterated the call for early reform of the Council. My delegation therefore appreciates the high priority that the President has given to the reform of the United Nations. We welcome the reappointment of Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations.

My delegation is of the view that in the past two years, substantial progress has been made in our effort to move the process of the intergovernmental negotiations forward. Seven rounds of intergovernmental negotiations have taken place, and Member States have spelled out their respective positions on the key issues. A number of proposals have been made. The Group of Four initiative proposing a draft resolution calling for expansion of the Security Council received much support, which reflected the wish of the vast majority of Member States for the expansion of the Council in both categories of membership. We believe that those are all positive developments that will contribute towards achieving tangible results.

My delegation's observation of the deliberations during the intergovernmental negotiations is that the reform model consisting of expanding the Security Council in both categories of membership enjoyed the greatest support. On the issue of the veto, we believe that the majority supports the extension of the veto to all permanent members of the Security Council, whether new or current, as both have equal responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and should be eligible for the same

rights and privileges, including the veto. On the other key issues, which we consider equally important, we believe that the differences are minimal and that consensus is achievable.

In concluding, my delegation would like to express its hope that, under the President's wise and able guidance, the next round of intergovernmental negotiations will resume soon, so that we can build on the progress achieved and work towards bringing about substantive reform of the Security Council.

Mrs. Beck (Solomon Islands): My delegation would like to join others in acknowledging the President's firm leadership on the issue of reforming the Security Council.

We would like to associate ourselves with the statement made by my colleague in the small island developing States group, Ambassador Raymond Wolfe, Permanent Representative of Jamaica, speaking on behalf of the group of countries sponsoring draft resolution A/61/L.69/Rev.1.

For decades now, the wider membership has called for an expansion in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories of Security Council seats. As stated by other representatives, in September more than 100 countries made that call again. We are pleased to see that the President responded to the call and reappointed Ambassador Zahir Tanin to facilitate the intergovernmental negotiations. We have every confidence in his ability to carry out the task and note the good work that he has done since 2009.

We are moving into the third year of informal intergovernmental negotiations. We are concerned and believe that we need to have more regular discussions so as to prevent the intergovernmental negotiations from sliding into circular discussions. In our view, the pace of negotiations has been slow but, with everyone's support and cooperation, that could be increased.

The world, including its political and economic dynamics, has changed. We now need to see more developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America occupying seats in the expanded permanent category. In the non-permanent seat category, we would like to see representation on the part of the African, Asian, Eastern European and Latin American and Caribbean States. Of particular importance to my delegation is a seat for the small island developing

States (SIDS). My delegation could not agree more with what was said by the representative of Barbados on behalf of the Caribbean Community yesterday, namely, that special provision should be made for the SIDS in the non-permanent category of Council seats (see A/66/PV.51).

As for the question of the veto, we would like to see its total elimination. If the veto is retained, its full rights and privileges should be extended to all permanent members, without exception.

My delegation hopes that, during the course of this session, we can put down milestones for the first meeting of the intergovernmental negotiations, so as to ensure that we make progress in the negotiations that is acceptable to all Members. We can begin by streamlining our negotiation text to ensure that it remains action-oriented. This is a house of words, and my delegation is positive that we can do that.

Let me conclude by stating that we must work within the spirit of the Charter and the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. We assure the facilitator and the President of the ongoing support of Solomon Islands in order to reform our principle organ.

Mr. Khazae (Islamic Republic of Iran): Let me begin by expressing our appreciation to the President for convening this meeting on such an important issue. I would also like to thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for his tireless efforts in leading the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform.

While associating my delegation with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement, delivered yesterday by the Ambassador of Egypt (see A/66/PV.51), allow me also to present a few more points in my national capacity.

There is general agreement among Member States on the fact that the Security Council, which was established on the basis of the realities of the 1940s, certainly no longer responds to the needs, concerns and realities of the world today, and should therefore be reformed both in its working methods and in its decision-making processes, as well as in its composition and structure. We all know that, as it stands today, the Security Council is one of the most anachronistic international bodies and requires urgent and comprehensive reform in order to have it correspond to the needs and requirements of the day.

In that regard, we believe that the Security Council reform process should not be viewed merely as an opportunity to score maximum national gains. Rather, it should be seen as an indispensable responsibility for all of us, a responsibility and a necessity that is long overdue and that, if undertaken in a way that can garner the widest possible political acceptance by Member States, will benefit the United Nations and the whole world community.

Impartiality, transparency, accountability and fairness are the key requirements that should guide the Security Council in discharging its Charter-mandated responsibilities. To increase the transparency of its work and improve its working methods, the Council should seriously take into consideration the relevant provisions of the Charter as well as the resolutions that clarify its relationship with the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations.

