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Official Records

President: Ms. Espinosa Garcés. (Ecuador)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Yelchenko (Ukraine), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 124 (continued)

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

Ms. Bavdaž Kuret (Slovenia): I want to begin by thanking the Ambassadors of the United Arab Emirates and Georgia for steering our intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-second session. We greatly appreciate all the documents produced so far, including the “Revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration”, prepared during the previous intergovernmental negotiations session. The document has come a long way and has enabled us to clarify our positions further. I also congratulate Ambassador Braun on his appointment.

Slovenia remains committed to continuing the discussions in the intergovernmental negotiations process, but I have to repeat our opinion, however, that the time has come to move forward. Reform of the Security Council received the highest political support in 2005, meaning that we are way past an early reform as it was envisaged then.

At the beginning of this month, the Security Council held an open debate on the importance of multilateralism and the role of the United Nations (see S/PV.8395). Slovenia advocated for an effective and

efficient Security Council that can detect concerns and threats early on and whose members assume responsibility for addressing them. Today I would like to join others in making some general remarks on the substance and process.

The previous session’s intergovernmental negotiations showed that there are a lot of commonalities on which we can build. We appreciate the inclusion in the revised elements of commonalities regarding the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, the size and the enlargement of the Council, and the working methods of the Council. That gives us a better picture in one document of all five categories of issues. They are interlinked, and in our view, none can be discussed in isolation from the others.

We recognize that some improvements relating to the working methods have already been achieved, and we call on every member of the Security Council to do its utmost to improve them further for the benefit of all Members of the United Nations and the Organization itself.

We know the goal we have set for ourselves, which is to make the Security Council broadly representative and more efficient, and ensure that its work is more transparent. So the process must bring us there. Slovenia believes that the options and proposals for each of the questions have been debated and examined in depth. We spend a couple of meetings every year on them. The time has come to start the real negotiations.

Since the Organization was established, the world has changed significantly, and almost none of those

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changes have been reflected in the Security Council. The Council, which is entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, has a particular obligation to the international community. That is one of the reasons why it should represent the entire world, which it does not do today. Membership in the Security Council is a serious responsibility, and Member States who take that role upon themselves must be ready to carry the burden.

On the more concrete issues, Slovenia, with a view to properly reflecting today's reality, is in favour of expanding the membership of the Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. When it comes to the category of elected, or non-permanent, members, we believe enlarging it would enable a higher rate of rotation and greater democratic representation. In that regard, allocating an additional non-permanent seat to the Group of Eastern European States is a high priority for Slovenia. Over the past quarter of a century, the Eastern European Group membership has doubled but the membership in the Council remains unchanged at one permanent and one non-permanent seat. We also support additional seats for African States.

There is a general understanding that enlarging the Security Council would improve the representation of States that are under- or unrepresented, ensure fair and democratic representation, and balance the principles of responsibility, transparency and efficiency. We are not sure of the formula yet, but we are very supportive of solutions that would bring more small countries into the Council. Slovenia is in favour of allocating seats based on regional groups.

With regard to the reformed Council, Slovenia is of the view that its size must not be an obstacle to its efficiency. In any case, the Council's methods of work will have to be changed or adapted if we want it to be able to deal with the fast-changing, complex and multiplying factors that pose a threat to international peace and security.

As to the question of the veto, as a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group and a supporter of the French-Mexican initiative, Slovenia advocates restricting the use of the veto in cases of atrocity crimes, as well as applying maximum self-restraint in the use of the veto in other cases.

Regarding the relations between the Security Council and the General Assembly, Slovenia can fully subscribe to the commonalities identified in

the revised document. Based on the provisions of the Charter, the relationship should be mutually reinforcing and complementary. Just last week, we discussed the implementation of the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (see A/73/PV.35). We believe that the relevant resolutions should also be taken into account.

Finally, I have just briefly highlighted some of the issues. We will be able to continue our deliberations during the upcoming intergovernmental negotiations. However, I want to take this opportunity to once again express our strong support for moving the process forward. We believe that the best way to do that and to pick up where we left off at the end of the previous session would be to begin concrete negotiations based on concrete text proposals.

