

Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative of India at the First Exchange of the Eighth Round of Intergovernmental Negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council on November 28 2011

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by congratulating you on being re-appointed as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform.

As we stated in the formal plenary meeting in the General Assembly on 8 November ,you are a highly experienced and wise Chair and we believe that the PGA could not have chosen a better person for this important task. In fact your letter of 10 November which outlined your general approach towards the issue in the current General Assembly session reiterates our assessment about your skills and abilities.

At the outset, I would like to place on record my delegation's willingness and determination to continue to participate actively in these negotiations.

We also align ourselves with the statement made by Ambassador Raymond Wolfe of Jamaica on behalf of the L69 Group.

Mr. Chairman,

Your letter rightly mentioned that in the course of the 66th General debate, world leaders once again highlighted the importance of the reform of the United Nations and the Security Council in particular.

In our count, around 100 world leaders articulated their views on the matter.

Some leaders were particularly forthright and frank in their comments.

For instance, His Excellency, the President of Nigeria told the Assembly on 24 September and I quote, "A reformed UN Security Council is the only way to demonstrate that all nations have equal stake in the UN."

My own Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh said, "The reform and expansion of the Security Council are essential if it is to reflect contemporary reality. Such an outcome will enhance the Council's credibility and effectiveness in dealing with global issues."

Mr. Chairman,

The entire international community is aware of the far-reaching impact of the outreach undertaken by a wide coalition of member-states on a short resolution that calls for reform comprising expansion of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories and improvement in its working methods.

As Ambassador Wolfe rightly pointed out, the outreach initiative took as its starting point your own assessment in September 2009 that the reform model seeking an expansion in both categories “commanded the most support from the delegations taking the floor.” And these Mr. Chairman are your words. Further, the initiative is completely in accordance with the parameters laid down in GA decision 62/557, which established the intergovernmental negotiations, and other relevant resolutions.

The results of the outreach indicate that this proposition enjoys broad support from delegations across various regions. To date, an overwhelming majority of delegations have signaled their support for this proposition, including 80 or more that have done so in writing.

Again at the formal plenary meeting held on 8 and 9 November, two out of every three speakers called for a reform model based on expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. In fact, my distinguished colleagues from Australia, Hungary and the Netherlands who was also speaking on behalf of Belgium went so far as to state that the short resolution should be put on the agenda of the intergovernmental negotiations.

Mr. Chairman,

The principles captured in the short resolution are simple and straight forward. These principles enjoy strong support among the UN membership. In our view, therefore, the intergovernmental negotiations should continue its work on the basis of these principles.

We could even adopt this as a GA resolution. It does not necessitate any Charter amendment and it does not exclude any other model. In fact, its adoption will articulate the general membership’s resolve to engage in good faith negotiations on the basis of the said principles.

Delegations with other points of view should feel encouraged to likewise put forward their principles and seek the support of the rest of the UN membership. Such efforts are par for the course in all intergovernmental negotiations.

The elements of the short resolution could also be appropriately reflected in the Rev3 along with the degree of wide support that it enjoys.

In addition, as regards the size of an expanded Council, the area of convergence seems to be in the mid-20s. Further, the great amount of numerical support for what we have been loosely calling the ‘veto restraint agreement’ is writ large in Rev3. So is the case with the overwhelming support for “equitable geographical distribution” as selection criteria for new members. All these aspects could be articulated in the negotiation text without repeating different formulations of the same principles. This will in one swoop considerably reduce the length of the negotiation text.

And let me add, lest I am misunderstood, all original proposals remain on the table!

Mr. Chairman,

My distinguished colleague from Egypt has made several comments regarding the ideas of the L69, including on the rights and obligations of new permanent members. Even though he spoke after Ambassador Wolfe, who spoke on behalf of L69, it would appear that he did not really hear the L69, which was clear that these rights and obligations must be the same as those of current permanent members.

I must also mention that the L69 and the Chair of the C-10 of the AU are in close contact given that the two Groups are on the same page with common goals on Security Council reform.

May be my distinguished colleague from Egypt whose activism and political maturity I personally greatly admire, is not on the same page as our distinguished colleague from Sierra Leone. And I would like to quote from the statement of our colleague from Sierra Leone where he says in the penultimate paragraph, in the second half, "At this stage, all of us must bear the responsibility to be flexible if we are truly committed to reforming the Council as resolved by our leaders at the 2005 World Summit, to make it more inclusive, democratic, transparent, accountable, legitimate, efficient and effective."

Mr. Chairman,

India is a member of two groupings devoted to early reform of the Security Council, namely the G4 and the L69. The positions of these two groups have a number of common elements with other groups and member-states who have made proposals on the subject. We are keen to enhance our convergences with such other like-minded groups during this General Assembly session, in particular with the African Group whose aspirations we support.

Mr. Chairman,

It is useful when we are immersed in any process to take a step back and reflect on the big picture.

We, the Indian delegation, see a mosaic that is neither appealing nor sustainable. The moot questions that are being asked the world over are: What is the alternative to the current Security Council?; How long should the world be subject to the mercies of a woefully inadequate system erected in 1945?; What prevents the international community from replacing an outdated governing architecture based on a selective interpretation of the dictum 'to the victor belong the spoils'?

There are two propositions that can help us unlock these mysteries, if you will.

First ,there is a growing recognition of the fact that the widespread feeling of marginalization among the un-represented and under-represented is now leading to a sharp sense of frustration which carries with it the potential to unravel the existing system.

Second, the established order should hasten to acknowledge the frustration and act credibly on it by ensuring a managed and orderly transformation so as to make it reflective of contemporary realities. Those who swear by the status quo and therefore latch on to their national positions risk contributing to a process that could endanger the entire edifice of international relations as it is presently structured and as we know it.

Mr. Chairman,

Change should usher in a new order. The new order has to assume responsibility. Once such responsibility is effectively discharged the Security Council will betaken seriously on all issues, and not merely on those in which by a conspiracy of factors unrelated to the maintenance of international peace and security some of the powerful are able to agree!

I am sure that you will agree with me when I say that we can witness more effective and efficient functioning of the Security Council if and when the Council is able to utilize the energies and resources of its most willing and most capable member-states on a permanent basis.

Along with membership will have to come responsibility, along with responsibility will come the willingness of burden sharing including where the costs are beginning to pinch and hurt the permanent members.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that India is of the view that reform and expansion of the Security Council are essential if it is to reflect contemporary reality. Such an outcome will enhance the Council's credibility and effectiveness in dealing with global issues. Early reform of the Security Council must be pursued with renewed vigour and urgently enacted.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)