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Seventy-second session

42nd plenary meeting

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Official Records

In the absence of the President, Mr. Hilale (Morocco), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 122 (continued)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representatives of Sierra Leone and Kuwait on behalf of the Group of African States and the Group of Arab States, respectively (see A/72/PV.41). I would like to add the following points in my national capacity.

At the outset, I would like to thank the President for convening today's plenary meeting on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other related matters, as well as for the importance he has attached to expanding and reforming the Security Council, as confirmed in his remarks at the opening of this year's general debate (see A/72/PV.3).

I would like to commend the efforts of the various co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, especially Mr. Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, who co-chaired the intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly. I would also like to welcome the appointment of our two colleagues,

Mr. Kaha Imnadze, Permanent Representative of Georgia, and Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, as the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations during the current session, which shows that the President is aware of the need to strengthen Member States' confidence in the negotiations process with a view to building the widest possible consensus.

Egypt is fully aware of the need for a real and comprehensive reform of the Security Council as part and parcel of reforming the United Nations system so as to promote the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and allow the Organization to address new and emerging international challenges. The intergovernmental negotiations should continue in a transparent and inclusive manner and be Member-driven in order to reach an agreed solution that would garner the widest possible political acceptance. These negotiations should focus on the five interrelated issues set forth in decision 62/557. We hope that these aspects will guide the work of the new co-Chairs during the current negotiations.

Over the past two years, Egypt has been honoured to serve on the Security Council as one of the three elected African members and as the only Arab member of the Council. The experiences that we have accumulated during this period have strengthened a number of our long-standing beliefs. As our term on the Council nears its end, I would like to recall a number of these beliefs, as they might contribute to success in our common efforts, within the framework of the

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intergovernmental negotiations, aimed at ensuring a real and comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

One of our beliefs is that there can be no real reform of the Security Council without addressing the dysfunction within the Council, namely, the hegemony that permanent members wield over the work of the Council through their monopoly of the right to veto. This situation underlines the relevance of the Common African Position, which gives voice to the principle that the right to veto should be eliminated. Until the veto right is eliminated, however, all new permanent members of the Council should be granted the same prerogatives and privileges as the original permanent members so as to ensure fair representation, which is one of the main goals of the reform process.

In the same vein, we reject any piecemeal approach that would focus only on increasing the number of non-permanent seats or the number of categories of permanent seats without addressing the right to veto in a manner that would ensure the equal treatment of all permanent members, whether they be current or future members. Such a piecemeal approach will not lead to a real and fair reform of the Security Council; rather, it would exacerbate the current imbalances from which the Council suffers.

Egypt is fully committed to the Common African Position, as set forth in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, which is the only position reaffirmed in numerous African summits. This position provides for a comprehensive vision for reforming the Security Council, including eliminating the veto right. The growing support for the Common African Position proves that an increasing number of Member States are aware of the need to address the historic injustices perpetrated against the African continent, which continues to be underrepresented in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. The African continent should be allowed to contribute to the work of the Council, particularly with respect to agenda items pertaining to Africa. That is especially true given that the Council frequently addresses Africa-related items on its agenda.

In closing, after many attempts throughout past sessions to produce documents and papers, I hope that efforts during the current session will be focused on building a common will to make real progress and build consensus among different countries and groups with a view to reaching an acceptable solution. We stress

the need to reach a consensus on the principles and standards of reform as an important step in this regard and in a way that would strengthen Member States' confidence in the intergovernmental negotiations. Egypt stands ready to cooperate with all Member States so as to ensure comprehensive reform of the Security Council in a manner that would allow the Council to carry out its effective role in maintaining international peace and security.

Mr. Lapouge (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to commend the appointment of Ambassadors Lana Zaki Nusseibeh and Kaha Imnadze as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We know that we can count on their dynamism and their resolve, as well as on their ability to bring the views of delegations together in the framework of constructive dialogue. France will provide them with its full support so as to ensure the success of their mission.

The discussions on Security Council reform within the General Assembly have been going on for almost two decades, and we are still far from reaching a successful conclusion. The process is long, difficult and frustrating in many ways. Nonetheless, even if the progress made can legitimately be seen as insufficient in the eyes of many delegations, including my own, such progress still exists. It is therefore necessary to build on these achievements during the seventy-second session.

Under the leadership of Ambassador Courtenay Rattray, the work carried out at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly resulted in an initial concrete outcome with the drafting of a framework document likely to act as a basis for global negotiations. This document has received the support and contributions of a large majority of Member States. The subsequent work carried out during the seventieth session, under the leadership of Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, made it possible to identify elements of convergence on two key points of the reform. This year, in work conducted at the seventy-first session led by Ambassadors Khaled Khiari and Ion Jinga, revealed common ground on certain elements of the reform.

France hopes that the result of all this work will serve as a basis for the cycle of intergovernmental negotiations that is beginning in this session in order to achieve decisive progress. Such progress is necessary, as the Secretary-General has embarked on the ambitious process of reforming our Organization with regard

to the pillars of peace and security, development and the management of the United Nations. The General Assembly must show an equally resolute commitment to reforming the Security Council.

In order to achieve this decisive progress, my delegation believes — as do a very large majority of delegations, especially those in the Group of Friends on Security Council Reform — that it is now necessary to begin negotiating a text as soon as possible. We are counting on the new co-Chairs to work in this direction. This reform is indeed crucial: the Security Council must better reflect the realities of today's world while preserving its executive and decision-making character, thereby bolstering its ability to fully shoulder its responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security.

France's position is unwavering and well known in that respect. We hope that the Council will take into account the emergence of new Powers that are willing and able to assume responsibility for a permanent presence in the Security Council and, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, are able to make an important contribution to the work of the Council. To this end, France supports the candidacy of Germany, Brazil, India and Japan as permanent members of the Security Council, as well as a strengthened presence of African countries among permanent and non-permanent members.

As President Emmanuel Macron stated in his address to the General Assembly in September (see A/72/PV.4), we need a Security Council that can make appropriate and efficient decisions, without being hindered by the exercise of the veto when mass atrocities are being committed. It is in this spirit that, since 2013, France has proposed that the five permanent members of the Council voluntarily and collectively commit themselves not to resort to the veto in the event of mass atrocities. This voluntary approach does not require a revision of the Charter but a political commitment. France voiced this position through the President of the Republic from this rostrum in 2015 (see A/70/PV.13).

Today, the initiative that we put forward jointly with Mexico is supported by nearly 100 countries. In the same spirit, the code of conduct developed by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, which France supports, has also received widespread support. Based on this dynamic, we hope that we will be able to convince other Member States to join us in

this endeavour. It is indeed in the common interest of all Member States for the Security Council to fulfil its mandate and fully play its role, particularly in situations of mass atrocities.

These initiatives on the regulation of the veto, which look towards a more just and more responsible Council, are distinct and complementary to the overall reform of the Council, of which France is an advocate. It is our collective responsibility to take stock of our obligations in order to change the status quo in the interest of the United Nations. The difficulty of this reform must not diminish its imperative necessity.

Ms. Bavdaž Kuret (Slovenia): We find ourselves in this Hall once again to discuss the reform of the Security Council before we embark on the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. In this context, we would first like to thank the Ambassadors of Romania and Tunisia for their leadership of the process during the seventy-first session. We highly appreciate all the documents produced so far, including the elements of commonality and issues for further consideration on the question of equitable representation and increase in the membership in Security Council and related matters, prepared during the last intergovernmental negotiations session. At the same time, we wish to congratulate the Ambassadors of the United Arab Emirates and Georgia and wish them all the best in their efforts to steer the process forward.

Slovenia has been closely following all intergovernmental negotiations sessions, and we remain committed to continuing the discussions. However, we believe that the time has come to move forward. Early reform of the Security Council was supported by world leaders in 2005; some 12 years later, we are still debating it, so any reform can no longer be considered early.

Today, we wish to make some general remarks on the substance of the process. The intergovernmental negotiations of the past session showed that there are a lot of commonalities upon which we can build, including the reconfirmation that such reform is to make the Council more broadly representative, efficient and transparent and to further enhance its effectiveness and legitimacy in the implementation of its decisions. We therefore know what our goals are, and the process must continue to be driven by Member States.

In the past 25 years since resolution 47/62 was adopted, a lot has happened in the international community. The world has changed significantly since

the end of the Second World War and the creation of the United Nations, as well as since the latest changes in the Security Council. As representatives in a major international organization, we, together with the Security Council, which has the supreme responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, have an obligation to the people of the international community for which the United Nations exists. We therefore believe that membership in the Security Council is, above all, a serious responsibility.

On more concrete issues, Slovenia is in favour of expanding the membership of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. When it comes to the category of elected or non-permanent members, we believe that enlargement would enable a higher rate of rotation and greater democratic representation in the Security Council. In this regard, Slovenia places high priority on the allocation of an additional non-permanent seat for the Group of Eastern European States. In the past 25 years, the number of members of the Group of Eastern European States has doubled, but its representation in the Security Council has remained unchanged — one permanent and one non-permanent seat. We also support additional seats for African States.

There is a general agreement that the Security Council's enlargement would improve the representation of those that are underrepresented or unrepresented, guaranteeing fair and democratic representation and balancing the principles of responsibility, transparency and efficiency. Slovenia stands in favour of a Security Council seat allocation based on regional election groups. When it comes to the size of a reformed Council, we are of the view that the Council needs to be efficient and transparent and that its methods of work will naturally have to be changed or adapted. Of course, it will be up to States members of the Council to deal with this issue, but we think that the majority of the membership will agree with us in saying that the Council's methods will have to be adapted if we want it to be able to deal with the fast-changing and proliferating factors threatening international peace and security.

As a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group and a supporter of the French-Mexican initiative, Slovenia advocates for a veto restriction in cases of atrocity crimes and for maximum self-restraint in the use of the veto in all other cases.

When it comes to the question of relations between the Security Council and the General Assembly, Slovenia can fully subscribe to the commonalities identified in the intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-first session. The relationship should be mutually reinforcing and complementary. Slovenia can fully support the suggestions set out in the document of the Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations of July 2016. Resolutions on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly can also be taken into account.

This statement only briefly highlights some of the issues. We will be able to continue our deliberations during future intergovernmental negotiations. However, let me take this opportunity to once again express our strong support for moving the process forward. We believe that the best way to do this and get out of the current deadlock is to begin concrete negotiations based on concrete text proposals.

Mr. Kapambwe (Zambia): I wish to begin by aligning my country with the statement delivered earlier by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, the Coordinator of the African Union Committee of Ten on Security Council Reform, who has articulated the position of Africa on this important issue (see A/72/PV.41).

I thank the President, first, for convening this round of intergovernmental negotiations and, secondly, for appointing our two colleagues, Mr. Kaha Imnadze of Georgia, and Mrs. Lara Zaki Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates, as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly. Much will be expected not only from the President and the co-Chairs, but from all of us during the intergovernmental negotiations process.