Ms. Jazairy (Algeria): My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representatives of Sierra Leone, on behalf of the African Union Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government on the United Nations Security Council Reforms, and Kuwait, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/73/PV.36).

I thank the President of the General Assembly for her commitment to continuing the Assembly's active engagement in the process of reforming the Security Council. My delegation looks forward to working with the newly appointed co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassadors Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Braun of Luxembourg.

At the outset, I want to reiterate that we continue to believe firmly in the need for a comprehensive reform of the United Nations system that upholds the principles, objectives and ideals of the Charter of the United Nations with the aim of achieving a fairer world, based on universalism, equity and regional balance. To that end, we remain true to decision 62/557 and other relevant General Assembly decisions aimed at achieving a comprehensive reform of the Security Council, encompassing the five main clusters, while taking into account their interconnectedness, as agreed by the Assembly. We therefore reject any kind of piecemeal, selective approach, which would contradict and violate the spirit of a comprehensive reform.

We take note of the efforts deployed to identify commonalities around which Member States can unite for consensus-building in the paper entitled "Revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration", circulated on 14 June. However, that

document did not accurately reflect the Common African Position. In that regard — and this is our firm position — Africa must be represented in both categories of the Security Council, and if it is not abolished, the right of veto must be extended to all new permanent members.

The Common African Position, as outlined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, emphasizes that reform of the United Nations system should be all-inclusive and encompass all components of the United Nations system, including the growing need to improve the relationship between its two principal organs — the Security Council, primarily responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, and the General Assembly, the main deliberative and representative body of the United Nations. The adoption on 29 June of the consensus rollover decision 72/557, which mainly called for an immediate continuation of the intergovernmental negotiations in the informal plenary during the seventy-third session of the Assembly, was another significant manifestation of the acceptance by all States Members of the United Nations of the intergovernmental negotiations as the appropriate forum for continuing to discuss the reform of the Security Council. That decision should lead to a resumption of the negotiations process as soon as possible.

Despite representing the largest number of Member States and accounting for three quarters of the Security Council's agenda items, our continent continues to be undermined in that it has no representation in the permanent member category, the core decision-making unit of the Council. Africa therefore demands its rightful place in the maintenance of peace and security, as the continent that has the clear qualifications for playing a more meaningful role in that area.

We have a unique opportunity to keep the international system on track towards a dynamic and effective democratic multilateralism that can ensure the role of the United Nations as the centre of global governance. We cannot afford to remain indifferent to the realities of our rapidly changing global circumstances. Africa will continue to advocate for meaningful reform that will make the Security Council both more relevant and more responsive to today's current and emerging global challenges. Africa will also continue to promote the core principles of the Charter.

In conclusion, my delegation insists that we urgently need to build on the progress made so far and accelerate its pace so that we can fulfil the vision of our leaders at the 2005 World Summit, which was to make the Security Council more broadly representative, democratic, effective, accessible and legitimate. As a member of the Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government, my delegation stands ready to work with the President of the General Assembly and the general membership within the intergovernmental negotiations for a comprehensive reform, as called for in decision 62/557.

Mr. Sinirlioğlu (Turkey): I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this debate and for her commitment to the Security Council reform process.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/73/PV.36). I would also like to make the following additional remarks in my national capacity.

The need for Security Council reform is real and urgent. We must make sure that the reformed Council reflects the realities of our time. To that end, we must strive for reform that ensures that the Security Council will continue to be a mirror of the ever-changing contemporary world. The outcome of the reform process should therefore not create a static body. Reform requires a comprehensive and inclusive approach, which demands that we emphasize the common good over individual national interests. Needless to say, the resulting reform should be adopted with the acceptance of all Member States. That is the only way that the Security Council can be more representative, democratic, accountable and effective.

