

**Statement to be delivered**

**by**

**Her Excellency Menissa Rambally,**

**Permanent Representative of Saint Lucia to the United Nations**

**On behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)**

**at**

**the intergovernmental negotiations (IGN) 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**

**Please check against delivery**

**Distinguished Co-Chairs,**

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the fourteen (14) Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). At the outset, please accept CARICOM's sincere appreciation for your decision to continue in the role of Co-Chairs of the IGN process for the 78<sup>th</sup> session. CARICOM assures you of its full support and cooperation as we engage on this critical agenda item.

CARICOM also takes this opportunity to commend your leadership during the 77<sup>th</sup> session. We have taken due note of the innovative practices implemented in the last session as described in your letter of 21 November 2023. CARICOM has also taken note of the work plan outlined in that letter and thank you for providing early orientation on how the IGN will proceed this session. The transparent and inclusive way you approach your assignment is certainly important for our work in the IGN.

**Distinguished Co-Chairs,**

In keeping with the direction given in your letter for today's discussions to focus on the five clusters of the reform, with a view to further increasing the understanding of positions and fostering convergences among IGN participants, CARICOM is pleased to elaborate its proposals once again. These proposals have been endorsed by our Heads of Government premised on the shared desire for achieving lasting Security Council reform.

CARICOM supports expansion of both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership and supports the inclusion of Africa in the permanent category of membership on the Council. We believe that this expansion should be premised on the need to ensure an equitable representation of all regional groups in both categories. The current composition of the Council is by no means equitable. Entire regions – specifically Africa and my own region of Latin America and the Caribbean – are unrepresented in the permanent category, with 60 percent of the Council's permanent membership concentrated in a single region. This configuration has outlived its usefulness and we must collectively work to change it. CARICOM takes this opportunity to reaffirm its support for the Common African Position as outlined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

With respect to the size of an enlarged Council, CARICOM is broadly supportive of an increase in the mid to upper twenties. Any increase in the size should include a rotating seat for Small Island Developing States across all regions. As you know, CARICOM remains a strong advocate for a dedicated SIDS seat. As a group, SIDS comprise a significant portion of the UN's membership, but are usually absent from the deliberations of the Security Council. A truly representative and enlarged Security Council must reflect the SIDS reality and a dedicated SIDS seat will guarantee their presence. We have seen other successful rotational models here at the UN, including the rotation of the AOSIS chairmanship among SIDS Member States in the Indian Ocean, Pacific and Caribbean regions, as well as the Arab "swing seat" which ensures that a Member State from this group is always represented on the Council. CARICOM is confident that consistent SIDS representation on the Council would add value to its work, given the unique perspectives that this group of countries can bring to issues concerning the maintenance of international peace and security.

On the question of the veto, CARICOM supports its abolition but believes that once it is retained it should be extended to all new permanent members. However, the veto should never be used in cases of serious crimes of concern to the international community such as crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide.

On the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, CARICOM believes that it should be characterized by cooperation and mutual support with full respect for their respective mandates. The Security Council should not encroach on the work of the General Assembly and the Council should account for all decisions taken on behalf of Member States. CARICOM also advocates for the continued strengthening of the role of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the United Nations.

CARICOM also proposes a review of any decisions taken on reform of the Security Council after a period of 10-15 years.

**Distinguished Co-Chairs,**

CARICOM underscores the need for all to approach the IGN in the spirit of respect for the voice and views of each delegation, despite the differences in position that we have on the substantive issues. CARICOM is committed to working with all Member States to build on the work done so far in the IGN and looks forward to further tangible progress this session. Please be assured of our full and constructive support as we try to move closer to a reformed Council as envisaged so many years ago.

I thank you.