It has been a painfully long time since the General Assembly began considering this issue. The various milestones along the way, which my various colleagues have referred to, do not put us in a good light. In September, we marked the tenth anniversary of the conclusion of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council and the creation of the intergovernmental negotiations process, courtesy of decision 62/557, which started off as draft resolution A/61/L.69. Next year will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Open-ended Working Group, which was the precursor to the

intergovernmental negotiations. The year after that, in 2019, we shall mark 40 years since this item was put on the General Assembly agenda.

I often hear us blame a lack of political will for our failure to achieve progress, but whose lack of political will are we talking about? It is certainly not our leaders who lack political will. In 2000, at the Millennium Summit, our leaders could not have been clearer when they gave us the task of expediting the reform of the Security Council. In 2005, at the World Summit, when marking the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, leaders expressed concern at the slow pace of the reform. Therefore, when it is suggested that there is a lack of political will, are we implying that our Heads of State come here, implore us to make progress and then turn around and give us contrary instructions when they return to our capitals? Or are there other custodians of political will above or more powerful than the Heads of State? Could it be that this lack of political will exists only at the levels of our Missions and our administrative bureaucracies at Headquarters?

I have no doubt that we can make progress and achieve the goals espoused by our leaders within a reasonable time frame. However, that will happen only when we, at the level of our Missions, and the various experts at our administrative headquarters, actually believe in the process. The starting point is to believe — to genuinely believe — in the United Nations. We must all believe that this is our United Nations and that it is in all our interests to preserve and protect the United Nations and project it forward, now and in future. We need to believe that what is good for the United Nations is good for all of us and that what is bad for the United Nations is ultimately bad for all of us. We need to believe in the oneness of our world, our oneness with each other and our oneness with our world.

I am aware of the fact that today is not the day to start the negotiations. Our co-Chairs will advise us in that regard in due course. It is, however, never too early to caution that if we do not make fundamental changes in the framework and the process of the intergovernmental negotiations, we shall not make any more progress than was made before. We must reflect on what has worked and what has not. More importantly, we must have the courage and the determination to change that which needs to be changed.

In my view, one thing needs to be done is to agree on what status we should give to the outcome documents

that have been issued at the end of each round of the intergovernmental negotiations. For the moment, those documents are merely reference papers that we often cite in subsequent rounds but which bind no one to anything said in them. Another issue that we need to address relates to the way in which we take decisions.

Let me end with a small comment relative to those who argue that the veto should not be extended to new permanent members of the Security Council. Africa would have found that acceptable if the argument were that the veto should be abolished altogether. That is the ideal position contained in Africa's Ezulwini Consensus. But we also believe that what is good for the goose is good for the gander. Africa is not prepared — and I repeat, not prepared — to accept the status of second-class citizen. The African permanent members of the Security Council either will have no veto because the veto has been abolished for all or they will have the veto as long as any other permanent member, old or new, has a veto. That request is neither unreasonable nor undeserved.

We come from a bad history — a history of slavery, domination, racial discrimination, colonialism and apartheid. Africa has always been at the bottom or the one left behind. We have no intention of moving into a bad future. Africa cannot and will not accept to be treated like a child who cannot be trusted to exercise the veto responsibly.

When one is not at the table, one is on the menu. For too long, Africa has not been at the table. We are tired of being on the menu.

Mr. Mohamed (Maldives): At the outset, I wish to express my appreciation to the President for having convened this important debate to carry forward the dialogue on Security Council reform. We welcome his decision to appoint Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, and Ambassador Kaha Imnadze, Permanent Representative of Georgia, to steer the intergovernmental negotiations process forward. I also wish to express our appreciation to Ambassador Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, the outgoing co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, for the exemplary manner in which they conducted the work of those negotiations.

The past 72 years have witnessed an extraordinary period of relative peace — a long peace that is

unparalleled in human history. The United Nations created the conditions enabling peace to prevail over war. The United Nations has grown from 51 countries at its inception in 1945 to 193 Member States today, representing the most universal community of nations. The Organization has delivered aid, supported peace and cultivated norms and values the world over without regard for size or might. Yet, despite its numerous successes, we have not been able to do full justice to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The principal organs of the United Nations continue to be non-representative.

The United Nations and its Security Council, which is the only body authorized to deploy troops under the United Nations banner or to take punitive action, were structured according to the needs and the realities of the time. Yet that reality has changed most profoundly. The world has changed. The United Nations has changed. The way in which we understand security, the means to sustain peace, has changed. We have new members, new approaches and new dimensions. Yet here at the United Nations, we persist in our old ways.

Since 1979, the Maldives has maintained a consistent position on the reform of the Security Council. The number of permanent members on the Council must be increased. At the time of its inception in 1945, the United Nations had fewer members. Most countries in this Hall were not independent then. But now we are. And we are here to stay. And we deserve our say. We must make the permanent membership — those holding the veto power — more representative. We believe that every continent must have at least one permanent seat, reflecting the political and the economic realities of our time. The principle of equal geographical representation must be the underlying principle of our work as we try to find a feasible formula for going forward in the intergovernmental negotiations.

Revising the number and the composition of the permanent seats is only one aspect of the reform. A more important dimension must be to increase the number of non-permanent seats. We believe that the membership of the Security Council should come from both developing and developed countries, including small island developing States, so as to reflect the diversity of the United Nations membership. That is the spirit of the formula devised in the Charter, which sets out two criteria: first, the contribution of Members to the maintenance of international peace and security

and to the other purposes of the Organization and, secondly, equitable geographical distribution.

Let us consider the first element. Every country can bring diversity. Every country can offer unique perspectives. While traditional concepts of security still constitute an important dimension, non-traditional emerging threats are increasingly gaining traction across the world. Those threats include pandemics, the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, the impacts of climate change, the scarcity of and associated competition over resources such as food, water and fuel, and other development challenges. Those are the new challenges to international peace and security. Those are the new frontiers of security.

In order for the Security Council to be able to reach those frontiers, we need a diversity of viewpoints and experiences that can assist us in addressing such diverse challenges. There is therefore a need to redefine old yardsticks for measuring contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security. We may be small, but we have strength in our shoulders and grit in our bones to carry the lofty ideals and aspirations that define this Organization. Diverse members that can contribute to such new, non-traditional understandings of peace and security must be included.

It is our firm belief that every country deserves an opportunity to serve. The second criterion — equitable geographical distribution — is the cornerstone of the United Nations. Every country, be it mighty or tiny, rich or poor, deserves to be heard and have a say. Yet, that is largely not the case. That imperative is significantly more valid in the Security Council, where every country must be heard. While new threats are redefining our conception of security and how we approach international peace, the countries that suffer the most are not represented.

The Maldives, for example, was the 117th country to join the United Nations. Of the 116 that joined before us, 104 have already served on the Security Council. After half a century, we have not had the opportunity to do so, as is the case with nearly all small island developing States. We believe that larger countries, especially those that have served on the Council, have a moral and, indeed, a Charter-based obligation to ensure that small countries, especially those that have not served before, get a fair chance.

We believe that every country is determined to serve, determined to make its contribution in its own

way to the maintenance of international peace and security and determined to uphold the principles of the United Nations. And one may ask, what is stopping those countries? In theory, every country has the same opportunity to compete. Any country can put forward its candidature, run in the election and participate in the competition.

But, I ask the Assembly whether the competition is fair anymore. For small States, it is not fair. The competition is tough. It is expensive. If a country wishes to undertake an effective campaign for a seat on the Security Council, that country is expected to spend enormous amounts of money and resources in order to secure votes. Even when a country chooses to not adopt such campaign practices, it is forced to do so in order to overcome perceptions about the country's capacity, about the country's drive or passion, or about the country's seriousness. Countries that cannot afford to spend a fortune on their campaign for the Security Council lose out.

We believe that that is most certainly why only eight small island developing States have managed to secure a seat on the Council since the establishment of the United Nations. Small countries can no longer campaign on an equal footing. That means that countries that need to be heard and countries that can bring unique perspectives and fresh, new ideas never end up on the Council. Equitable geographical distribution increasingly looks like a principle with a financial price tag.

The Maldives can and will change that. We hope to get elected to the Council for the term of 2019-2020 in the election to be held in June 2018. If elected, the Maldives will, in collaboration with our partners, build a reservoir of hope, trust and credibility that will redefine the ordering principle in multilateral diplomacy, transforming it into an order in which right will become might. Yet, that can happen only if the General Assembly joins hands in upholding the obligations of the Charter of the United Nations. We urge the General Assembly and individual Member States to uphold the principles that they agreed to when they signed up for the United Nations.

The General Assembly can do more. It should do more. The Assembly can accelerate reforms by creating opportunities for every country, by upholding the principles of fairness and equitable geographical distribution and by joining hands with the Maldives in crafting shared solutions for our shared destiny.

Mr. Tenya (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the convening of today's meeting, which touches on a central theme for the future of the Organization, namely, the issue of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. We welcome the appointment of the Permanent Representative of Georgia, Ambassador Kaha Imnadze, and the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations during the current session. I assure them that they have the full support of my delegation.

If anything has been evident during the long process of the negotiations for the reform of the Security Council, it is the overwhelming agreement of the membership on the imperative need to adapt the structure of our Organization to changes in the international context. We continue to observe, unfortunately, the inaction of the Security Council in the face of serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, which further affects the perception of international public opinion of the Council's performance, thereby also affecting its legitimacy and credibility.

That is why the time has come to act. We cannot limit ourselves to reiterating our well-known national positions over and over again. We must make the necessary concessions and process the available options to move towards real negotiation work. None of that will be possible without a real commitment to obtaining tangible and balanced results, within the framework of a process that must always be transparent and inclusive.

The remarkable changes that the international system has undergone in recent decades make it imperative to increase the number of members of the Security Council. With that said, such an increase should be carried out with restraint, since the possible gains in terms of the representativeness of the Council should not be undermined by a loss of efficiency in the performance of the Council's work. In such efforts, it is essential, in our view, that special emphasis be placed on the expansion of seats for those regions that are not properly represented at present. However, as long as the necessary consensus is reached to carry out a deeper and more comprehensive reform of the Council, we would like to consider the provisional establishment of an intermediate category of non-permanent members of the Security Council that would perform functions for a longer period of time and could be evaluated biennially and re-elected for successive periods indefinitely.

Regarding the issue of the veto, we wish to recall that Peru has consistently supported commitments aimed at limiting the use of the veto, especially in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity and successive acts of flagrant violations of human rights or international humanitarian law. We reiterate in that regard our support for the initiative taken by France and Mexico, as well as for the code of conduct submitted by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, of which my country is a member.

Throughout the previous session there was a healthy exchange of ideas, presenting contrasting positions, all of which constituted, in practice, a kind of negotiation process. That convinces us even more of the gains that would come from a process that produced a text that enabled us to initiate formal negotiations. We anticipate that the issue will see increasing support, since as of today it has the backing of at least three quarters of the membership.

Furthermore, we have also seen in recent months the promotion of a closer link between the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the Organization. A similar trend has been observed in the relationship between the Security Council and the various bodies of the United Nations, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, with productive meetings held by their respective Presidents. Peru, which will join the Security Council as a non-permanent member starting in January 2018, will encourage that type of effort, as we consider it highly beneficial for the Council to coordinate, integrate and generate synergies with other bodies.

To conclude, Peru reaffirms its full commitment to continue working towards a lasting and effective Security Council reform.