An insistence on increasing the number of permanent members of the Council is the main reason for the lack of progress in the reform process. Yet time and again the discussion on Security Council reform is consumed by efforts to allocate additional permanent seats with the right of veto. Make no mistake about it, permanent membership with the right of veto is the reason we need to reform the Council in the first place. It is the very reason why the Security Council has failed to carry out its mandate and provide timely and adequate responses to crises on many occasions. The Council now serves only the national interests of those who enjoy that privilege. The veto makes the Security Council dysfunctional, unaccountable and

undemocratic, which erodes trust in the United Nations and in multilateralism in general.

The reform process should look for ways to address the current problems of the Security Council, not exacerbate them. The Council will be more representative and responsive if we increase the number of elected seats and the possibility that all Member States can serve on it. The Security Council will be more accountable if the performance of its members is subject to periodic elections. An improved ratio between the non-permanent and permanent members will improve the decision-making process and make the Council more effective.

The Security Council has to fulfil its mission as the primary United Nations organ responsible for maintaining international peace and security. It is time to work together constructively and achieve the widest possible agreement. We call on all Member States to demonstrate the political will and flexibility needed to facilitate the reform process.

Mr. Boguslavskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's meeting. The issue of reform of the Security Council is one of the most important and complex items on the agenda of our global Organization, owing to the fact that under the Charter of the United Nations, the Council has the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

We congratulate the Permanent Representatives of Luxembourg and the United Arab Emirates on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. We hope that their activities will be based on the principles of impartiality and full consideration of the views of all the States participating in the process. We thank the Permanent Representatives of Georgia and the United Arab Emirates for their work as co-Chairs during the previous session of the General Assembly.

Today's meeting begins the discussion of reform of the Security Council for the seventy-third session of the General Assembly. This is not the first year we are having that discussion. A total of 14 rounds of intergovernmental negotiations have taken place. Member States have been able to make some progress in advancing reform, but there are no proposals so far for a universal solution that would satisfy a majority. The approaches taken by the major players in the area of reform still diverge significantly and are sometimes even diametrically opposed. In the circumstances,

we see no alternative to continuing patient, step-by-step work aimed at bringing negotiating positions closer together during the current session of the General Assembly.

Our position is well known. As a permanent member of the Security Council, Russia has noted the importance of making it more representative, especially for developing States in Asia, Africa and Latin America. However, the efforts to achieve that should not affect the Council's ability to respond effectively and efficiently to emerging challenges. In that regard, we are in favour of preserving the compact nature of Security Council membership. Its optimal membership should not exceed the low twenties. In our view, any ideas that could infringe on the prerogatives of the current permanent members of the Council, including the right of veto, is unacceptable. We have to remember that the power of veto is an important factor driving Council members to make balanced decisions. The use or threat of the use of the veto has often saved the United Nations from becoming involved in questionable enterprises.

The process of reforming the Security Council should be owned by all Member States, without exception, and the resulting format should enjoy the broadest possible support among the membership. If consensus cannot be reached on that issue, it is still politically essential to ensure the support of a significantly larger number of Member States than the legally required two-thirds majority of the General Assembly. We believe that the issue of Security Council reform cannot be resolved by mere arithmetic, putting one or another proposal to the vote so as to obtain the minimum number of votes necessary. Results achieved that way would hardly add to the Security Council's credibility and effectiveness and would definitely not strengthen our world Organization. On the contrary. However, we are willing to consider any reasonable option for expanding the membership of the Security Council, including a so-called interim solution based on compromise, if it is based on the broadest consensus possible within the United Nations.

We cannot make progress on Security Council reform by imposing on Member States some type of coordinating texts, negotiation documents or other initiatives that have not been agreed to by all participants in the process. Previous General Assembly sessions have demonstrated the futility and danger of attempts to force through decisions on the issue of reform without considering the need for the broad support of Member

States. Progress on Security Council reform will depend strictly on the political will of Member States and their willingness to reach a reasonable compromise. We urge everyone to adhere to that fundamental principle.

We hope that the efforts of the President of the General Assembly and the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations will focus on providing maximum support for the negotiations while understanding that the ownership of the process belongs to Member States. This kind of painstaking work should be conducted calmly, transparently and inclusively, without arbitrary timelines. It is important for all of us to realize that there is no place here for artificial deadlines or attempts to solve a complex problem with a stroke of the pen. And in the turbulent international relations prevailing today, neither do we want our intergovernmental negotiations to create new divisions among States.