The size and working methods of the Council are the two most important aspects of Security Council reform. We concur with the view that the composition of the Security Council does not represent the realities of the international community today. That issue should be thoroughly addressed and resolved through a meaningful reform of the United Nations. The credibility, efficiency and effectiveness of the Council will be strengthened by giving adequate attention to an equitable geographical distribution of its membership. It is noteworthy that the current composition of the Security Council is neither regionally balanced nor geopolitically reflective of today's realities. Therefore, the new composition should accurately reflect the realities of today, as has been stated by many of my colleagues.

As to the Council's working methods, we are of the view that the Security Council's failure to adequately improve its working methods and decision-making processes have brought about a situation in which we are witnessing a decline in trust in this important organ in international public opinion. That trend has, in turn, led to the loss of reputation and credibility by the Council in the eyes of the general membership. According to Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council acts on behalf of all Member States. However, in reality, not only do the Council's decisions reflect to a lesser and lesser extent the wishes and views of the general membership, but in many cases they do not even represent the genuine opinion of its own membership.

Whereas, in accordance with the Charter, the General Assembly, as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations, is primarily entrusted with the task of the progressive development and codification of international law, we have been witnessing an alarming trend in which the Security Council has been increasingly involved in law-making and norm-setting practices. That is a disturbing trend, which runs counter to the letter and the spirit of the Charter and should be checked and reversed. Unnecessary and quick resort to Chapter VII of the Charter, and the threat or use of sanctions in cases where no actions have even been necessary are other issues of concern for the general membership. They have also hurt the credibility and legitimacy of the Council's decisions.

As has been mentioned by many different delegations since the very beginning of the work of the United Nations, the veto power has always raised concerns and criticism on various grounds on the part of a significant majority of Member States. There is a strong sense of injustice and discrimination between the haves and have-nots. In fact, the veto is a non-democratic and non-constructive instrument.

Finally, we believe that a meaningful reform of the Council will be possible only through addressing those shortcomings and by dealing in a serious and meaningful manner with the question of the underrepresentation of developing and Muslim countries in the Council.

Before concluding, I wish to stress that as the President proceeds to implement the difficult but important task bestowed upon him to move the process of the reform of the Security Council forward, he will always find us beside him offering our sincere help and constructive support.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker on agenda item 122.

Several representatives have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I remind them that statements in the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first statement and to five minutes for the second statement and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Aikawa (Japan): My delegation has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply in response to the statement made by the representative of the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is most regrettable that we are compelled to respond at this late hour, when all other delegations are engaging in serious debate on Security Council reform.

The allegations made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are simply not acceptable to my delegation. First, Japan has been making serious efforts to contribute actively and constructively to the maintenance of international peace and security. Japan has served as a non-permanent member of the Security Council 10 times since its accession to the United Nations and has done its utmost to contribute to the Council's work in a responsible and constructive manner. We believe that our policies and actions over the past decades speak for themselves. We trust in the judgment of other Member States regarding our contribution to international peace and security.

Secondly, my delegation cannot accept the references made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea relating to the issue of our past history. Since the end of the Second World War, Japan has addressed the issue of its past with sincerity and consistency. With that in mind, for more than six decades, Japan has dedicated itself to promoting international peace and prosperity, as well as demonstrating its respect for democracy and human rights.

Japan continues to stand ready to further contribute at all times to international peace and security.

Mr. Kim Song (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation has asked for the floor to exercise the right of reply to respond to the remarks just made by the Japanese representative.

As we have mentioned previously, regarding past Japanese crimes, my delegation once again strongly urges the Japanese delegation to acknowledge its legal responsibility for all its past crimes, including the sexual slavery system perpetrated by the Japanese Army, involving 200,000 women, the forcible drafting of 8.4 million and the massacre of 1 million Koreans during the occupation of the Korean peninsula in the first half of the twentieth century.

That is the very definition of crimes against humanity. But Japan has not yet offered its apology or compensation for them. On the contrary, Japan distorts

its history and even justifies its past crimes and whitewashes them. That clearly shows once again that Japan has no political or moral qualifications to become a permanent member of the Security Council.

The Acting President: I now call on the representative of Japan, who has asked for the floor to make a further statement in the exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Aikawa (Japan): We have already explained our position on the issues that the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has just raised. I will refrain from entering into a detailed rebuttal of the statements made by the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Suffice it to say that we cannot accept the statements by that delegation, and that it is most regrettable that the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has made use of this meeting — in which all other Member States are seriously discussing Security Council reform — in order to advance its entirely unfounded accusations against Japan.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 122.

Programme of work

The Acting President: I should like to consult members regarding an extension of the work of the Sixth Committee. Members will recall that, at its 2nd plenary meeting on 16 September, the General Assembly approved the recommendation of the General Committee that the Sixth Committee should complete its work by Thursday, 10 November.

I have been informed by the Chair of the Sixth Committee that, in order to avoid a possible conflict between the programme of work of the General Assembly, as revised, and the programme of work of the Sixth Committee, he would like to request the approval of the Assembly to move the last meeting of the Sixth Committee from 10 November to 11 November.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to extend the work of the Sixth Committee until Friday, 11 November?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.