Ms. Rodríguez Abascal (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to begin by acknowledging the commitment of the President of the General Assembly to the reform of the Security Council. We take this opportunity to convey to Ambassador Kaha Imnadze of Georgia and Ambassador Lana Zaki Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates the full cooperation of Cuba in the hope that the intergovernmental negotiations can achieve progress. We commend the efforts made by the co-Chairs during the previous session, the Permanent Representatives of Romania and Tunisia.

All delegations are aware that the consideration of the question of the Security Council membership

expansion and other matters, such as its working methods, which has had various designations over the years, such as consultations, exchanges and, more recently, intergovernmental negotiations, has now lasted more than 25 years. Lately, some preliminary results have been achieved, but, let us be clear, they have been extremely limited in scope, as they do not address the fundamental issues, on which there still remain broad differences. If a profound negotiating effort is not made on the salient issues, another 25 years will come and go at the Assembly without satisfactory results.

The process of Security Council reform must be comprehensive, that is, it must include all substantive matters, such as, *inter alia*, the question of membership, regional representation, the agenda of the Council, its working methods, its decision-making process and the issue of the veto. The process must also achieve the widest possible acceptance by Member States.

The reform must ensure that the Council's agenda reflects the needs and interests of both developing and developed countries and is characterized by a rational, non-selective and non-arbitrary objective. With respect to regional representation, the size of the Security Council's expansion and the categories of members, Cuba attaches great importance to the issue of regional representation, given that the current composition of the Security Council does not reflect geopolitical realities and needs, therefore, to be rebalanced. There is no doubt at all that developing countries are underrepresented in the Council, which undermines the interest in and the authority and credibility of the Council. In view of the aforementioned considerations, the main goal of the expansion of the Council should be to rectify the insufficient representation of the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

In the opinion of the Cuban delegation, the expansion of the categories should consist of an increase in the number of new permanent members from two African countries, two developing countries in Asia and two countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. We feel that the number of non-permanent members should be increased to a total of at least 15 members. The new permanent members must have exactly the same prerogatives and rights as the current ones do, without establishing selective or discriminatory criteria. Cuba declares that the obsolete and undemocratic right of the veto must be abolished. If it is not eliminated immediately, the new permanent members must also have that prerogative.

If the representation of developed and developing countries in the Council is not expanded, the Council will become even less representative and therefore, less legitimate and effective. Cuba is not in favour of the creation of new categories or subcategories of members. New categories would increase existing differences and stimulate division among the members of the Council, instead of contributing to its better functioning.

Cuba advocates that the Council should be expanded to at least 26 members. With that figure alone, the ratio between members of the Security Council and the Member States of the United Nations would be closer to the ratio that it had when the Organization was founded. Cuba will not support any partial or selective expansion, nor any increase in the composition of the members of the Council to the detriment of developing countries.

With respect to the working methods of the Security Council, in particular the presentation of the Council's annual report to the General Assembly, Cuba regrets that that report remains a mere descriptive account of the meetings, activities and decisions of the Council, when the vast majority of the Member States of the United Nations has repeatedly expressed the need for a comprehensive and analytical report on the work of that body.

We reiterate that the Security Council must, in the exercise of its duties, of which the maintenance of international peace and security is its primary responsibility, as stipulated by the Charter of the United Nations, act on behalf of all Member States, and it must, therefore, comply with the obligations established in Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter, namely, to submit special reports on its actions for the consideration of the General Assembly.

Cuba reiterates its concern over the lack of transparency and democracy in the Security Council. Although during the most recent period there has been an increase in the number of public meetings and unprecedented consultations and exchanges with Member States during the selection and appointment process of the Secretary-General, the trend persists for the Council to work mainly in closed formats and make decisions without addressing the concerns of non-permanent members. At present, the Security Council is neither transparent, nor democratic, nor representative.

Urgent changes are required in its working methods so as to enable real participation on the part of all of its

members in its work and decision-making process. To that end, its rules and regulations must be formalized, as they have been provisional for more than 70 years. In that connection, Cuba again proposes that closed-door consultations in the Security Council be the exception.

In addition to changing its working methods and composition, the Council must adjust its functions to follow its mandate as established in the Charter and respect all resolutions of the General Assembly, the main deliberative body for the adoption of policies and the representation of the United Nations. The Security Council's tendency to consider issues and assume functions that do not correspond to its mandate, thereby usurping the role assigned to other bodies, particularly the General Assembly, must cease. We underline the need to achieve an adequate balance between the principal organs of the United Nations, pursuant to the Charter.

A reform of the United Nations, such as the one currently being promoted by the Secretary-General, will not be effective or real without an in-depth reform of the Security Council. A truly transparent, representative, democratic and efficient body is urgently needed.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first of all to congratulate the two new co-Chairs, my good friends the Ambassadors of Georgia and the United Arab Emirates, for having been assigned the important responsibility of chairing the informal intergovernmental negotiations at the current session. They are two splendid professionals who will, I am sure, be able to skilfully and effectively spearhead those difficult negotiations. Before beginning my statement, I wish to state that I fully endorse the statement made by the representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/72/PV.41).

I will attempt to briefly respond to three questions. The first of them concerns the main reason for the state of gridlock in which the negotiations for Security Council reform have found themselves for so many years. The answer is as complex as the story is long but, in my opinion, one of the factors that has weighed most upon that state of deadlock is the inflexibility of the positions of various groups.

Nevertheless, in recent years we have appreciated the fact that a number of States have insisted on broadening the membership of the Security Council in terms of both permanent and non-permanent members. In the world today, at least in my view, it is difficult

to imagine or conceive what the advantages might be of having a Security Council with more permanent members, instead of a Council in which all members are elected. I believe the latter would ensure greater rotation in the Council membership, which would also mean that a high number of States that have never been able to participate in the work of the Security Council would be able to stand for election. I also believe that usurping the General Assembly's power to periodically elect members of the Security Council — especially if we broaden the permanent membership category — would significantly affect levels of representativeness in the Council.

My second question is as to which group has shown greatest flexibility in the negotiation process. The Assembly is well aware that Spain belongs to the Uniting for Consensus group — a group that has, on more than one occasion, been termed a group of “spoilers” in the negotiations that have taken place in recent years. I wish to recall here that the Uniting for Consensus group was created a number of years ago now with a proposal to increase the membership of the Security Council to 25, including 10 new elected members for a term of two years with the possibility of re-election. The Uniting for Consensus group then moved from the proposal to increase the number of non-permanent members elected for two years to a new proposal circulated during the previous intergovernmental negotiations on 8 May to include a category for long-term membership seats. My delegation believes that, with that new category, we would be able to reach common ground, consensus and understanding on the substantive issue at play in the negotiation process.

My third question is with respect to our overarching goal with that proposal. Logically, the first objective would be to finalize the negotiations, which have been dragging on for too long. However, one of the major goals of the Uniting for Consensus group's proposal within a new Security Council is to give a rightful place to and satisfy the needs of a region that has been neglected and maltreated within our Security Council today. I am referring, of course, to the African Group.

We believe that, with the proposal to have longer-term seats and all the details previously outlined by the Ambassador of Italy, we would rectify that historical injustice inflicted upon the African continent. We would also allow a large number of small States to stand for election to the Security Council. I will not go into any further detail here, as this is a general debate and I think

that the positions of various delegations — particularly that of Spain — are well-known. Nevertheless, I will conclude with two brief comments addressed to the co-Chairs of the new process.

First of all, we stress the need for transparency. As the Assembly is well aware, I believe that it is crucial that we embark upon the negotiations in the spirit of full transparency in order to ensure that all delegations are equally apprised of all the details of the reform under way.

Secondly, the negotiations have to be predictable, insofar as the leaps forward that we have managed to make in the past have failed to produce tangible results and States have simply crystallized their positions, which is not ideal. I am convinced that, thanks to the quality of our co-Chairs, we will see important progress and be able to build on the major achievements that we have previously accomplished.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China welcomes the appointment by the President of the General Assembly of Ambassador Imnadze, Permanent Representative of Georgia, and Ambassador Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during the current session of the General Assembly. We applaud the President's commitment to building a credible, transparent and inclusive intergovernmental negotiation process on Security Council reform, and China actively supports the co-Chairs in their work.

During the intergovernmental negotiations at the seventy-first session, in-depth and frank discussions took place on the five clusters of key issues concerning Security Council reform, guided by the principle of having a Member State-led process and the package approach. The constructive momentum of the intergovernmental negotiations was maintained. China commends those developments and appreciates the efforts of the former co-Chairs, the Permanent Representatives of Romania and Tunisia.

Security Council reform affects the immediate interests of all Member States and the long-term development of the Organization. It also bears on the future of the global collective security system. Security Council reform should be conducive to building a global governance system featuring joint consultations, extensive participation and shared benefits, which will help elevate the Council's authority and efficiency and

lead to better delivery on its mandate as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

China has always been an active supporter of the rational and necessary reform of the Council and advocates that, as a priority, greater representation and voice in the Council should be given to developing countries, especially the African States. A wider membership, including in particular small and medium-sized countries, which make up the majority of Member States, would enable greater access to the Council, allowing such countries to be involved in its decision-making and play a bigger part in safeguarding international peace and security. The intergovernmental negotiations process is an important avenue through which Member States can exchange views on issues concerning Council reform, deepen their understanding and narrow their differences. The comments, positions and proposals of the broad membership on Council reform form the basis of the intergovernmental negotiations.

China supports the co-Chairs in their efforts to perform their functions and fulfil their duties pursuant to decision 62/557, adhering to the principle of a Member States-led process and the package approach and encouraging Member States to engage in democratic consultations on the five clusters of key issues in order to achieve the broadest consensus. It is our hope that Member States and the co-Chairs will work hand in hand to contribute constructively to the intergovernmental negotiation process without artificially setting deadlines for the reform, trying to rush immature reform proposals through or launching text-based negotiations before the right conditions are at hand.

We should work together to maintain unity among Member States. Together with all parties, China stands ready to advance Security Council reform in a way that serves both the common interest of all Member States and the long-term interests of the United Nations.

Mr. Plasai (Thailand): Once again, we are gathered here to remind ourselves that the world today is different from what it was when the United Nations first came into being seven decades ago. Today's geopolitical landscape has been transformed. Modern-day conflicts are different and more complex. That requires us to adapt. Yet the Security Council, the organ responsible for one of the key pillars of the United Nations activities, namely, the maintenance of peace and security, is the

very one that has defied adaptation for the longest time. Today, we are meeting in a slightly different context. We are meeting at a specific juncture in time when there is a clear momentum for reform. We have our Secretary-General to thank for that, and Thailand supports his reform agenda, in particular his vision to restructure the peace and security architecture.

We must adapt the management, operations and structures of the Secretariat to make the United Nations more fit for purpose, coherent and properly aligned so as to prevent conflict and sustain peace. We hope that the current momentum for reform is an opportunity to inject urgency into the Security Council reform process. We are under no illusion that the reform agenda for the United Nations and the Security Council will be challenging. The latter reform, in particular, will require a constructive, pragmatic and results-oriented approach from all Member States if we are to realize any progress. Changes are needed in the composition and working methods of the Council so as to reflect current realities. Thailand joins other Member States in pushing for those changes and has been actively engaged in the intergovernmental negotiations. We welcome the progress made during the previous session, which circulated the food-for-thought document, which, we hope, offers an excellent template for text-based negotiations in the near future.