Mr. Mlynár (Slovakia): I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this plenary debate on the important issue of reform of the Security Council and for inviting us to speak. We thank her for her important leadership on this subject, as well as on many other substantive issues of importance to Member States. I also want to add my congratulations to Ambassadors Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, and Braun, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations during the General Assembly at its seventy-third session. I am confident that under their guidance we will be able to move this challenging task forward efficiently. We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to Ambassadors Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Imnadze of Georgia for their dedicated service and hard work during the previous session of the General Assembly.

Earlier this month, the President of the General Assembly circulated her synopsis of the general debate of the seventy-third session. We can see that throughout the debate, world leaders were in almost total unanimity in highlighting the critical importance of multilateralism and international cooperation for addressing global challenges and promoting human rights, sustainable development, security and stability. An exceptionally large number of Heads of State and Government attended the general debate this year and spoke about the importance of multilateral cooperation as the only way to address the problems facing humankind, and the majority noted the irreplaceable

role of the United Nations as the only world forum that can address the multitude of global concerns.

This month, at the initiative of the Chinese presidency, the Security Council met in an open debate to reflect on ways to strengthen multilateralism and the role of the United Nations (see S/PV.8395). The debate demonstrated the crucial importance that the Security Council attaches to multilateralism and collective problem-solving and highlighted the key role that the United Nations has played since its establishment.

Such commitments to multilateralism are needed more than ever, as international peace and security are being confronted with new and complex challenges. The Security Council continues to play a central role in global security governance and the rules-based international order. By reforming the Council so as to make it more representative of the broader membership, more efficient and inclusive, and better suited to address the security challenges that face the international community today, we will be making a greater investment in the multilateral system, with a stronger United Nations at its core. We must therefore accelerate our efforts to reform the Security Council. In 2019, it will have been 40 years since substantive reform was put on the agenda of General Assembly for the first time. In that regard, I would like to add that my delegation joins other countries in calling for substantive give-and-take or text-based negotiations.

The position of my delegation on a possible revision of the membership of the Security Council is consistent and well documented. Slovakia supports the expansion of the categories of both permanent and non-permanent membership and calls for increasing their total to no more than 25 members, while respecting geographical balance. As a matter of principle, the new members of the Council should have the same responsibilities and obligations as the current members. I want to underscore that the reformed Council should include one additional non-permanent seat for the Group of Eastern European States.

We welcome the intensified efforts during previous sessions of the General Assembly to identify ways to further narrow differences in a transparent manner and through a membership-driven process. Obviously, the five key reform issues of decision 62/557 remain the guiding principles for our work in the intergovernmental negotiations, and they should be addressed and resolved as a package. Nevertheless,

we believe that our negotiations should also devote greater attention to ensuring that Africa is more widely represented on the Security Council, including in the permanent member category.

In conclusion, I want to reaffirm my delegation's strong commitment to finding a good, negotiated outcome in the intergovernmental negotiations. We look forward to engaging in open, transparent, inclusive and result-oriented negotiations towards that end.

Mr. Fesko (Ukraine): We appreciate the convening of today's debate and would like to express our support for the efforts of the President of the General Assembly aimed at re-energizing the process of reforming the Security Council.

Few delegations in this Hall disagree with the basic premise that the Security Council, in its current form, is in dire need of serious reform. At the same time, as we are all well aware, that is the point at which the general consensus ends. Some Member States advocate a radical overhaul of the Security Council, while others call for a more moderate approach. Some insist that reform should have begun long ago, while others advocate a very measured approach to the issue of timing. Some stand ready to engage in hammering out the existing differences in the process of actual text-based negotiations, while others are quick to point out that the United Nations family has not yet achieved a consensus even on procedural matters, let alone on the substantive issues.

Where does that leave us? If we are frank, we have to admit that the reform process has not made much progress since the early days 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, which was established by resolution 48/26, back in the already distant year of 1993.

