



Permanent Mission of Italy  
UN - New York

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Maurizio Massari  
on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus Group**

**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  
13 December 2023**

Check against delivery

*Distinguished Co-Chairs,*

*I take the floor on behalf of Uniting for Consensus (UfC), a pro-reform group, welcoming this first meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Security Council reform for the 78th Session of the General Assembly. Under your leadership, we look forward to constructive and committed work with all negotiating groups in this new session, building on the achievements of the 77th session.*

*As we stated many times, the credibility of this reform process depends on its transparency and inclusiveness. For this reason, the UfC group reiterates that the IGN remains the sole agreed negotiating setting for Security Council reform, as established by Decision 62/557.*

## ***Distinguished Co-Chairs,***

*In your letter of 21 November, you invited Member States to address the five clusters mentioned in Decision 62/557 in a comprehensive and concentrated manner. We, however, feel that further discussion on each cluster could prove beneficial and thus is welcome.*

*Our aim is to ultimately reach a long overdue comprehensive reform, and finally deliver a more representative, democratic, transparent, accountable and effective Security Council. The common thread in our position for every cluster is an enlargement only in the elected (non-permanent) category, giving priority to underrepresented regions in order to tilt the balance in the Council toward democratically elected members and ensure an equitable geographic representation. Why then do we need a comprehensive reform? If we want a better Council, beyond expanding elected membership, we also absolutely need to ensure that the use of the veto is limited. We need to fine-tune the Council's working methods especially with a view to empowering the elected members, as well as its interactions with the other main UN bodies, starting with the General Assembly.*

*On the **categories of membership**, the best way to achieve a reform for all -I repeat: "for all" is by expanding only the number of non-permanent seats, which would be subject to regular elections. The UfC opposes the expansion of permanent membership, with or without veto powers.*

*This goes against the principle of sovereign equality, preventing the rest of the membership's from serving more frequently on the Council and further hampering the Council's action and efficiency. A constant rotation and regular elections would ensure that the UN reflects, in real time, the constant evolutions that occur in the world. Besides they are essential to making the Security Council more representative of and accountable to the general membership. The expansion of the number of elected seats contemplates the creation of non-permanent seats, whose terms would be longer than the current two years. It would help meet the demand of those Member States that are willing and able to offer a long-term contribution to international peace and security.*

*When it comes to the cluster of **regional representation**, enlargement in the non-permanent category would accommodate the legitimate regional aspirations of all. It would not only enable more countries from respective regions to serve on the Council, but also allow for a rotation of seats among cross-regional groups. On the contrary, adding new permanent members to the Security Council does nothing to increase regional representation. In fact, while elected members of the Council must always heed the interests of those they are representing, permanent members - not subject to elections - do not represent the wider membership: they represent themselves alone. Moreover, additional and individual permanent seats first, create the illusion that a country elected only once and with a life tenure represents that region in its entirety.*

*Second, any permanent seat from a region prevents other Member States from that same region from being elected to the Council.*

*UfC is committed to ensuring “Equitable geographical distribution”, as referred to in the article 23 of the UN Charter. The composition of the Council’s non-permanent membership must equitably reflect the different geographical groups within the UN membership.*

*Concerning the issue of the **size of the Council**, the IGNs have demonstrated that enlargement of the Council up to a maximum of mid-twenties is a convergence among MS and negotiating groups. The UfC reiterates that the size cannot be discussed in isolation from other issues such as the ‘categories of membership’ and the ‘equitable geographical distribution,’ and that due consideration should be given to strike a balance between representativeness and effectiveness of the Council. By enlarging only the non-permanent membership of the UNSC, UfC expects to increase the weight of the elected members in decision-making.*

*Concerning **the veto**, it is a fundamental pillar of the reform process and has a direct impact not only on the efficiency of a reformed Security Council, but also on the credibility of the United Nations. Member States are increasingly calling for the abolition of the veto. The UfC shares this sentiment, because the veto undermines the rights of others. It makes the Security Council less democratic and less effective, as we have unfortunately experienced.*

*If the P5 are not going to renounce their vetoes, which UfC would favor but is unrealistic, we believe that further extending the veto to more States would only exacerbate - not mitigate - inequality, further obstructing the Council's decision-making process and its capacity to reach solutions to vital peace and security matters. Can we imagine an effective and efficient Security Council with 11/12 vetoes? In addition to the well-known initiatives to limit the use of the veto, which the UfC members support, the most effective and feasible way of re-balancing the veto is to increase the number of elected members. This would tilt the balance away from the permanent members, with a twofold consequence: the elected members would collectively have a larger say in decision-making, and the political burden of vetoing a resolution would increase.*

*The UfC proposes a broad array of measures on **working methods of the Council** to make them more flexible, inclusive and transparent, and enhancing the **relationships between the Council and the other main UN bodies**. We also believe that Article 27 (3) - which states that a party to a dispute in the Council (including both permanent and elected members) shall abstain from voting in decisions under Chapter VI of the Charter - must be fully applied.*

### ***Distinguished Co-Chairs,***

*We have recalled here the principles and views of the UfC on the main pillars of reform, but we will certainly have further opportunities to address more thoroughly certain points tomorrow and in the next meetings of the IGN, when we discuss the models.*

*Obviously, a lot remains to be done to encourage a rapprochement between the various positions. There can be no alternative to reaching convergence on the main pillars of the reform; no one benefits from a standstill, or from crystalized positions. Convergences and meaningful compromises will allow us to move to negotiating details of the new SC architecture on a text. If everyone makes a sincere and genuine effort to reach a compromise and agree on common ground, we could achieve Security Council reform much sooner than many might expect.*