I take this opportunity to express appreciation to Mr. Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, for their hard work and dedication throughout the previous round of intergovernmental negotiations. We also welcome the appointment of Mr. Kaha Imnadze, Permanent Representative of Georgia, and Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, as the co-Chairs for the upcoming session. We wish them every success. In our view, three aspects are key to the reform of the Security Council.

First, there seems to be a broad convergence of views on the merits of expanding the membership of the Council, whether through the expansion of both of the existing categories or through the introduction of interim or intermediate options. We reiterate our idea, presented in November 2014, of an interim category of membership. Accordingly, aspiring permanent members would have the opportunity to prove themselves and immediately stand for re-election for a second term. If they are re-elected, a review could be conducted on

the possible expansion of permanent members based on conditions and criteria to be established. In line with views expressed by other Member States, we agree that the size of the reformed Council should be in the mid-twenties. However, any expansion must take into account a greater and a more equitable regional representation, as well as the varying sizes of regional groups. It must also reflect the plurality and evolving realities of the United Nations membership.

Secondly, we are of the view that the right of the veto has been both an important safeguard and an obstacle to the unity of purpose and decisive action of the Council. Thailand continues to support the code of conduct with regard to the use of the veto, as elaborated by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group. We also support the French-Mexican initiative on the voluntary limit on the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities.

Thirdly, we support strengthened dialogue and partnership between the Council and the General Assembly so as to support and enhance transparency. Efforts have already been made to strengthen regular consultations between the Presidents of the two bodies, and we commend those efforts. In addition, members of the Council can do more to engage the wider membership of the United Nations, particularly on issues with broader impact and complexity.

Security Council reform remains unfinished. Let us use the current momentum of the United Nations reform agenda to inject renewed determination into the process. Let us turn stumbling blocks into stepping stones for a reform that is acceptable to all and aligned with the rest of the Organization, so as to achieve genuine progress in designing a Security Council with greater representation, credibility, legitimacy and, above all, effectiveness.

Mr. Heusgen (Germany): Germany aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Japan on behalf of the Group of Four this morning (see A/72/PV.41). Allow me to add a few remarks.

In Germany, we have a saying: “The squirrel feeds itself slowly, but surely.” Everyone might rightfully be wondering what a squirrel has to do with reforming the Security Council. Well, the saying means, first and foremost, that the squirrel does not give up. It will persevere and succeed in gathering everything it needs in time for winter, as all will be able to see once again in Central Park this year. Similar to a squirrel collecting

acorns and nuts, one by one, States Members of the United Nations have over the years collected all the elements necessary for achieving the comprehensive reform of the Security Council. The pieces of the puzzle are all there. However, in order to achieve progress, we now have to find the courage to rearrange the pieces and assemble the puzzle. To be able to do that, we need a concise negotiating text that will allow us to finally begin concrete, results-oriented negotiations.

Let me be very honest. We all know that there are differing positions in the General Assembly pertaining to the reform of the Security Council, but, in my view, that is in an argument in favour of, rather than against, embarking on concrete negotiations. For it is in the framework of negotiations that we will be able to narrow down differences, and maybe eventually bridge them.

A startling 85 per cent of Member States have requested such text-based negotiations. We have just listened to our colleague from Thailand, who has been asking for such text-based negotiations, and our colleague from Spain speaking on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/72/PV.41), who stated that that group has shown itself to be the most flexible of all groups seeking Security Council reform. We should therefore not lose any more time. Why? Because it matters, and it matters that we finally make progress. It matters how that central organ responsible for maintaining international peace and security is composed. It matters whether that important body reflects the realities of the twenty-first century. It matters in terms of ensuring its future authority and the relevance of its decisions. It matters to be able to face current global challenges to peace and security. It matters for our international order and for a strong United Nations at its core, because we need a strong, legitimate United Nations that can help us restore confidence in global governance and cooperation.

We very much look forward to working together with everyone, in particular with the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Lana Zaki Nusseibeh and Ambassador Kaha Imnadze. We congratulate both of them, and we also express our willingness to work with the President of the General Assembly.

I would like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly on his strong commitment to responding positively to calls for change. I can only underline what the President said this morning — it is

time for action. Let us bring our nuts and acorns together, survive the winter and ultimately see a luminous spring that brings us closer to Security Council reform.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): My delegation and I welcome the commitment that the President of the General Assembly has thus far demonstrated to the long-outstanding process aimed at the reform of the Security Council. We appreciate that he has identified reform of the Security Council as a key priority of his presidency. I therefore take this opportunity to reassure him of my delegation's unwavering support in that endeavour and trust that through his leadership, considerable progress will be made in moving the process forward.

Allow me also to congratulate the incoming co-Chairs, Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh and Mr. Kaha Ilnadze, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Georgia, respectively, for assuming the co-chairship of the intergovernmental negotiations. South Africa urges the co-Chairs to devote all their efforts to reinvigorating the negotiations process, with the aim of achieving the momentum needed to move discussions on reform forward. South Africa firmly believes that continued, direct and enhanced engagement by Member States is required.

South Africa aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Sierra Leone, on behalf of the Group of African States, and of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, on behalf of the L.69 group of developing countries (see A/72/PV.41). I wish to make the following additional remarks in my national capacity.

The reform of the Security Council remains of the utmost importance for South Africa. In 2005, with the adoption of the Ezulwini Consensus, Africa made its position clear with regard to the reform of the Security Council. The goal is

“to be fully represented in all of the decision-making organs of the United Nations, particularly in the Security Council, which is the principal decision-making organ of the United Nations in matters relating to international peace and security”.

That remains our primary goal. The African Common Position is also very clear in its call for the expansion of the Security Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories of membership in order to address the current inequality in its composition, and for new permanent members

to be afforded the same privileges as the current permanent members.

I also wish to stress that, while Africa remains the most marginalized continent with regard to the composition of the Council, the underrepresentation of Latin America and Asia remains a challenge as well and also needs to be addressed urgently. The 2005 World Summit called for the speedy and urgent reform of the Security Council, and South Africa can only express its concern that 12 years after the Summit, the process is still in its infancy. Furthermore, my delegation expresses concern at the lack of meaningful progress in the intergovernmental negotiations, and we reiterate our view that it is only through text-based negotiations that progress can be achieved by identifying points of convergences and agreement, thereby providing the opportunity to bridge our differences.

The framework document that was unanimously adopted at the sixty-ninth session and the convergence issues identified at the seventy-first session, as well as the food-for-thought document of 2017, entitled “Elements of commonality and issues for further consideration on the question of equitable representation and increase in the membership in the Security Council and related matters”, which was produced during the seventy-first session, all offer a solid basis for text-based negotiations. However, in order for those documents and agreements to produce meaningful results, we need to adapt the way in which we have been doing business in the Organization. South Africa is disappointed that the intergovernmental negotiations have turned into another open-ended process with no real urgency to its work and Member States falling into the practice of issuing statements and restatements of previously stated positions.

It is appropriate to underline the significant Security Council reform efforts that have been advanced throughout the history of the United Nations. This year marks 72 years since the Security Council was established in 1945. It has been 52 years since the first and, sadly, only expansion of the Security Council. In little over a month from today, 11 December will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 47/62, which initiated the process of considering in the General Assembly the agenda item dealing with the Security Council reform and the question of equitable representation on and the increase in the membership of the Security Council.

Next year will mark exactly a decade since the start of the intergovernmental negotiations process. It will also mark 13 years since the World Summit of 2005, which produced a unanimous agreement on an early reform of the Security Council. It is with deep regret that, despite those efforts and processes regarding reform of the Security Council, no significant results have been produced. It is for that reason that South Africa wishes to propose the following.

First, we should discuss and agree on the programme of work of the intergovernmental negotiations process during the current session. We suggest that attention should be given to developing a road map with clear, implementable time frames for the immediate start of text-based negotiations. Addressing practicalities that are in line with United Nations procedures does not undermine the principle of transparency and inclusivity. It is important to underscore the fact that 164 out of 193 countries of the United Nations want the immediate commencement of text-based negotiations. That overwhelming number amounts to more than 80 per cent of the membership. The 164 countries encompass all regions of the United Nations: Africa, the Group of Western European and other States, the Latin American and Caribbean Group, the Asia-Pacific Group and the small island developing States, as well as some of the members of the permanent five. That vital point should not be ignored by anyone.

Secondly, South Africa would welcome the idea of having a block of time — even a week — allocated per element. That block of time would allow delegations to have sufficient time to engage in interactive discussions, which is the only way to achieve progress.

Thirdly, the idea of ending the work of the intergovernmental negotiations in June 2018, as has been the case in the previous two sessions, does not promote the efficient utilization of time and denies the process an adequate opportunity for full discussions. It also creates the impression that there is no urgency to the very important and long-outstanding process of Security Council reform.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm my delegation's commitment to working with the President and other Member States to ensure that the current session of the intergovernmental negotiations is a success. We reiterate our call for the current session to produce a fair and progressive outcome, so as to restore

the credibility and the legitimacy of the Council as one of the critical organs of the United Nations.

Having said that, my delegation would like to emphasize and reiterate the urgent need for the speedy reform of the Security Council. The world and the work of the Council have changed over the past 70 years. The structure runs the risk of losing legitimacy, credibility and acceptance should we fail to affect the necessary and required reforms. The current stalemate in the Council and its glaring failure to carry out its historic mandate of maintaining international peace and security are largely attributed to its current configuration. That is why South Africa calls for urgent practical steps to be taken during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Sandoval Mendiola (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Mr. Miroslav Lajčák for convening, during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, this debate on one of the most important pending items of the United Nations: reforming the Security Council to bring it in line with the twenty-first century — a time when democracy, equality and inclusion must prevail. We welcome the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Kaha Imnadze of Georgia and Ambassador Lana Zaki Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates. We express Mexico's commitment to and cooperation with their efforts.

As we have reiterated for years, the reform process must be carried out under the principles of transparency, impartiality, objectivity and inclusion. It must take on board the lessons learned in the previous sessions of the intergovernmental negotiations — in terms of managing to create understandings and the mistakes made in the process that have regrettably polarized the membership — and thereby try to advance the reform process. Mexico recognizes the interest expressed by all the negotiating groups in continuing this exchange of ideas. However, we stress that the reform of the Security Council will require a genuine political will that tones down individual interests and seeks in effect to benefit the Organization as a whole, so that it has the broadest support possible.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by Ambassador Lambertini of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) group. The UfC initiative responds to the principles of resolution 62/557 because it was formulated in good faith. It is a proposal

of commitment to attaining a Security Council that is more representative, transparent, democratic, effective and accountable. The UfC has shown great flexibility and transparency so as to achieve the greatest levels of agreement possible among the membership of the Organization.

