

EGYPT



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The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

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Statement Inter-Governmental Negotiations IGN

**“Question of Equitable Representation on
and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council,
and Other Matters Related to the Council”**

Wednesday, 13 December 2023

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برجاء المراجعة عند الإلقاء

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

At the outset, allow me to indicate that Egypt associates with the statements delivered by Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group, and Bahrain on behalf of the Arab Group.

I would like to take this opportunity, as we kick off the IGN session, to congratulate you on your reappointment as co-chairs, and to voice our trust in your leadership and your ability to steer the negotiations into meaningful outcomes, in the same manner that you've done in the previous session.

Co-Chairs,

This time around, the IGN commences at a very crucial point in the 78 years' history of the United Nations. A moment that tests our belief in, and our commitment to, the very rules, regulations and norms that we have setup throughout the years, since the end of the second world war, to govern our conduct as a community of nations. This delicate system is today facing the toughest moment since its inception whose outcome will dictate our international modus operandi for decades to come.



Co-chairs,

Today in Gaza, and for more than two months, the worst and most vile side of humanity has shown its ugly face, perpetrating a genocide against the people of Palestine on an industrial scale unprecedented in the twenty first century, with a rate of deliberate targeting of civilians surpassing the horrors of all wars in modern history.

Yet, despite the unspeakable carnage and destruction brought about by Israel on the civilian population of Gaza, threatening international peace and security and possibly instigating a wider war with ramifications that would engulf the entire middle east, despite all this, the Security Council, again, has failed to uphold its one most important responsibility, that is, maintenance of international peace and security.

This failure of the Security Council is exactly the reason we are here today. Simply because the Council, in its current shape,



is no longer able to perform its functions, is no longer representative of current global realities, and, most certainly, is not the collective security arrangement that we wish to pass on to our future generations.

But rather than being discouraged, we should be reinvigorated to address this clear and present challenge in the most comprehensive and inclusive manner, to ensure delivering a reformed Security Council that is agile, effective, representative and fit-for-purpose.

Co-Chairs,

We received of your letter dated 21 November in which you laid out your plans for this IGN session. We take note of your proposed course of action and we reaffirm that Egypt, as always, will remain committed to the reform of the Security Council through the IGN process, in accordance with GA resolution 62/557 which was and shall remain the legal basis for the work of the IGN.

We believe the novel approach to discussing reform models would help instill new life in the process, and that the IGN should be the exclusive platform for agreeing on the Council reform paragraphs for the Future Summit this year.

On the topic for discussion in our meeting today, we would like to briefly make the following remarks:

First: On **categories of membership**, Egypt supports expansion in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories, according Africa two permanent African seats and two additional non-permanent seats, as dictated by to the Common African Position spelled out in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

Second: On the **question of the Veto**, Egypt strongly believes that as a matter of principal, if the veto shall be preserved, it should be accorded to the two permanent African seats, in accordance with the Common African Position.

Third: the concept of “**regional representation**” entails that the Security Council treats all regions equally. Thus, Africa, the

only region lacking representation in the permanent category, should be represented in this particular category. Also, it is worth noting that the African position has an element of regional representation of its own, as it calls for two additional non-permanent seats in order to fully represent the five African sub regions in the Security Council.

Fourth: On the question of the **size of an enlarged Council**, we do not subscribe to the view that enlarging the Council would necessarily impede its efficiency and effectiveness. As a matter of fact, a reformed Council, where all regions are adequately represented, will more likely benefit from a broader global perspective, enabling it to make better-informed decisions, thus rendering it more effective and democratic. In all cases, the final size of a reformed council is matter that should be determined through careful consideration, striking the right balance between equitable representation and effectiveness.

Fifth: on **working methods**; and despite some improvements introduced in recent years, it is evident that the way the Council conducts its business still needs serious reform. The

Council needs to enhance its engagement with the wider membership, including at the meetings of its subsidiary bodies which could benefit from more participation of concerned countries. The council also needs more democratization of its decision-making process, including through co-penholdership;

Last but not least: The relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council is well defined by the UN charter, nevertheless the charter is often overlooked in this domain: The General Assembly is almost always unable to exercise its mandate in calling the attention of the Security Council to situations which are likely to endanger international peace and security. Yesterday's vote adoption of a ceasefire in Gaza to put an end to Israel's genocide of the Palestinian population is yet another example of the GA's important role in preserving international peace and security when the council is at limbo. This role should be maintained and strengthened, and GA resolutions in this case should be legally binding, in accordance with the charter.



Co-chairs,

To conclude, I would like to express our willingness to engage with you and all members of the IGN in this session to ensure that we are able to get to an outcome that garners the widest possible political acceptance, in an inclusive and comprehensive manner, all while avoiding imposed deadlines and premature outcomes that risk unraveling the delicate balance on which the IGN is based. Only through calculated steady steps will we be able to achieve meaningful progress.

I thank you.

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