

Statement for the Inter-Governmental 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

Co-Chairs,

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) Group. We congratulate you, co-chairs, on your re-appointment and look forward to engaging constructively to build upon the incremental progress achieved during the previous IGN cycle under your lead.

2. The reform of the Security Council involves the strategic interests of all Member States. We all want to see a Security Council that is more representative, more democratic, more transparent, more effective, and more accountable. This goal can only be attained through a comprehensive reform that caters to the interests of all Member States – small, medium, and large.

3. The IGN process offers the best platform to reach an agreed outcome to the question of equitable representation and reform of the Security Council. Only through a patient exchange, mutual accommodation, and compromise can we broaden the areas of convergence and reduce the points of divergence and thus evolve a ‘model’ for the reform that can be accepted by the widest possible majority of Member States, as provided in decision 52/30, i.e. by consensus. Any hasty or rushed process with a piecemeal approach will divide the UN membership; and not be able to secure the requisite ratification by the 5 permanent members.

Co-Chairs,

4. You invited Member States to collectively address the ‘5clusters’ in today’s meeting. We believe that more time and attention should be devoted to discussing the individual clusters and their interlinkages and reconciling the divergences to achieve tangible progress.

5. Devoting only one meeting to the five clusters will not serve the aim of reconciling the divergences. A discussion of the “models” presented by various groups and individual states will once again reveal the divergences. We need to focus our consultations on overcoming these divergences to build a “model” of reform that has the widest possible support of the entire membership.

6. We have all agreed that the five clusters are all interlinked. The Elements Paper – which is reflective of the co-chairs’ “understanding of and views on” the current state of the IGN process – can only be updated once we complete the discussion on all five clusters and the co-chairs can discern the prospects of broadening the convergences across the 5 clusters.

7. The UfC submitted its formal proposal in a draft resolution in 2005. We have also outlined our “compromise” proposal (for longer-term or electable seats, representation of SIDS, and other regional and cross-regional groups) in various statements made by the group during recent years. We can elaborate those proposals during our discussions.

8. Any artificial move to propel the reform process towards a disproportionate focus on ‘models’ is likely to polarise positions and pull the Member States further apart. Instead of breathing new life, this will further complicate the prospects of a meaningful outcome.

Co-Chairs,

9. Turning to the specific clusters. On the categories of membership, UfC believes that its proposal for the creation of additional non-permanent seats, with equitable geographical representation, regularly elected to ensure accountability, is the best option. The UfC opposes the expansion of permanent membership in the Security Council, with or without a veto. Adding more permanent members will (a) compound the paralysis of the Security Council; and (b) prevent representation of the majority of the UN's small and medium-sized states (still around 1/3rd of the member states have not served on the Council).

10. To respond to the desire of some Member States which may be in a position to make greater contributions to peace and security, the UfC has offered a compromise proposal for the creation of longer-term and/or re-electable seats.

11. We see the expansion to newly elected members from less represented regions going hand-in-hand with the principle of regional representation. We respect the African desire to rectify the "historic injustice". We can consider ways and means to accommodate "regional" seats for Africa. Asia, with 57 member states, is also under-represented, as is Latin America. Equitable geographical representation also implies that there is no reason to add any further seats for Europe, which is presently over-represented.

12. In contrast, additional and individual permanent seats undermine inclusive regional representation in two fundamental respects: first, by creating the illusion that a country elected only once and with a life tenure would represent that region in its entirety. Second, any permanent seat in a region statistically reduces the opportunity for other Member States from that same region to get elected to the Council.

13. 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. Many Member States are calling for the abolition of the veto. The UfC shares this sentiment because the veto of ‘a few’ undermines the rights of others. It makes the UNSC less democratic and less effective, as we have unfortunately experienced time and again. However, if the P5 do not renounce their privileged position, we believe that further extending the veto to more states would only exacerbate – not mitigate – inequality, further obstruct the Council’s decision-making process, and ultimately add new obstacles to the solution of important peace and security issues. The most effective and feasible way of balancing the power of veto is to increase the number of elected members in the Security Council.

14. When it comes to the size of the Council, the deliberations in the IGN have revealed that enlargement of the Council up to the mid-twenties is a relevant convergence among Member States and negotiating groups. In line with the UfC position, we can agree with this.

15 The UfC furthermore proposes a broad array of measures aimed at innovating the working methods of the Council; reforming the decision-making mechanisms, to make them more flexible, inclusive, and transparent; and developing a better relationship between the Council and the UN’s other main bodies. Some of these measures consist of offering Member States more informal opportunities to interact with the subsidiary bodies, or convening more frequent, timely and informative briefings for non-Council members on matters discussed in Security Council closed meetings and informal consultations, and in its subsidiary bodies.

Co-Chairs,

16. We do not believe that we have reached a point where text-based negotiations will produce an agreed-upon outcome. We first need to arrive at a broad agreement on the parameters of

an outcome covering all the 5 clusters. This will require reconciling the wide divergences that still exist on size, regional representation, categories, and veto, besides the Security Council's working methods.

17. Finally, the UfC believes that the IGN remains the only acceptable process for negotiating the Security Council reform. Any new process will have to start de novo and face the same challenges as those being addressed in the IGN process.

18. The decision on the scope and elements of the Summit of the Future (SOTF) has decided that there should be no duplication with the existing (negotiating) processes. Therefore, we welcome the IGN Co-Chairs' assurance that the language for the SOTF will be formulated and agreed upon only in the IGN process. This language should encapsulate the positions of all concerned groups and individual Member States and not compromise the positions of any of them. We will engage constructively with that exercise to draft consensus language on Security Council reform that could be incorporated into the "Pact for the Future".

I thank you.