Our proposal is inclusive, since it seeks to provide opportunities to all Member States and regions, particularly those that are underrepresented in the current configuration of the Security Council, such as Africa. The UfC proposal even addresses the ambitions of some States that legitimately wish to take on greater responsibility in the Security Council. In this context, I would like to invite the General Assembly to reflect on the following points, in the hope that they will also be useful for the work to be carried out by the co-Chairs of the new session of intergovernmental negotiations.

First, reforming the Security Council is a great responsibility that must not be taken lightly, nor approached in a fragmented or partial manner. It is in our hands to improve the capabilities of the Council so that it functions according to the expectations of contemporary international society. We must avoid preserving the status quo, but we must also avoid a meaningless reform that satisfies individual political aspirations, granting privileges in perpetuity to some States based on simple short-term reasons and to the detriment of the collective interest. That is the worst possible scenario, one we must not let play out.

Secondly, a Security Council with more privileged permanent members contradicts democracy, equality and inclusion. Increasing the number of permanent members goes against the need to reform the Council to make it more democratic, equal and efficient. We seek greater inclusion in the Organization, more rotation among countries in decision-making — not more privileges granted in perpetuity to selected States.

Thirdly, the reform of the Security Council must not focus solely on expanding membership, but also seriously address the improvement of its working methods, including the decision-making mechanisms such as the responsibility in the use of the veto. The current international moment we are living as well as the historical record are full of reasons for the use of veto to be restricted or withdrawn altogether. The French-Mexican initiative, complemented by the proposal of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, also shows that most of the States Members of

the United Nations want a comprehensive reform of the Security Council so that it does not lose its relevance to the international community.

Mr. Andrianarivelo-Razafy (Madagascar), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Fourthly, expanding the category of elected members — the non-permanent members — is the only issue on which all the regional groups and negotiators agree. We must focus comprehensively on this aspect of reform, in addition to the working methods that I mentioned earlier, rather than concentrating on or even trying to impose views on the issues that divide us. The proposal of the Uniting for Consensus group to create only new long-term non-permanent seats with re-election should be a solution that satisfies the ambitions of States seeking broader participation in the Council. This method is the only solution to reform, and not accepting that is to block progress.

Fifthly, we regret that some negotiating groups in the previous session have, absurdly, called into question democracy and representativeness. The lack of progress in the negotiations process is very frustrating, but even more disheartening is the notion that in order to move forward, we must set aside principles agreed on as the basis for the reform of the Security Council.

Sixthly, the lack of agreement on the central elements on which the reform should be based is a core impediment to beginning negotiations on a text imposed by a purported majority. Mexico will not support the start of negotiations on a text that recommends privileges in perpetuity for some States. We are sure that the expertise and skill of the new co-Chairs will guide our work without losing sight of that guiding principle. I reiterate Mexico's support for achieving that end.

Mr. Beleffi (San Marino): First of all, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this annual debate on the reform of the Security Council. San Marino aligns itself with the statement made by Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group. I would now like to make some remarks in my national capacity.

San Marino welcomes the decision to appoint two co-Chairs for the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. I would like to congratulate the Ambassadors of Georgia and the United Arab Emirates for assuming the important responsibility of

being co-Chairs. The delegation of San Marino would like to ensure them of its full cooperation in all aspects of the work of the intergovernmental negotiations.

Even if wide divergences remain on critical issues, we, the Member States, agreed, in decision 62/557, that credible Security Council reform requires a comprehensive approach and that Member States must drive the negotiations. It is now our collective responsibility to move the process forward in order to find new areas of convergence among Member States.

I would like to briefly remind the Assembly of the principles upon which, in our view, the reform of the Security Council should be based: democracy, transparency, accountability and inclusiveness. Those principles should be integrated into any reform of the United Nations, not only that of the Security Council. A representative body is democratic if its members are periodically elected. Regular and periodic elections are possible only by increasing the number of non-permanent seats. Regular and periodic elections would also build a more accountable Security Council.

San Marino believes that we should work on the idea of a compromise solution if we want to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council that can garner the broadest possible political acceptance by Member States. We now know quite well each other's perspectives on the different aspects of reform. We therefore have to show flexibility and a spirit of compromise to build a credible process for Security Council reform.

Mr. Tiare (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank the President for convening this debate on agenda item 122, entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council". The number of delegations that have already spoken or that have yet to take the floor serves to underline the importance of this topic.

I join others in congratulating Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh and Mr. Kaha Imnadze, Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Georgia, respectively, following their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. We hope that under their leadership we will achieve tangible results. To that end, I assure them of my delegation's support and full cooperation in carrying out their tasks. I also take this opportunity to convey

to their predecessors, the Permanent Representatives of Romania and Tunisia, Mr. Ion Jinga and Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari, respectively, our gratitude for their work during the seventy-first session.

With regard to this item, my delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Union (see A/72/PV.41), which clearly outlined Africa's stance on the issue. I would now like to make some observations in my national capacity.

The question of Security Council reform has been considered annually by the General Assembly for a decade, pursuant to decision 62/557, which outlined five points around which the debate should take place.

On equitable representation in the Security Council and the increase in the number of its members, my delegation wonders whether today we still need to persuade Member States of that necessity, as obvious it is, and because both regional groups and those created by individual Member States support the legitimate initiative to adapt the main organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security to new geopolitical realities. The main body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security must be more representative, more responsive, more democratic, more transparent and able to respond effectively and efficiently to contemporary challenges. Accordingly, African countries, so far underrepresented in the non-permanent member category, and the African continent, the only continent with no permanent seat, have a role to play in that important body, which would undoubtedly contribute to righting the historic injustice against Africa and to better establishing the legitimacy of the Security Council.

With reference to previous negotiations, Burkina Faso already welcomed the fact that the majority of States agree on the need to increase the number of members, with representation from Africa within the Security Council in both categories. That would enable the continent to participate in decision-making, particularly with regard to those affecting the African continent, given that nearly three quarters of the issues on the Security Council's agenda relate to African countries. Burkina Faso therefore reaffirms its commitment to the Common African Position enshrined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, and renewed at the African Union Summit held in Kigali in 2016.

With regard to membership categories, my delegation is in favour of maintaining both existing categories, since reform will eventually lead to a better membership balance for both permanent and non-permanent seats, while strictly respecting broader geographical representation. My delegation also favours a balanced enlargement of the two categories, in accordance with the African stance to which I referred.

With regard to the right to the veto, Burkina Faso of course aligns itself with Africa's position — that new member States should enjoy the same privileges and prerogatives as existing members, including the right of veto, if it is maintained, of course, and in the interests of fairness.

With regard to the working methods of the Security Council, it should be noted that they are of paramount importance, because they determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council, whose the primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security objectively, impartially and non-selectively. Although we recognize that efforts have been made to improve the working methods of the Security Council, we must acknowledge that much remains to be done.

On the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, progress has been made, as evidenced by regular meetings between the President of the General Assembly and the rotating monthly presidency of the Security Council. However, the General Assembly is the only deliberative body in which all Member States have an equal voice. It is therefore fitting that it should be given special attention by the Security Council. For that reason, we agree with the large majority of delegations that close cooperation and coordination between the two bodies is essential, in strict compliance with the prerogatives and tasks of each body and in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. In the same vein, the Security Council needs to be more transparent in its relations with the General Assembly.

After more than 20 years of discussions and 13 cycles of intergovernmental negotiations, no comprehensive, satisfactory solution has emerged from this major undertaking, even though all Member States agree on the principle of a more representative Security Council that is better adapted to contemporary realities and able to respond to crises more quickly. How much longer should we wait? It is high time, as is felt by the majority of Member States, to move towards text-

based negotiations, which is the only sure way to move towards a consensus-based solution accepted by all Member States. My delegation therefore urges the new co-Chairs to consider the calls of the majority.

To that end, the documented progress made during the sixty-ninth, seventieth and seventy-first sessions amounted to language that could be used to draft a resolution for Member States to then consider. In that same vein, the existing points of consensus and convergence among regional and other groups, because they have already been presented, are assets that we possess which, if properly used, will certainly make it possible to make significant progress in considering the issue.

Burkina Faso believes that only balanced multilateralism will guarantee success in addressing the most serious contemporary problems. It therefore calls on all parties to sincerely negotiate with the resolute will, mutual trust and good faith required to achieve a reformed Security Council that is able to meet the expectations of States and peoples. The unanimous demand for reform by all Member States confirms, if that were still needed, a legitimate aspiration, because the inaction of the United Nations when faced with such a clear-cut situation cannot be convincingly justified.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): Let me first thank the President for convening us here on a very important topic. I congratulate both Ambassador Imnadze of Georgia and Ambassador Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates on their appointment as the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We also express our gratitude to the previous co-Chairs, Ambassador Ion Jinga of Romania and Ambassador Khiari of Tunisia, for their important stewardship and contributions.

The ability and credibility of the Council are being widely questioned. The Council's current structure, the use of the veto and, at times, its failure to address conflicts equally and to uphold international humanitarian law, international human rights law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations are among the crucial challenges that it faces in fostering international peace. Indonesia calls for a comprehensive reform of the Council, one that will make it more effective, accountable, democratic and representative of the contemporary world's realities and plurality.

Indonesia, together with many other Member States, has contributed actively to helping advance

the reform process in a results-oriented manner. We will continue to play a positive role to that end, but the countless reform debates leave us with little doubt that overcoming differences on key issues, such as categories and the representation of countries, will not be easy. Concerned States make arguments according to their legitimate perspectives, which is of course their right. However, given the nature of current conflicts and their grave humanitarian toll, the world cannot afford to wait for the reform exercise to run its course, which has been long.

That is why Indonesia advocates for picking the low-hanging fruit that can enable the Council to meet its responsibilities. We are pleased that an increasing number of countries are also emphasizing such an approach. As a practical measure to prevent inaction by the Council in the face of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, Indonesia supports initiatives that seek to regulate the use of the veto. We hope that there will be greater focus on that issue in the upcoming intergovernmental negotiations.

Furthermore, Indonesia is open to the exploration of all proposals that embrace an intermediate approach with regard to categories of members with the addition of a clear review mechanism. In our view, such an approach has the potential to garner the widest possible political acceptance and move things forward.

We firmly believe that today's many complex and multidimensional global challenges cannot be met unless the various regional perspectives are also reflected in the Council's decision-making. The concerns and aspirations of the developing world and the majority of its citizens should be reflected adequately. Without detailing our position on regional representation, which has been presented on many occasions, we support the addition of at least four non-permanent seats each for Asia and Africa, along with additional seats for Latin America and the Caribbean as well.

We fully support the Secretary-General's call for a surge in political diplomacy and for a strong effort to set conflict prevention as an overarching priority for the United Nations. Indonesia also stresses the actualization of the deep interconnection between sustaining peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In that regard, we underscore that the work to reform the Security Council also needs to be linked to other reform processes, particularly General Assembly revitalization, the alignment exercise facilitated by

Australia and Argentina to enhance synergy between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council so as to advance the 2030 Agenda, and the restructuring of the peace and security architecture, as well as other United Nations management reforms.

While the Council must be reformed so that it can fulfil its responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations, sustainable peace will have the greatest chance of occurring when all three pillars — namely peace and security, development and human rights — work in unison and are supported firmly by everyone.

