

Informal Meeting of the Plenary on the Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters

Size of an Enlarged Council and Working Methods

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Statement by

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Mr. Chairman,

The size of an enlarged Council and its working methods merit, in our view, a separate debate in their own right considering the wide ranging implications that both key issues entail within the framework of the UNSC Reform discussions. This is reflected in the forty-one valid proposals that have been put forward and are the subject of our first consideration today.

As in previous sessions of these Intergovernmental Negotiations, Malta would like first of all to reiterate the inter-connectedness of the five key-issues identified in Decision 621557. These five key issues are inextricably linked and must be considered as forming part of an all-inclusive package. Any consideration of any of these issues must ensure a coherent and cohesive progression on the other key issues.

The principle of sovereign equality must be the principal guiding criteria in the search for an agreement on the **size of an enlarged Security Council**. Our discussions on the size of an enlarged Council are closely interlinked with the issue of categories of membership. In this regard, my delegation has gone on record in these intergovernmental negotiations as to question how we can separate the issue of 'size of an enlarged Council' from that of the other key issues including 'categories'.

As a small State, my Delegation gives particular attention to the size of an enlarged Security Council. In our previous rounds of negotiations, some Member States had conditioned the determination of the size of an expanded Council on the basis of certain criteria, including equitable geographic distribution, enhanced credibility and effectiveness of the Council. In highlighting these goals, my Delegation agrees with those delegations that have proposed an addition of around 10 to 12 non-permanent seats. It is to be recalled that since the last enlargement of the Security Council forty-five years ago, the UN Membership has increased dramatically and therefore this increase necessitates that the Security Council become more reflective of this situation and ensure that all the 192 Member States can really claim and declare ownership of the Security Council. This would in turn strengthen the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, an issue which we considered last week.

We all recognize the fact that small States have increased in all regional groups since the last enlargement. Therefore these negotiations must also take into consideration this large number of small States that are now Members of the United Nations.

All small States, irrespective of their geographic location and whatever their level of development, must secure better opportunities in their legitimate right to serve on the Security Council. Malta therefore strongly supports the call that small States be given added recognition, opportunities and increased access to serve on the UNSC through the allocation of one seat reserved for small States. It is in this context that my Delegation would like to reiterate its strong support to the model presented by Italy and Colombia which proposes, among other things, the allocation of an additional non-permanent seat on the Security Council to small States with a population below one million.

The working **methods of the Security Council** for many years has been one of the priority issues on the agenda of our Organization, particularly in the context of a comprehensive reform of the principal organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council.

As a small State, Malta wishes to express its support for the proposal by Italy and Colombia. My Delegation is strongly in favour of more open briefings and less closed meetings; more transparency in the work of the Security Council through an enhanced access and participation by all UN Member States in the work of the Council, including prompt, relevant and current information on matters brought before the Council to be made available not only to all members of the Council but also to the wider UN membership.

My Delegation wishes to once again take note with appreciation of the S-5 proposals particularly in proposing ways on how to increase the Security Council transparency. Likewise, the UfC proposal on additional working methods would enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Security Council.

Our deliberations on working methods cannot be made without bearing in mind our discussions on the question of the veto. My Delegation has consistently declared its position that the veto is directly linked to the issue of categories and working methods, and that by adding new permanent members with veto powers would continue to make the Council less democratic, less representative, less transparent, less effective and less accountable. We therefore cannot agree with those proposals that would remove such key issues as the working methods, the use of the veto, and the issue which we discussed last week on the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, from the on-going discussions taking place in these Intergovernmental Negotiations. Such proposals would, in or view, contradict the spirit and contents of Decision 621557 which, as you have often stated, is the "lodestar" of our negotiations.

In conclusion, my Delegation would like to make a general point on this Fifth Round of Intergovernmental Negotiations. In our last meeting we noted that a few delegations are proposing the elimination of proposals submitted by other delegations. My delegation feels, and I am sure other delegations feel the same way as I do, that it is still very premature to embark on such a process. The complexity of the process which we, as Member States, are undertaking must continue to be led by all Member States. A UN Security Council reform must command the ownership of all UN Member States and not by a few Member States. Progress in one cluster will inevitably affect progress in the other. It is therefore necessary to see the whole and comprehensive reform package on all the five key issues as identified in Decision 621557 and which would achieve universal approval. We must avoid any attempts that would divide us, especially at this stage of our discussions when we are all searching for a common and comprehensive approach to the five key issues.

Thank you.