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**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**

Draft report of the Open-ended Working Group*

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- II. General Assembly resolution 53/30 of 23 November 1998
- III. Programme of work of the Open-ended Working Group during the fifty-third session of the General Assembly (A/AC.247/1999/CRP.1)

* The final version of the report will be issued as *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 47 (A/53/47)*.

** The text of the annexes will be added at the final stage.

- IV. Conference room paper submitted by the Bureau of the Open-ended Working Group: working methods of the Security Council, transparency of its work, as well as its decision-making process (A/AC.247/1998/CRP.4/Rev.2)
- V. Conference room paper submitted by the Bureau of the Open-ended Working Group: expansion of the Security Council and decision-making in the Security Council, including the veto, dated 13 April 1999 (A/AC.247/1999/CRP.2)
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- XI. Conference room paper on the expansion of the Security Council and decision-making in the Security Council, including the veto, submitted by Colombia on behalf of the delegations of Argentina, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Mexico, Pakistan, Panama, the Republic of Korea, San Marino, Singapore, Spain and Turkey (A/AC.247/1999/CRP.4)
- X. Letter from the Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt in his capacity as Chairman of the Working Group of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on the reform and restructuring of the Security Council: paragraphs related to the reform of the Security Council which appeared in the final document of the twelfth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries [original paragraphs 64 to 73] held in Durban, South Africa, from 29 August to 3 September 1998 (A/AC.247/1999/CRP.6)
- XI. Conference room paper submitted by the Bureau of the Open-ended Working Group: working methods of the Security Council and transparency of its work (A/AC.247/1999/CRP.3/Rev.1)
- XII. Letter dated 22 June 1999 sent to all permanent representatives to the United Nations by the President of the General Assembly in his capacity as Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group (A/AC.247/1999/CRP.5)

I. Introduction

1. At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly decided, in its resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993, to establish an Open-ended Working Group to consider all aspects of the question of increase of the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council. The full text of the resolution is reproduced in annex I to the present report.
2. The Open-ended Working Group began its deliberations in January 1994. The mandate of the Working Group was extended by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth through fifty-second sessions.¹ Reports on the progress of its work were submitted by the Working Group to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth, forty-ninth, fiftieth, fifty-first and fifty-second sessions.²
3. On 24 August 1998, in its decision 52/490, the General Assembly decided that the Open-ended Working Group should continue its work and submit a report to the Assembly before the end of the fifty-third session, including any agreed recommendations. The present report is prepared and submitted pursuant to that decision.
4. On 23 November 1998, the General Assembly adopted resolution 53/30 with regard to one of the agenda items of the Working Group, namely, "Majority required for taking decisions on Security Council reform", which reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Mindful of Chapter XVIII of the Charter of the United Nations and of the importance of reaching general agreement as referred to in resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993, determines not to adopt any resolution or decision on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, without the affirmative vote of at least two thirds of the Members of the General Assembly."

II. Proceedings of the Working Group during the fifty-third session of the General Assembly

5. The President of the General Assembly, H.E. Dr. Didier Opertti Badan (Uruguay), served as Chairman of the Working Group. Ambassadors Hans Dahlgren (Sweden) and John de Saram (Sri Lanka) were appointed on 2 December 1998 as Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group.
6. During the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, the Open-ended Working Group held six substantive sessions on the following dates: first session, from 8 to 19 February 1999; second session, from 8 to 12 and 22 to 24 March 1999; third session, from 12 to 23 April 1999; fourth session, from 10 to 14 May 1999; fifth session, from 16 to 25 June 1999; and sixth session, from 19 to 30 July 1999. A total of 53 meetings were held during the six sessions. During these sessions, delegations made several written as well as oral proposals related to the issues discussed. Reference was also made to proposals and/or position papers submitted during previous sessions and annexed to previous reports of the Working Group. All proposals remain on the table. The Working Group affirmed that the work of the General Assembly on Security Council reform should be conducted in conformity with the relevant Assembly resolutions, fully respecting the need for transparency and open-endedness.

A. First session of the Working Group

7. At its first session, from 8 to 19 February 1999, the Working Group adopted its programme of work (see annex III). The Working Group also agreed to begin in-depth discussions on the first item, “Working methods of the Security Council and transparency of its work” (referred to in this report for the purpose of convenience as “cluster II”) and on the third item, “Expansion of the Security Council” (referred to for the purpose of convenience as “cluster I”).