Reform should also mean that more work is done on the working methods of the Security Council. Better communication and coordination are needed among all related bodies of the General Assembly and the Security Council, including the organs of the Secretariat. We would love to see better consultations with members, particularly with the troop- and police-contributing countries (TCCs/PCCs), which put their young men and women in harm's way. That is what we mean by concrete contributions. I also believe that small and large Member States alike deserve to have a place in the Security Council based on their concrete contributions.

Building on Indonesia's track record of diplomacy, reconciliation and peaceful conflict resolution, and as one of the top 10 contributors of TCCs and PCCs in peacekeeping efforts, as well as a candidate for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the term 2019-2020, Indonesia is keen to assist the Council in meeting its responsibilities. Indonesia is determined to play its role fully in helping the Council achieve its Charter aims and to facilitate global peace, embedded in a holistic, synergized and practical approach.

I would also like to support the comment made by my colleague the Permanent Representative of San Marino on the need for all of us to be flexible and to achieve consensus. Let us not dilly-dally while the world awaits our action.

Ms. Argüello González (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the convening of this important meeting on the negotiating process regarding the question of equitable representation in the Security Council, including increasing its membership. We congratulate Ambassadors Kaha Imnadze of Georgia and Lana Zaki Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on the topic before us.

We are confident that their leadership will maintain the dynamism and impetus that the negotiation requires.

Nicaragua aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ambassador Rhonda King, on behalf of the L.69 group (see A/72/PV.41).

After 72 years, the Organization has not managed to comply fully with the objectives set out in its Charter. Faced with that unfortunate situation, the call for reinvention is an urgent one. To that end, we must promote the indispensable transformations of the Organization so that it can better serve the interests of humankind.

We wish to emphasize that, during his presidency of the General Assembly in 2008, Father Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, Nicaragua's Minister of Peace and Dignity, developed and fought for such a reinvention until the end, laying the foundations for the discussion of such transformations. It is imperative to carry out the reform of the Security Council so as to ensure that its composition and function reflect the geopolitical and economic realities of the international community of the twenty-first century, for which the expansion in the membership categories, including permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council, is essential.

It is urgent that the negotiations enter a more dynamic phase. It is urgent that a negotiating text be prepared so as to achieve the necessary convergences and proceed with reforms during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly. We consider it vital to negotiate on the basis of a text, so that we can carry out real negotiations with sincere efforts by all interested parties. After many years of participation in the negotiations, we are ready and prepared to negotiate. It is time for concrete results. At least 180 States have declared their positions since 2009, and at least 164 of them support negotiations based on a negotiating text. We cannot ignore those numbers, hence the urgent need for a basic draft text to help us achieve the required convergences and proceed with the reforms.

Nicaragua will continue to support efforts to reform the Security Council. The vast majority of the international community has underscored that the status quo is not an option. We cannot continue to obstruct a final decision in the reform process. We hope that the leadership on the part of the co-Chairs will be decisive in overcoming the labyrinth that has

consumed so many years. They can count on the full collaboration of Nicaragua in their noble task. There is every need to have an open and in-depth reflection process aimed at the crucial transformation, reinvention and democratization of the United Nations.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to congratulate Mr. Kaha Imnadze and Ms. Lana Nusseibeh, the Permanent Representatives of Georgia and the United Arab Emirates, respectively, on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council. My delegation assures them of our full support as they carry out their work.

We would also like to commend the outstanding work carried out by the previous co-Chairs, Mr. Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Mr. Mohamed Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia. That work culminated in the drafting of a discussion paper that takes stock of the convergences and divergences in the positions of Member States on the question of Security Council reform.

My delegation endorses the statements (see A/72/PV.41) made by the representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States and by the representative of Kuwait on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

During the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, we witnessed an increasingly urgent call from a large majority of delegations to continue negotiations on Security Council reform. Nevertheless, in our view, it is crucial to prevent the process from being never-ending. We must reach agreement on specific modalities with a clear timetable for further work.

We agree that it is time for the international community to ensure that the Security Council demonstrates effectiveness, representativeness, accountability and transparency in its work, and that it is a Security Council that underscores its ability to reflect the concerns of all Member States. Everyone agrees that the reform of the Council should be comprehensive and not gradual, and that it should take into account the five key elements with no exceptions and without distinctions.

The way in which the Security Council currently operates has led to a situation where for years now several voices within the international community have been calling for its revision and its improvement through a tangible expansion that would improve its transparency and effectiveness. We call for a Security Council that is more representative, but we believe that any expansion of the Council should not be at the expense of its effectiveness, efficiency and accountability. For us, the expansion of the Council in both categories is an absolute necessity. However, that is a thorny issue, one that must be carefully considered and managed.

However, the injustice done to Africa in the design of the Security Council is apparent to us all. It means that we should address that without further ado. Strengthening Africa's presence within the category of non-permanent members and ensuring its representation in the permanent-member category would deliver justice to our continent and would provide a positive response to the request put forward, nearly unanimously, by the vast majority of Member States.

The Charter of the United Nations designates the Security Council as the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. That is a clear, unequivocal mandate with no ambiguity. Any support of the General Assembly in matters pertaining to peace and security can be seen as positive only if it is in line with the respective mandates of those two bodies.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my delegation's support to the two co-Chairs. I hope that during this session the intergovernmental negotiation process — the real platform for dialogue and constructive exchanges — will make it possible to iron out the points of divergence and reconcile the positions in order to ensure that the reform of the Council to which we aspire actually materializes.

Mr. Mažeiks (Latvia): I thank the President for convening this annual debate on Security Council reform. Since the 2005 World Summit, the call for an early reform of the Security Council has been made many times, just as there have been many appeals to make the Council more representative, efficient and transparent in order to reflect the political realities of the twenty-first century. Security Council reform is long overdue, and we should all seek to strengthen the legitimacy of that important body.

This is the tenth year of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We note that some progress was achieved during the past three sessions of the intergovernmental negotiations, each resulting in an outcome document that clarifies the positions of Member States regarding various aspects of Security Council reform. First, the 2015 framework document reflected the positions of more than half of the Member States. A year later, the intergovernmental negotiations tried to formulate elements of convergence covering certain aspects of the reform. At the latest such session, the co-Chairs prepared a document entitled "Elements of commonality and issues for further consideration on the question of equitable representation and increase in the membership in Security Council and related matters". We appreciate the efforts of all former Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations to help to inform its work, just as we appreciate the support of the former and current Presidents of the General Assembly to advance the reform.

Latvia welcomes the decision of the General Assembly to appoint Ms. Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, and Mr. Kaha Imnadze, Permanent Representative of Georgia, as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations at this session of the General Assembly. We wish them success in that important task, and we are committed to working with them and with other Member States in order to facilitate real reform.

The intergovernmental negotiations have yet to produce the concrete outcome of a true negotiation process. We believe that, rather than entering into yet another cycle of discussions and restating well-known positions, the time is right to take the process a step further and to start text-based negotiations on the reform. While we believe that a wide majority of States Members of the United Nations share that view, we fully trust our distinguished co-Chairs to confirm such an assessment in a way that they find appropriate.

We do not expect the negotiations to be fast and easy. The result can be achieved only through careful consensus-building and must receive the widest political acceptance. Latvia is ready to take part in such negotiations aimed at achieving long-awaited Security Council reform, which should be the goal of our deliberations.

Moving on to specific aspects of the reform, in our view, all regions must be adequately represented in

the Council so as to ensure its legitimacy. The reform should ensure equitable geographic distribution of both permanent and non-permanent seats in the Council, including the allocation of at least one additional non-permanent seat to the Group of Eastern European States. We also believe that during the nomination and election of non-permanent members of the Council, due consideration should be given to adequate representation of small and medium-sized Member States.

There is no doubt that the question of the veto represents a very important part of the reform. Discussions on the use of that special power in certain circumstances should be continued. Yet aspects of the problem are by now beyond debate. Blocking the work of the Council in matters related to mass atrocities is unacceptable. Council members should refrain from using their veto in situations of atrocity crimes. Latvia has signed the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, and we are happy to see that more than half of the United Nations membership has done so as well.

We also support improving the Security Council's working methods so as to increase the transparency, inclusiveness and representativeness of its work. That would enhance the Council's legitimacy and facilitate the implementation of its decisions.

In conclusion, Latvia believes that the United Nations capacity to address the current global challenges depends largely on the political will of Member States to move forward Security Council reform. That is long overdue, and we should all strive to strengthen the legitimacy of that important body. It is time to move forward and achieve a concrete outcome in that process. We hope that the upcoming session of the intergovernmental negotiations will achieve progress in that regard.

Ms. Flores Herrera (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I welcome the decision of the President of the General Assembly to convene today's meeting on agenda item 122, entitled "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council". The need to pursue the intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly reflects, in no uncertain terms, the desire of more than 97 per cent of Member States.

We commend the President's appointment of our colleagues Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, and Mr. Kaha Imnadze, Permanent Representative of Georgia, to serve as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, which represents not only a good choice but also demonstrates the commitment that the President has made to try to ensure gender quality in carrying out his work. We wish the co-Chairs every success in facilitating the process, which they will, we know, skilfully carry out, and we assure them of our unyielding support and readiness to work constructively to achieve the goals ahead. Likewise, we acknowledge the commendable work of Ambassadors Khiari and Jinga as co-Chairs during the previous session.

The Security Council was born as the result of a cataclysm in the history of humankind — from the ashes and the suffering of a World War. Despite the changing nature of our world over the past 72 years, the Council has been substantively overhauled only once. Although the Security Council has succeeded in preventing another conflict of a global scale, we are witnessing today the proliferation of humanitarian crises that also know no borders and present great challenges to international peace and security, including the protracted and ongoing tragedy of refugees, the threat of terrorism becoming the status quo, and constant challenges to the disarmament agenda in all its aspects. Those situations, which affect so many people, in particular the men, women and children whom, in keeping with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we made a commitment not to leave behind. That is more than enough reason to give greater impetus to reforming the sole organ of the United Nations whose decisions are binding and strictly enforceable. The inertia of the Security Council in its decision-making is measured in human lives every day, and the Organization cannot allow that.

The review of the composition of the Security Council and other related matters is an essential component in efforts to revitalize the Organization and make it more fit for purpose pursuant to the noble agenda that we are already implementing. It is a fundamental issue that concerns the maintenance of peace and international security and is intrinsically linked to sustainable development. Panama believes that the time has come for the reform of the Security Council to become an effective reality, thereby becoming the fourth pillar sustaining the comprehensive overhaul

of the United Nations, in addition to the reform of the development system, which is the most advanced, the reform of the peace and security architecture and the reform of management, which we have entrusted to the Secretary-General.

The Security Council needs to be revitalized not only to reflect the world's current composition, but also in order for it to be effective, transparent and accountable to the international community. Most important, a successful reform would send a clear message that our common global interests supersede individual national interests. By safeguarding the credibility of the Security Council with regard to the resolution of conflicts, we will safeguard the continued relevance of the multilateral system for the world. The practical implementation of the code of conduct on limiting the use of the veto in the Security Council will bring us closer to reforming that body, because it will progressively erase the distinctions between permanent and non-permanent, elected members.

