

**Joint Nordic Statement to be delivered at the Intergovernmental
Negotiations (IGN) on 13-14 December, 2023**

by

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Excellences, Co-Chairs,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Denmark.

Please allow me to extend our sincere gratitude to Ambassador Albanai and Ambassador Marschik for taking on the important role as Co-Chairs of IGN for the second year in a row. We want to commend you both on your proactive and innovative approach that led to important progress last year. We are optimistic that we can build on these convergences to make further progress in this year's session.

We also wish to thank the Co-Chairs for their letter of 21 November 2023, which outlines the parameters of today's meeting. We welcome the Co-Chairs' initiative to address all issues of the five clusters in a comprehensive and concentrated manner during this meeting. While of course discussions on the five key issues will also naturally continue throughout our later focus on different models.

Illuminating the interlinkages and connections among the five clusters could enable convergences as we gain a deeper understanding of various positions. In order to make progress toward meaningful reform of the Security Council, we must all engage in crosscutting conversations about how proposals across the five clusters can serve as a platform for wider discussions of the urgent need for reform to ensure the legitimacy of the Security Council.

Co-Chairs,

Security Council reform remains a key priority for the Nordic countries. In order for the Council to be able to fulfil its mandate of maintaining international peace and security, we need a Council that is better equipped to address and act on the crises we face today. A Council, which reflects the world of today, and which is capable of addressing the needs and concerns of people from all regions of the world.

The Nordic countries have long been advocating – and will continue to do so - for a more representative, effective, transparent and accountable Security Council. We support expansion of a reformed Council with both more non-permanent and permanent members. That includes, redressing the historical injustice done to the African continent through better representation for African countries in both categories.

While expansion of the membership of the Council can improve representation and legitimacy of the Council, an enlarged Council further actualizes the need for reform of the Council's working methods to accommodate an increased membership. In the meantime, we also need to continuously review and improve the methods, and continue finding new innovative ways to ensure an effective and accountable Council..

Another key area is the question of the future of the veto. The Nordics remain committed to support initiatives to limit the scope of the veto. We must carefully consider the possible negative impacts of the veto power on the work and functioning of the current and a future enlarged Security Council, and of the United Nations as a whole.

The Nordic countries believe that further reforms are urgently needed to ensure that a veto if cast, is done so in line with the broader purposes and principles of the Charter. A veto must not paralyze Council action on critical matters of international peace and security. This is particularly important in the current situation on the Council. Moreover, in line with the ACT Code of Conduct, the veto must never be used to halt Council action aiming to prevent or end the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.

The use of the veto should come with transparency and accountability. The veto-initiative adopted by the General Assembly is a step in this direction, and serves as an example of the role of the General Assembly in bringing initiatives for a more accountable Council.

The Nordics support initiatives that further strengthen the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly and the General Assembly's own role in matters of international peace and security. We believe that a systematic and institutionalized approach to reform will increase transparency, inclusiveness and accountability of the Council's work to the broader UN membership.

Co-Chairs,

The coming session will be particularly important since we look ahead to the Summit of the Future as an important inflection point to reaffirm our common commitment to Security Council reform. In this regard, we support your approach to making the two processes mutually reinforcing by submitting a substantial contribution to the Summit of the Future co-facilitators on the basis of this year's IGN process.

The Nordic Countries lend our full support to your leadership as Co-Chairs of the process, and we stand ready to contribute to a constructive and interactive dialogue including on the different models of reform in this year's important IGN session.

Thank you.