8. It was also agreed that cluster I and cluster II should continue to be considered by the Working Group in tandem, meaning that the Working Group should, in terms of time and emphasis, consider cluster I and cluster II in a similar and balanced manner. In general, meetings on cluster I issues were chaired by the Chairman of the Working Group, while meetings on cluster II issues were chaired by each of the Vice-Chairmen alternatively.

9. The Working Group undertook general discussions on cluster I issues. In relation to cluster II issues the Working Group used, as a basis for discussion, conference room paper A/AC.247/1998/CRP.4/Rev.2, prepared by the Bureau during the fifty-second session of the General Assembly (see annex IV).

B. Second session of the Working Group

10. Consideration of cluster II issues continued during the second session, which was held from 8 to 12 and 22 to 24 March 1999. During the session the Working Group completed its first reading of conference room paper A/AC.247/1998/CRP.4/Rev.2. In addition, the Working Group discussed item 2 of its programme of work, “Decision-making in the Security Council, including the veto”, and item 4, “Periodic review of the enlarged Security Council”.

C. Third session of the Working Group

11. At its third session, from 12 to 23 April 1999, the Working Group continued its discussions on the expansion of the Security Council and on its working methods. The first week of discussion focused on issues of cluster I. The Bureau presented conference room paper A/AC.247/1999/CRP.2 of 13 April 1999 (see annex V) as a list of issues. A new version of A/AC.247/1999/CRP.2 was subsequently distributed on 14 April 1999 (see annex VI).

12. The Bureau also prepared a revised conference room paper on working methods of the Security Council and transparency of its work (A/AC.247/1999/CRP.3 and Add.1; see annex VII), which formed the basis of further discussions on cluster II issues.

D. Fourth session of the Working Group

13. At its fourth session, from 10 to 14 May 1999, the Working Group continued its consideration of cluster I issues, taking into account conference room paper A/AC.247/1999/CRP.2 (see annex VI). A revised version of the paper was prepared by the Bureau and circulated on 14 May 1999 as A/AC.247/1999/CRP.2/Rev.1 (see annex VIII). This paper was subsequently discussed at the fifth session (see para.16 below).

14. The Working Group continued to discuss cluster II issues based on conference room paper A/AC.247/1999/CRP.3 and Add.1 (see annex VII). The Working Group completed its first reading of the paper.

15. In addition, the Working Group again discussed item 2 of its programme of work, “Decision-making in the Security Council, including the veto”, and item 4, “Periodic review of the enlarged Security Council”, on the basis of conference room papers A/AC.247/1998/CRP.10/Rev.1 and A/AC.247/1998/CRP.13/Rev.1.

E. Fifth session of the Working Group

16. At its fifth session, from 16 to 25 June 1999, the Working Group continued its consideration of cluster I issues. Discussions were based on conference room papers A/AC.247/1999/CRP.2/Rev.1 prepared by the Bureau (see annex VIII and para.14 above) and A/AC.247/1999/CRP.4 submitted by Colombia on behalf of 17 other Member States (see annex IX).

17. The Working Group also continued its consideration of cluster II issues based on a further reading of conference room paper A/AC.247/1999/CRP.3 and Add.1 (see annex VII). A number of delegations proposed amendments.

18. In addition, the Working Group discussed the question of “institutionalization” referred to under each of the sections of conference room paper A/AC.247/1998/CRP.4/Rev.2 (see annex IV), namely the form in which provisions would be finally recorded.

F. Sixth session of the Working Group

19. At its sixth session, from 19 to 30 July 1999, the Working Group continued to discuss both cluster I and cluster II issues. **During this session, a conference room paper (A/AC.247/1999/CRP.6) was submitted by the Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt in his capacity as Chairman of the Working Group of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on the reform and restructuring of the Security Council (see annex X).**

20. Concerning cluster II issues, provisional agreement was recorded on a number of subparagraphs in the conference room paper dealing with the working methods of the Security Council and transparency of its work. The second reading of that paper covered the entire chapter II (“Relationship between the Security Council, the General Assembly and the general membership of the United Nations”), but time did not permit a similar discussion of chapters III–VI. A revised version of the paper (A/AC.247/1999/CRP.3/Rev.1) was distributed at the end of the sixth session (see annex XI). This revised version indicates which subparagraphs have been provisionally agreed upon and, where no provisional agreement was reached, lists all amendments which have been offered on other subparagraphs during the fifth and the sixth sessions.