As we have said before, Panama hopes to see a Security Council that in 2045, which will mark the United Nations centennial, will be composed of 26 members, all on equal standing, elected every three years, with the possibility of consecutive re-elections. The intended effect is to bring together various positions around the table, giving a greater voice to underrepresented regions in the current composition of the Council, such as Africa and small island developing States. The intent is to dismantle the paradigm that we have been discussing so that we can move forward. The paradigm I am speaking of is one composed of permanent and non-permanent, elected members.

(spoke in English)

Let me repeat Panama's vision in English so that it is absolutely clear. By the time of the United Nations centennial in 2045, Panama envisions a Security Council consisting of 26 members, all on equal standing, elected for three-year terms, with the possibility of consecutive re-elections.

(spoke in Spanish)

Our proposal can be found on PaperSmart.

During this session, let us use the intergovernmental negotiations to move beyond the status quo and come up with a text on the basis of which we can negotiate towards achieving the much-desired reform of the Security Council. Let us move beyond the discussions

that we began more than 20 years ago about the urgent need to reform the Council.

For its part, the delegation of Panama will continue to participate actively in the intergovernmental negotiations process on reforming the Security Council, in keeping with our mission to build bridges, while trying to bring together those with positions that are clearly polarized. We believe that there are more elements that unite us than divide us. That is our commitment to "We the People" — "We, the peoples of the world" — to whom we are duty-bound.

Mr. Vitrenko (Ukraine): Let me begin by expressing our full support for the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, and the way forward that he has presented for the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations. I would like also to join others in congratulating the Permanent Representatives of Georgia and the United Arab Emirates on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations process on the reform of the Security Council, and in wishing them every success in moving forward the intergovernmental negotiations.

During the previous session of the General Assembly, we achieved considerable progress in our deliberations on Security Council reform, as reflected in the food-for-thought paper prepared by the previous co-Chairs, which includes commonalities and issues for further consideration. We share the view that continuing our discussions in such a constructive and coherent way will help in our efforts to achieve long-awaited progress in Security Council reform.

My delegation is ready to discuss all the proposals already put forward by delegations during previous rounds of negotiations, so that we can identify those that might receive major support in the General Assembly and the Security Council. The General Assembly unanimously adopted decision 62/557, calling on us, in our work on the Security Council reform, to build upon the discussions held during previous General Assembly sessions, including proposals and positions reflected in the framework document circulated on 31 July 2015. In that regard, we believe that there is already a solid basis for beginning text-based negotiations in order to arrive at a shorter, more precise framework document as the most immediate outcome of our deliberations.

I will not go into all the details of our position, since it is well known and duly reflected in the framework document. Yet, as a current elected

member of the Security Council and as a country that has experienced at first hand the shortcomings of the Council's existing working methods and format, which directly influence its record in safeguarding international peace and security, Ukraine deems it necessary to reiterate our position on several important aspects of Council reform.

First, increasing the representative character of the Security Council is one of the top priorities. Yet it should not be an obstacle to, or in any way delay, reaching agreement on other areas of the Council's reform or the practical implementation of such reform.

Secondly, we strongly believe that any formula for the Council's enlargement should include the provision of an additional non-permanent seat for the Group of Eastern European States, whose membership has more than doubled in size in the past decades. We are encouraged that, during our intergovernmental negotiation discussions, several groups of States, not only the Eastern European Group, have clearly expressed their support for that approach. We are therefore of the view that the addition of one more non-permanent seat for the Eastern European Group in an expanded Council should be considered as one of the commonalities as far as regional representation goes.

We also support the idea that equitable geographical distribution should be reflected in an expanded Council's membership. My delegation is convinced that any change in the Security Council's composition should be based on the existing regional groups of Member States. At the same time, we think that there is merit in exploring the option of allocating a non-permanent seat in the future Council to the small island developing States.

Thirdly, on the basis of our own current membership of the Security Council, we know how imperative it is that elected members be able to play a more active and effective role in the proceedings and the decision-making process of the Council. In order to enhance the transparency, accountability and inclusiveness of the Council's work, and with a view to strengthening its effectiveness, my delegation considers it equally necessary to hold broader consultations and other forms of interaction with non-Council members on a regular basis.

The Council should also meet, as a general rule, in a public format and hold frequent, timely and substantive open briefings on the matters discussed

in the Security Council and in its subsidiary organs in private meetings. In that regard, we welcome the so-called wrap-up sessions of the Council, of which there have been very few, one of which was held this year under Ukraine's presidency (see S/PV.8038). At the same time, we also consider appropriate other public formats of the Council's meetings, such as the Arria Formula, which provides an opportunity for Council members to discuss issues of the utmost importance not only with concerned Governments but also with the broader United Nations membership, as well as key civil-society actors. All those and many other important procedural matters were reflected in the recently adopted revised note prepared by the President of the Security Council in document S/2017/507. That decision should now be properly implemented in the Council's daily practice.

I cannot but stress that, for my country, the need for Security Council reform is as high now as ever before. The continued unlawful and aggressive actions of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, leading to the loss of thousands of lives, have placed into question not only the security of my country but also that of all of Europe. The subsequent inability of the Security Council to react promptly to that aggression because of the use of the right to the veto severely undermines the credibility of the Council and condones the very aggression that the Council was established to rule out.

In that regard, we would like to reiterate our firm position on the need to phase out the right to the veto as a major obstacle to the Council's ability to act effectively in response to challenges to international peace and security. As one of the signatories to the French-Mexican declaration on the restriction of the veto power, as well as the related code of conduct, we believe that, while abolishing the veto is a long-term objective, all members of the Council — permanent and elected alike — must voluntarily pledge not to vote against draft resolutions in cases of mass atrocities, genocide and crimes against humanity. The same approach should be implemented in cases of war crimes and foreign aggression. That is why it is important, in the course of the Council's reform, to envisage the responsibility of a party to a conflict to abstain from voting on a Council decision concerning the resolution of that conflict.

Finally, let me assure the President and the co-Chairs of my delegation's full support for their

challenging assignment to steer the intergovernmental negotiations process.

Mr. Al-khalifa (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of Qatar would like to thank the President for having convened this meeting. We express our appreciation for the commendable efforts of the Permanent Representatives of Tunisia and Romania, co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly. We would also like to congratulate the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates and the Permanent Representative of Georgia as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations during the current session.

We align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of the Group of Arab States (see A/72/PV.41).

The international community places great hopes on the reform of the Security Council, because the Council is the primary organ within the United Nations responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security and the only organ within the United Nations that has the authority to adopt binding resolutions and take collective enforcement measures under the Charter of the United Nations. More than 20 years after the start of discussions on the reform of the Council, and after the submission of many proposals and initiatives, despite the difficulties and the obstacles encountered in that process Council reform continues to be a priority for Member States. Success in the comprehensive reform of the United Nations hinges on the reform of the Security Council as one of the pillars of the United Nations. The delay in that reform calls for greater cooperation among the groups and countries interested in reform and involves rethinking in order to accelerate negotiations so that we can agree on a number of proposals that would render the new Council more effective in implementing its mandate to maintain international peace and security.

The State of Qatar is committed to the common responsibility of States to reach international consensus on issues of interest to the international community and to provide an opportunity for an informal dialogue that would move forward the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. To that end, in January, my country hosted the Doha retreat on the reform of the Security Council, in which geographical groups and interested countries took part. The Doha

talks reaffirmed that the reform of the Security Council is not the responsibility of specific groups of countries but that of the entire international community.

The State of Qatar underscores the interlinkages among all aspects of the negotiations. There are also elements of commonality pursuant to decision 62/557, which was adopted by consensus. Any attempt to reform the Security Council will therefore not be successful if it is limited to one aspect and ignores the other aspects.

We therefore reiterate that the issue of the right to the veto is a crucial element in the reform of the Council. Experience has shown that it is important that the use of the veto should be limited and that States should refrain from using it in cases of mass atrocities, war crimes, genocide or ethnic cleansing. The arbitrary use of the veto has in many cases undermined the credibility of decision-making within the Security Council. It has also led to the inability of the Security Council to assume its responsibilities and take measures to maintain international peace and security. In that respect, we reiterate our support for the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group and the French-Mexican initiative on restraint in the use of the veto in atrocity situations. Those initiatives have been endorsed by more than 120 States, including the State of Qatar.

There is another issue of interest to the State of Qatar, namely, the working methods of the Security Council, which we believe should receive more attention in negotiations. Limiting ourselves to piecemeal approaches in addressing the working methods of the Council undermines important negotiations. The Council's working methods must be reviewed and adapted to be in line with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. All States must participate in formal and informal meetings of the international community. Periodic analytical reports should be submitted by the Council to the General Assembly, and there must be sufficient coordination among the Security Council, the General Assembly and other United Nations organs. Furthermore, the prerogatives of other organs of the United Nations should not be encroached upon.

In conclusion, the State of Qatar will continue cooperating and working with Member States to constructively and openly address all proposals and ideas arising in the intergovernmental negotiations process aimed at making the Council more effective

and accountable and able to take timely decisions in order to maintain international peace and security.

Mr. Nurudeen (Nigeria): At the outset, let me thank the President and the Secretariat for convening today's plenary meeting on agenda item 122, which again provides us with an opportunity to share perspectives on the question of equitable representation and an increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council. I also thank the President for his insightful introductory remarks on this crucial issue (see A/72/PV.41).

The Nigerian delegation welcomes the President's decision to appoint Ambassadors Kaha Imnadze and Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, Permanent Representatives of Georgia and the United Arab Emirates, respectively, as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations at the current session. We assure the co-Chairs of our full support and wish them great success in their efforts to move the reform process forward. We also commend the outgoing co-Chairs, Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari of Tunisia and Ambassador Ion Jinga of Romania, under whose watch significant successes were recorded during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly. We admire the great skill with which they steered the intergovernmental negotiations process.

I wish to reiterate the fact that Nigeria aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Chairs of the Group of African States and the L.69 group, respectively (see A/72/PV.41). Let me, however, make a few remarks in my national capacity.

During the more than seven decades since the inception of the United Nations, the world has undergone tremendous change, ranging from population increase, economic growth and technological advancement, among other things. During that period, new challenges have also emerged posing threats to international peace and security on a scale that has never been witnessed before. The imperative of the new challenges strongly indicates that the current structure of the Security Council must be reformed in order to reposition it so as better to respond to issues in a timely and appropriate manner.

A reform of the Council would entail a restructuring and expansion of its membership to take account of, *inter alia*, the increased membership of the Organization and the need to reflect the interests of all the constituent regions. To our delight, previous sessions of the intergovernmental negotiations have

shown the emergence of broad consensus on the need for expansion of the membership of the Security Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. Nigeria acknowledges the work already done at previous sessions and looks forward to working concertedly with all concerned to build on the gains made thus far. We appreciate the contributions of a large number of States whose proposals are contained in the framework document on the subject and, given their quality, we are convinced that it is high time to commence text-based negotiations on this critical matter.

We are aware of the challenges that we face in guiding and moving the reform process forward. Given the difficulties experienced in bridging the differences in the varied positions and in working out the *modus operandi* for advancing the process, we urge Member States to continue to seek ways of fulfilling the political commitment that our leaders made at the 2005 World Summit, at which time Heads of State and Government agreed on the imperative need for early reform of the Security Council.