Of course, there have been changes, and quite significant ones, in the work of the Council in recent decades. Its working methods have improved dramatically, its activities have become more transparent and accessible to the wider United Nations membership, and the workload itself has increased greatly. However, the inherent deficiencies in the Council's design, composition and decision-making processes remain largely unaddressed.

In Ukraine's view, making the Security Council more representative and bringing its working methods in line with the demands of modern times are long overdue. It is probably obvious to everyone that the Council in its current form is not well suited to addressing the challenges of the twenty-first century effectively. It is extremely regrettable that while the world outside of these walls is calling loudly and clearly for a more efficient Council, the States Members of the United Nations find themselves stuck in a seemingly perpetual circle of repeating their well-known positions on Council reform year after year, unable to make any tangible progress.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that, while the United Nations family procrastinates on reform of the Council, people are dying outside these walls because the current Council is simply powerless to help them. Our experience of serving on the Council in 2016 and 2017 only strengthened our conviction that without genuine reform, it will be doomed to lose its relevance and standing in the wider international context. Having said that, I would like to applaud the efforts of all the elected members of the Council, past and present, to improve its working methods. To be fair, permanent members have also quite often done their best to help elevate the Council above its limitations.

We are grateful to the previous session's co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on reform of the Security Council, the Permanent Representatives of Georgia and the United Arab Emirates, for their sincere efforts and hard work in trying to build bridges and narrow the gaps between the positions of Member States. We wish every success to the new team of co-Chairs, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg, in steering the negotiations in the coming months. They can count on our support in their difficult and challenging assignment of leading the intergovernmental negotiations.

As we are about to embark on a new round of consultations within the format of the intergovernmental negotiations, I would like to reiterate Ukraine's position that we are open to discussing all progressive options and new approaches to Security Council reform, in particular those aimed at streamlining the negotiations process and making it more pragmatic and result-oriented.

For our part, we consider two issues to be crucial the overall reform process. First, on the representation

of the Group of Eastern European States on the Council, it is a matter of principle for us that at least one additional seat be given to the Eastern European Group in the elected-member category. Secondly, I must stress that in our view, the need for the United Nations membership to reconsider the role of the veto in the work of the Security Council is a major priority.

We have all seen too many instances in which permanent members of the Security Council have used the right of veto in direct contravention of their duty to maintain international peace and security. We therefore advocate phasing it out, and we strongly support all initiatives aimed at limiting the veto's use. At the very least, it should be restricted not only in cases where the Security Council is considering a decision on preventing genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes — as per the French-Mexican initiative and the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group — but also when a permanent member itself is involved in a conflict or situation being considered by the Security Council and cannot therefore exercise its voting rights impartially owing to a conflict of interest. When a permanent member of the Security Council is a party to a conflict on which the Security Council may be about to adopt a decision, that member's exercise of the right of veto directly hinders the Council from carrying out its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

We believe that the issue of limiting the ability of a party to a conflict to abuse the right of veto in relevant situations has to be considered during the intergovernmental negotiations and implemented as an integral part of Security Council reform. In conclusion, I hope that this year we will be able to make progress towards our shared goal of reforming the Security Council, and my delegation is ready to engage constructively with all Member States to do so.

Mr. Elnour (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): We would first like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council. We also thank the President of the Assembly at its seventy-second session, Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, as well as the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Georgia, for their efforts during the previous session with regard to the intergovernmental negotiations concerning

this important agenda item. We affirm our readiness to cooperate with the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg, the two co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations at the current session.

We align ourselves with the statements delivered previously by the representatives of Sierra Leone, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Kuwait, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/73/PV.36). We would also like to make the following points in our national capacity.

It goes without saying that reform of the Security Council constitutes an essential pillar of the reform process of the United Nations that is currently under way. That is unmistakable, since the credibility and image of the United Nations in our contemporary world will basically depend on the success of our efforts to reform the Security Council, with the goal of making it more representative and transparent in order to address our growing challenges and the missions entrusted to it by the Charter of the United Nations. In that connection, my delegation is concerned about the very slow pace of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. Twenty-five years have passed since they began, and despite minor progress, they have still not achieved their desired goal. The progress that has been made is not commensurate with the effort that has been put in or with the Council's urgent need for reform.

