

Intervention by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative, at the informal meeting (closed) of the plenary on the 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, 12 July 2010

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you very much for giving me the floor.

Today's debate goes to the very essence of Council reform. To use a simple analogy, if the final product of Council reform were a building, then the key issue of 'categories of membership' would be the foundation, the column, the wall, the lintel, the arch, the vault, the dome, and the roof all rolled into one.

And Mr. Chairman, when I say this, I merely echo the views of the overwhelming majority of the UN membership, who are unambiguous that there must be an expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of Security Council membership.

But why does this overwhelming majority want expansion in both categories? Differences in articulation apart, the basic argument has two strands. One, that Security Council continues to reflect the geopolitical realities of 1945 rather than 2010. Two, the remedy to the current state of affairs is to make the Council reflect the contemporary geopolitical realities, critical for its legitimacy but also for the efficiency and effectiveness with which it carries out its primary task of maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

India's clear position is that comprehensive reform of the Security Council implies expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. In this regard, India's stance reflects that of the overwhelming majority of the international community.

Mr. Chairman,

There are some who take the position that repeated elections are the panacea to the Council's weaknesses. Some argue that improvements in the working methods are the be all and end all of the reform process. Some try to apportion ratios to the different strands of the negotiations and call for carrying the reform process forward on the basis of calibrating these ratios.

To the proponents of all these arguments, I have to clearly state that the G4 and L.69 positions have incorporated these valuable points and gone two steps further. The G4 and L.69 proposals have recognized that correlation is not causation and has gone in for both the curative and preventive approaches alongwith provisions for further action as may be required in time through a review.

Mr. Chairman,

The large majority of these proposals, including those from the African Group, the L.69, the CARICOM and the G-4 call for an expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories. This is also the running strand in proposals with some variations.

Liechtenstein has called for "six additional members" which "shall be elected to serve on a permanent basis for renewable terms of [8/10 years]"while going onto add that such candidates "shall not be eligible to serve as nonpermanent members in accordance with article 23, paragraph 2, of the UN Charter for the following [8/10] calendar years."

Moreover, barring a handful, even other proposals that favour expansion only in the non-permanent category also call for some form of an intermediate model or solution.

Most of the proposals, of course, provide for a review clause.

Mr. Chairman,

The negotiation text thus presents us with what is essentially a three-fold choice with review clauses where appropriate:

- i. continuation of existing categories while expanding the size of both of them
- ii. creation of a third new category of seats; and
- iii. for having only one category of non-permanent seats.

It is the view of my delegation that Rev 2 could merge the relevant portions under this key issue of "categories of membership" on the basis of the three-fold choice that I have just mentioned. We further believe that the Chair should eliminate those options that do not reflect the middle-ground. If this is not feasible, at least we should be able to quantify the support that different options have received, either in the body of the text or in its footnotes.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, let me reiterate that the Indian delegation is willing to work with other delegations in a spirit of flexibility and compromise in order to shorten this text.

Thank you.

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