Nigeria and other emerging nations continue to demonstrate the capacity to add value to the work of all the organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council. For that reason, we must now commit ourselves to accelerating the long-overdue reforms of the Council. They will no doubt make the Council more equitable, more inclusive, efficient, transparent and more effective. Nigeria believes that a reformed Security Council with expanded permanent membership would benefit from the unique experiences and capacities that regional representatives could bring to bear on its work.

Nigeria has always expressed its support for the advancement of the intergovernmental negotiations process in an open, inclusive and transparent manner. As we prepare to move into the next round of negotiations during this session, we thank all delegations that have continued to express their support for the Common African Position. We would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm that African Union position on the entire subject of Security Council reform, to which we adhere very strongly. That proposal is important, as it seeks, *inter alia*, to correct the historical injustice done to the continent and its continued marginalization over so many years. For that reason, we wish to underscore the overriding need to ensure that the interests of Africa continue to be advanced and safeguarded. African States have offered a coherent, practical and persuasive blueprint for the Council's reform. We have

come up with our Common Position, which asserts the right of our continent, which has for so long been marginalized, to be fully represented in the Council, just we recognize the legitimate aspirations of other regions to be represented.

Security Council reform is inspired by the principles of the Charter of the United Nations itself. The clear objective of that process is based on the sovereign equality of all Member States and on the need to adhere to the principles of democratization and inclusiveness in the United Nations. It is undoubtedly a worthwhile process. We must therefore muster the desired will that can lead to the achievement of a reformed Security Council sooner rather than delaying it indefinitely. Be assured that my delegation will actively participate in all of the processes relating to Security Council reform. In doing so, it is important to stress that all outcomes should encompass and take on board the views and interests of all Member States.

Finally, what is required of us at this juncture is to move the process forward through text-based negotiations. There should be noticeable progress in the forthcoming negotiations, far beyond what we achieved during the seventy-first session. The demand is legitimate and credible and made with a full sense of responsibility and relevance to the international system, and it deserves the full support of all Member States. We look forward with great optimism to the next stage of action during the seventy-second session. We assure the President of our full cooperation in that respect.

Mrs. Pobee (Ghana): I join other delegations in expressing appreciation to the President for his leadership in the matter before us today and for the opportunity to continue the important debate on Security Council reform, which has engaged the attention of the United Nations for almost 25 years. During the high-level general debate of the General Assembly in September, the issue of equitable representation in, and the enlargement of, Security Council membership was raised by several delegations, including the delegation of Ghana, thereby reaffirming the need for inclusive reforms that would reflect the universal and representative character of the United Nations.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/72/PV.41). I shall now make the following remarks in my national capacity.

At the outset, we wish to emphasize the central role played by the General Assembly in this question, and we welcome our continued deliberation on this item in the General Assembly at the current session. We congratulate Ambassador Kaha Imnadze, Permanent Representative of Georgia, and Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We assure them of Ghana's active engagement and support in the course of this session.

Ghana, like many other delegations, attaches great importance to the issue of equitable representation on the Security Council, and over the years it has called for the enlargement of the Council's membership, in line with the African Common Position as contained in the Ezulwini Consensus. We are committed to efforts to make the Council, a vital organ of the United Nations, more broadly representative, efficient and transparent so that we can enhance its effectiveness and legitimacy in the implementation of its decisions.

It is more evident now than ever, 72 years after the founding of the Organization, that broader political space is required within the Security Council so as to enable it to address today's challenges and fulfil its mandate. Our loud call in the General Assembly for the reform of the Security Council is well-grounded in the changing global landscape and in the face of the dramatic changes in the nature, scale and complexity of threats to international peace and security. The inability and apparent lack of political will in the Security Council to provide effective leadership in addressing some of the most urgent and dire threats to global security make it imperative for us to intensify efforts to improve the structure and functioning of that important body. Ghana believes that, if we continue to allow our current differences to stall progress on Council reform, it will be to the detriment of the Organization and the billions of people we represent.

With its 54 Member States, Africa accounts for close to one third of the membership of the United Nations and 70 per cent of the Council's work. Many African countries, including Ghana, contribute troops to international peacekeeping, not only on the continent but also in other regions around the globe. In that context, some of our peacekeepers continue to pay the ultimate price with their lives in the maintenance of international peace and security. It is inconceivable, therefore, that in the scheme of things today, Africa has only three

seats in the non-permanent category, and no permanent seat. Africa's demand for at least two permanent seats and two additional non-permanent seats is a matter of addressing the historical injustice done at the founding of the Organization, and of ensuring the right to an equal say in decision-making on issues of international peace and security, as well as in modernizing and improving global governance. The same principle should apply to other underrepresented regions.

As we all know, multilateralism seeks to ensure collective security and inclusion. In our view, continued, substantive and enhanced engagement on the part of all is necessary if we wish to improve prospects for early reform. We as Member States must continue to work together, even if we differ in views, in order to move the intergovernmental negotiation process forward. Ghana therefore welcomes the elements of convergence that were identified during the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, and commends Ambassador Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Ambassador Mohamed Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, for their tremendous efforts in that regard.

We believe that there is general acceptance of the need to enlarge the Council membership so as to make it more representative and to include more developing countries. Progress on other reform issues, such as membership categories, the question of the veto, regional representation, the size of the enlarged Council and Council working methods, may be complex but do not represent an insurmountable challenge. With abundant flexibility, goodwill and compromise we can reach our goal of Security Council reform. We believe that the emerging consensus on various aspects of the reforms must be followed through, and efforts should be made to advance the intergovernmental negotiations to text-based negotiations.

With regard to the question of the veto and its impact on the work of an enlarged Council, we would need to critically address that aspect of reform against the background of the current impact on the Council's effective functioning. In the interim, Ghana continues to support the code of conduct proposed by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group aimed at preventing veto use in cases of mass-atrocity crimes.

We also welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General aimed at restructuring the United Nations

peace and security architecture. We hope that when those reform proposals are eventually finalized and implemented, the Organization will be better positioned to coordinate and seamlessly carry out its mandate with a reformed, democratic and representative Security Council working for a secure and peaceful world.

Mr. Hickey (United Kingdom): I thank Ambassador Imnadze of Georgia and Ambassador Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates for taking on the leadership of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform.

The United Kingdom is a long-standing and firm supporter of the need for reform of the Security Council. When the first meeting of the Security Council was hosted in London, in 1946, there were 11 members. That membership increased to its current 15 in 1965. In the intervening years, the United Nations has grown and the world has changed. But the Security Council has failed to keep pace with that change. It is right and fair that the world's principal organ for the maintenance of peace and security should be representative of the world that it seeks to protect. The United Kingdom therefore continues to strongly welcome all efforts to move the debate on Council reform forward.

When we consider Security Council reform, we must be mindful of the need to ensure that its effectiveness is never compromised — too great an increase in size risks a cumbersome and slow decision-making process, thereby undermining the Council's ability to respond appropriately and quickly to issues of international peace and security. With so many challenges before us, that is a risk we cannot take.

By the same token, we cannot allow the issue of the veto to slow our progress on the expansion of the Council. As my Prime Minister made clear in this Hall in September (see A/72/PV.8), we are proud to have used the full weight of our diplomacy to ensure that we have not had to exercise our veto in a generation. We are also proud signatories of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group's code of conduct, and we are committed to never voting against a credible draft resolution on preventing or ending a mass atrocity. Sadly, we have seen others wield their veto through narrow self-interest, to the significant detriment of the Council's reputation and, indeed, its responsibility to those who so desperately need our help. On Syria, such a use of the veto has prevented action against a

despicable regime that has murdered its own people with chemical weapons.

For those reasons, we believe that a modest expansion in the permanent and non-permanent categories — an increase that balances representation with effectiveness — is the approach that we should collectively pursue. Members will be aware of our support for permanent seats for Brazil, Germany, India and Japan, alongside permanent African representation. That support is steadfast, and we look forward to working through all available avenues in order to reach a more representative and effective Security Council.

Mr. Filimonov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the President for convening today's meeting. The issue of the reform of the Security Council is one of the most important issues on the agenda of the global Organization, since it is the organ that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

We trust that the work of the Permanent Representatives of Georgia and the United Arab Emirates, as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, will be based on the principles of neutrality and will consider the entire gamut of positions of Member States. We thank the representatives of Romania and Tunisia for their work as co-Chairs during the previous session of the General Assembly. They performed their duties in a competent and responsible manner.

Today's meeting kicks off the start of discussions on the reform of the Security Council during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly. Discussions on the issue have been ongoing for many years and are complex in nature. To date, there have been 13 rounds of intergovernmental negotiations. Member States have made some slight progress towards reform; However, a universal solution that is able to satisfy the majority has not yet been achieved. The approaches of the main players in the reform issue still differ significantly, and are sometimes diametrically opposed. In such circumstances, we do not see any alternative but to continue the painstaking step-by-step work on the rapprochement of negotiating positions during the current session of the General Assembly.

Our stance on the matter is well known. Russia, as a permanent member of the Security Council, notes the need to make the body more representative, first and foremost by including developing countries from

Asia, Africa and Latin America. However, efforts in that direction must not be allowed to affect the ability of the Council to respond effectively and promptly to emerging challenges. In that context, we are in favour of maintaining the compact nature of the composition of the Security Council — its membership should not exceed the low twenties.

Any ideas that would lead to the infringement of the prerogatives of the current permanent members of the Security Council, including the institution of the veto, are unacceptable to us. We must remember that this institution plays a key role in prompting members of the Council to seek balanced solutions. It would be wrong, both from a historical and a political point of view, to encroach on it.

The process of reforming the Security Council must be owned by all States without exception, and its ultimate composition should enjoy the widest possible support of Members of the Organization. If consensus cannot be reached on this issue, at least politically speaking, we should ensure the support of a significant number of Member States, more than the legally required two-thirds majority of the General Assembly.

We are convinced that the issue of reform of the Security Council cannot be resolved solely by arithmetic by putting any models to the vote in order to obtain the minimum number of votes necessary. A result achieved in that way would hardly enhance the prestige and effectiveness of the Security Council, and would certainly not serve to strengthen the global Organization; rather, it would achieve the contrary. We are ready to consider any reasonable option for expanding the membership of the Security Council, including an interim solution or one of compromise, if it were based on broad consensus within the United Nations.

Progress in reforming the Security Council cannot be achieved through the preparation of any texts, negotiating documents or other initiatives that do not enjoy consensus among all Member States. Previous sessions of the General Assembly are a testament to the futility and danger of trying to force through a solution to the reform issue while ignoring consensus. Progress in Security Council reform will depend upon the political will of Member States alone and their willingness to reach a reasonable compromise. We urge all members to follow that fundamental principle.

We trust that the efforts of the President of the General Assembly and the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations will focus on providing the maximum assistance to the negotiations, on the understanding that ownership of the process lies with Member States. Such painstaking work should be

conducted in a calm, transparent and inclusive manner, without arbitrary time frames. We must all understand that there is no place for arbitrary timelines regarding this issue, and no place for attempts to solve it with a stroke of a pen.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.