21. At this session the Working Group also considered its report to the General Assembly.

III. General observations

22. The participation of delegations in the Working Group was of a substantial nature. An increasing number of delegations stated their views on the main issues before the Working Group.

23. In both oral and written statements, all aspects of the main issues of cluster I, as well as the implications of the different ideas for an enlarged Security Council, were examined in great detail.

24. A number of delegations made oral or written statements in response to a letter dated 22 June 1999 (A/AC.247/1999/CRP.5; see annex XII), sent by the Chairman of the Working Group to all missions inviting them, particularly those who had not done so before, to comment on cluster I and other related issues. Other delegations felt that statements made previously in the Working Group, by them or on their behalf, constituted a sufficient response to the letter of the Chairman.

25. Some substantial progress in the consideration of a number of issues under cluster II was recorded. Provisional agreement has been reached on some aspects of the working methods of the Security Council. The manner in which other provisions should be finally worded would need further discussion.

26. In relation to most issues of cluster I, as well as items 2 and 4 of the programme of work, substantial differences of view still remain. Owing to the importance of the subjects being debated in the Working Group, which affect vital interests of States, and the great sensitivity and caution with which all matters — whether procedural or substantive — are approached by delegations, progress towards a general agreement on the main issues has been very slow. Differences of opinion continue to exist with regard to, among other issues, the category or categories of the new members in an enlarged Security Council.

27. Notwithstanding differences of view, in the course of the discussions a number of elements emerged that could be used as a basis for the future work of the Working Group. These include the following:

(a) The Open-ended Working Group continues to be the appropriate forum in which to pursue the efforts aimed at reforming the Security Council on the basis of General Assembly resolution 48/26;

(b) To ensure that the United Nations will continue to play the role assigned to it by the Charter, it is important to reform the composition and functioning of the Council so as to consolidate its authority and make it more equitably representative and more capable of continuing to assume its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security;

(c) To strengthen the role and function of the Security Council, one way is to ensure a more equitable representation of the membership of the United Nations in that organ, in accordance with the sovereign equality of States and other relevant provisions of the Charter, and to make its work more transparent;

(d) A more equitable representation in the Security Council may be obtained by increasing the number of its members, taking into account the substantial increase in the membership of the United Nations, especially of developing countries, as well as the changes in international relations;

(e) The number of members of an enlarged Security Council should be from 20 to 26 as a minimum;

(f) In the context of the discussions of the Working Group, the question of the enlargement of the Security Council implies the consideration of the question of the veto;

(g) The question of the equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and the question of the working methods of the Security Council, the transparency of its work and its decision-making process, should be considered as integral parts of a common package. It is reaffirmed that there is a continued need to improve the working methods and the decision-making process of the Security Council towards greater openness, transparency and representativity.

IV. Recommendations

28. At its 53rd meeting, on 30 July 1999, the Open-ended Working Group concluded its work for the current session of the General Assembly and decided to recommend that consideration of this item be continued at the fifty-fourth session of the Assembly, building upon the work done during the previous sessions. To that end, the Working Group recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

“The General Assembly, having considered the report 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,³ established pursuant to its resolution 48/26 of 3 December 1993:

(a) *Takes note* of the report of the Working Group on its work during the fifty-third session of the General Assembly;

(b) *Decides* that the Working Group should continue its work, taking into account the progress achieved during the forty-eighth, forty-ninth, fiftieth, fifty-first, fifty-second and fifty-third sessions, as well as the views to be expressed during the fifty-fourth session of the Assembly, and submit a report to the Assembly before the end of the fifty-fourth session, including any agreed recommendations.”

Notes

¹ General Assembly decisions 48/498, 49/499, 50/489, 51/476 and 52/490.

² *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 47 (A/48/47);* *ibid.*, *Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 47 (A/49/47);* *ibid.*, *Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 47 (A/50/47);* *ibid.*, *Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 47 (A/51/47);* and *ibid.*, *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 47 (A/52/47).*

³ *Ibid.*, *Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 47 (A/53/47).*