My delegation believes that reform of the Security Council should be a comprehensive process that covers the five agreed points, which are increasing the representation of permanent and non-permanent Council members, ensuring equitable geographical representation, modernizing the Council's working methods, improving the decision-making process, including the right of veto, and updating the Council's agenda. In that connection, we want to see the Council's agenda meet the needs and interests of both developing and developed countries. The Council would then become more representative, effective and accountable.

My delegation also calls for addressing the historical injustice to which African countries have been subjected by increasing their permanent and non-permanent representation on the Council, in accordance with Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. We also call for equitable representation on the Council of the Arab States in both the permanent

and non-permanent categories, as expressed in the statement by the representative of Kuwait.

With regard to reform of the Council's working methods, my delegation calls for adopting permanent rules of procedure, which have been provisional for more than 70 years, for an increase in the number of public meetings and for greater participation by States whose situations are on the Council's agenda.

With regard to the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, we call on all United Nations organs to fulfil their mandates in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, while not infringing on the competencies of others. We are very concerned about the Council's increased involvement in issues that under the Charter fall under the purview of the General Assembly, and about certain States' exploitation of the Security Council in implementing their own agendas. It is important for the Council to comply with the principles of neutrality and non-selectivity and avoid double standards in its work.

My delegation also emphasizes the importance of avoiding invoking Chapter VII of the Charter to address issues that do not constitute a threat to international peace and security and of promoting the use of Chapters VI and VIII, especially in the light of the growing role played by regional organizations in dealing with issues that are relevant to their regions. Foremost among these is the African Union, which in April 2017 signed the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. That can be used to strengthen peace and stability on the African continent.

My delegation is deeply concerned about the Council's increasing use of sanctions. In that regard, we call for abiding by the principles of the Charter and for refraining from using sanctions until all other ways of peacefully settling disputes have been exhausted. The potentially far-reaching consequences of such sanctions should be thoroughly studied before imposing them, given that they are only a means to an end, not an end in themselves. Where sanctions have been imposed, we call for them to be periodically and flexibly reviewed in the light of developments on the ground.

In conclusion, we affirm our readiness to work with the President and the two co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council at the current session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Vaultier Mathias (Portugal): At the outset, let me start by thanking the President for her engagement in promoting a constructive follow-up debate on reform of the Security Council.

I would also like to express our gratitude to the Permanent Representatives of Georgia and the United Arab Emirates for their role as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations during the previous session and welcome the appointment of this year's co-Chairs, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg, to whom I convey my best wishes and support for the challenging work ahead.

Portugal believes that this process must be inclusive, transparent and comprehensive, generating solutions that can garner a broad consensus among Member States that goes well beyond the required two-thirds majority of the General Assembly. In that regard, we believe that consideration should be given to extending the number of both permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council. However, that reinforcement of the inclusiveness of the Council should not compromise its efficiency, and the right of veto should therefore not be extended to potential new permanent members. In the same spirit of preserving the effectiveness of the decision-making process, we must refrain from creating additional categories other than the existing two of permanent and non-permanent members.

The process of reforming the Security Council must also include continued improvement of its working methods. Portugal has consistently defended that principle, especially in its term as an elected member of the Security Council, when we had the honour to chair the Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Matters, as well as in the framework of its participation in the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group.

The Security Council has enormous responsibilities in preserving peace and security in the world. It must live up to the high expectations that we all have of its work and duly reflect the circumstances of today's world. In that regard, I would like to quote my President, who, in his statement at this year's general debate, declared that

“if we fail to reform the Security Council through a broad-based consensus, we ignore the geopolitics of the twenty-first century” (*A/73/PV.9, p.26*).

