



Intergovernmental Negotiations to reinforce and build convergence on Security Council reform

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Statement by H.E James Larsen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations

Check against delivery

Co-chairs,

Security Council reform has been on the General Assembly's agenda for 44 years.

We have never been closer to agreement that change is needed.

It remains to be seen whether it is possible.

Current crises have starkly highlighted the conundrum we face.

I start by expressing deep appreciation to the co-chairs for the updated elements paper.

The paper identifies important areas of convergence.

Amongst Member States, I think it is fair to say we enjoy a consensus that the Security Council should reflect contemporary realities.

This includes more appropriate **regional representation**.



It is clear that the Council would benefit from views of a greater proportion of the world's population.

To this end, Australia has long pushed for greater permanent and non-permanent representation for Africa, Latin America and Asia.

Use and operation of **the veto** needs to be the subject of particular attention.

Australia opposed the existence of the veto from the earliest negotiations of the Charter and, since then, has consistently called for better standards governing its use.

Use of the veto should be both limited and transparent.

We applaud the efforts of Member States including Mexico, France and Liechtenstein which have advanced tangible proposals which bring us closer to achieving this.

The relationship between the Council and the General Assembly should be improved.

Of course we recognise that the Security Council has primary responsibility for international peace and security under the Charter.



But its members should be reminded that under of Article 24 this responsibility is conferred by the entire UN Membership, and the Council acts on our behalf.

Australia supports proposals which ensure the Council is more **accountable to Member States**.

We want to see greater engagement between Council members and other institutions across the United Nations system which enjoy first hand technical expertise and experience which can contribute to solving the problems the Council is tasked with addressing

For example, Australia will prioritise practical proposals to operationalise more robust ties between the Council and the Peacebuilding Commission when we take up a seat on the Commission in 2025.

It is also important to pursue improvements in the Council's **working methods**. For example, equal penholder arrangements among Council members will ensure fairer and more transparent processes, including in an enlarged Council.

Australia looks forward to engaging proactively on new proposals and, like others, we would encourage proceeding to **text-based negotiations** as a means of maintaining momentum.



We consider this to be the most effective way of building consensus.

And we urge all member states to contribute just as we do in our negotiations on other issues,

We must work to build our understanding of each-others perspectives, prosecute our interests carefully and thoughtfully, compromise where we can and strive to achieve an outcome which is acceptable to as many of us as possible.

I am confident that we all agree that a more representative and effective Security Council is in all our interests and should be at the heart of a fit-for-purpose contemporary United Nations.

Thank you

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