At the very least, a more representative Security Council requires the permanent presence of the African

continent, Brazil and India. Proper implementation of the principle of geographic balance must also translate into enhanced opportunities for small and medium-sized countries. We sincerely hope that the intergovernmental negotiations to come will enable us to make progress and broaden the scope of the elements of consensus that we have already agreed on. Portugal is ready to continue supporting that process and to encourage the President's leadership in that framework.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): First of all, let me thank the President for convening this important meeting. We welcome and congratulate the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, Ambassadors Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Christian Braun of Luxembourg. Indonesia assures them of our full cooperation and engagement in what it hopes will be a productive session. We also thank the previous co-Chairs, from the United Arab Emirates and Georgia, for their important leadership and work, not least through their revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration, which have enabled us to have a more focused discussion.

Given the increase in conflicts in recent years, with some old ones remaining unresolved or becoming more intractable, there are legitimate questions as to the Security Council's ability to fulfil its responsibilities mandated by the Charter of the United Nations. On numerous occasions, the Council has failed to uphold international humanitarian law, human rights law or the purposes and principles of the Charter, with devastating consequences for far too many innocent people. Indonesia once again calls for comprehensive Security Council reform that can make the Council more effective, accountable and democratic, as well as equitably representative of the regions and realities of today's world. That issue has been lingering for far too long, while the world has changed drastically and dramatically. Only by upholding established universal norms, including full respect for the Charter, can peace and security be best ensured for everyone, large or small. At this juncture, I would like to share several ideas on behalf of the Indonesian delegation in relation to the issue of Security Council reform.

First, while Indonesia supports the abolition of the right of veto, considering the present entrenched realities, we also welcome steps that can regulate the use of the veto. We support a workable mechanism that will ensure that the veto is not used to subvert the

cause of humanity and justice. One obvious hurdle is the self-selected right of veto, which has rendered the Council powerless in the face of mass atrocities on many occasions. It also runs counter to the wishes of the majority, thereby negating democracy. Indonesia therefore supports initiatives aimed at ending from the use of the veto in situations of mass crimes, as well as a code of conduct for the Council regarding genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Secondly, I want to address the issue of membership and regional representation. Indonesia believes firmly that we cannot meet the many complex and multidimensional global challenges we face unless our various regional perspectives are meaningfully reflected in the Council's decision-making. We support at least four additional non-permanent seats each for Asia and Africa, along with additional seats for Latin America and the Caribbean. With the experience of the various regions in peacemaking, sustainable development and stability, there are valuable insights and networks of influence that can greatly benefit the Council and, by extension, world peace.

Indonesia affirms its belief that Council membership should be governed by considerations of democracy and with an intense focus on maintaining peace and security effectively, justly and efficiently. We also envision that there will be no segregation in the Council's membership categories in the long term. In the meantime, we urge for a more inclusive role and responsibility of the elected 10 members of the Council, noting that they are elected democratically from the entire membership of the Organization.

Thirdly, with regard to working methods, Indonesia emphasizes that better communication and coordination are required among all of the related bodies of the United Nations, including between the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as the entities of the Secretariat. We believe that more can be done to improve the Council's working methods, as mentioned in document S/2017/507, including codifying and finalizing the six-decades-old provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council.

We also believe there is room for improvement in the area of peacekeeping, which can be considered the core business of the Security Council. It is important to establish intensive dialogues between the Council and host countries with a view to improving the environments in which peacekeepers are deployed.

While such dialogues might seem a small thing, they will undoubtedly be one of the most important elements determining a mission's success. Indonesia would also like to see better consultations between the Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries, which put their people in harm's way on the ground to fulfil United Nations mandates. That is what we call a concrete contribution, and I believe that both small and large countries at the United Nations deserve a place on the Security Council based on their concrete contributions.

In closing, I want to underline Indonesia's deep commitment to continuing to play an active role aimed at helping to advance practical approaches to meaningful Council reform that enjoys the support of all. At the end of the day, the Security Council belongs to us all.

Mr. Beleffi (San Marino): I would first like to thank the President for convening this annual debate on the reform of the Security Council and to commend her commitment to the revitalization of the United Nations, including the Security Council, for which the process of reform must be open, transparent and inclusive, in accordance with decision 62/557.

San Marino aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/73/PV.36), and I would now like to make some remarks in my national capacity.

Decision 62/557 indicates that credible reform of the Security Council requires a comprehensive approach and that Member States must drive the negotiations. Over the past 10 years, the intergovernmental negotiations have ensured the participation of all States Members of the United Nations in the reform process. The discussions, which were based on transparency and inclusivity, enabled us to identify broad commonalities among Member States. We know that wide divergences remain on critical issues of reform. It is now our collective responsibility to move the process forward in order to find new convergences among Member States.

We believe that we should work on the idea of a compromise solution if we want to be able to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council that can garner the widest possible political acceptance by Member States. The Uniting for Consensus group compromise solution integrates the principles of democracy, transparency and accountability into an enlarged Security Council, in addition to properly

addressing the request of regional groups to correct their underrepresentation on the Council.

Our proposal is comprehensive, presenting a model of reform that takes into account the interests of the Security Council, which are in fact aligned with the interests of all Member States. Now that we are all well aware of each other's points of view on the various aspects of the reform, we have to show flexibility and a spirit of compromise in order to build a credible process for Security Council reform.

Finally, I would like to wish the newly appointed co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, the Permanent Representatives of Luxembourg and the United Arab Emirates, all the best in their work. They can count on the support of San Marino.

Mrs. Bogyay (Hungary): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this important debate. After successfully agreeing in previous sessions on many groundbreaking reforms related to all of the main pillars of the Organization during past sessions, we must not rest. The next phase, the implementation of this ambitious restructuring plan, is still ahead of us, as is tackling perhaps the most difficult of all of the reform areas, the Security Council.

Hungary firmly believes that the United Nations reform process cannot be complete until its main executive body is adapted to the challenges of the twenty-first century. The integrated nature of today's threats clearly demands that we come up with lasting solutions. As the President rightly mentioned in her opening statement to the General Assembly in September,

“continuing the process of the reform of the Security Council, in line with the will and commitment of States” (A/73/PV.1, p.3)

remains a priority. Hungary has long been a supporter of Security Council reform.

Let me now thank the co-Chairs of the previous session, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Georgia, and congratulate the two new co-Chairs, the Ambassadors of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg. Close and transparent consultations with all Member States and a schedule planned well in advance were best practices during the previous session, and should be continued this year.

Hungary believes that we need a reasonably ambitious but realistic agenda, with results-oriented, practical discussions on all five reform clusters. We should not get caught in a loop of repeating the same intergovernmental negotiations sessions over and over again. In our view, all of the important documents agreed during previous sessions should be taken into account. That will enable us to build on the progress that has already been achieved. Let me now briefly underline the main points of the Hungarian position on Security Council reform.

With regard to the Security Council's size and configuration, Hungary continues to support its enlargement in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. At the same time, we are ready to examine all practical proposals in the hope of garnering the broadest possible support, as well as considering interim solutions. Enlargement must be based on equitable geographical representation. We call for a second non-permanent seat for the Group of Eastern European States, a request that stands under any enlargement model. We also recognize and respect the aspirations of other regional and cross-regional groups.

Enlargement will necessarily require overhauling the Security Council's working methods. We have witnessed positive developments in that field that should be continued. As regards the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, more must be done to achieve clearer and more detailed rules for the Council's coordination and cooperation with the main organs of the United Nations, Member States and other stakeholders.

Concerning the question of the veto, we are encouraged by Member States' growing support for the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group's code of conduct aimed at preventing or stopping atrocity crimes, as well as for the French-Mexican proposal on voluntary restraint in the use of the veto power in certain cases. Those initiatives have the potential to lead to a longer-term solution on that matter.

I would like to assure the President that Hungary's constructive participation will continue in the future.

Mr. Edrees (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country's delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Sierra Leone, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Kuwait, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/73/PV.36). I would also like to make some points in my national capacity.

At the outset, I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this plenary meeting on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council, which is of paramount importance for all members of the United Nations. I commend and appreciate the efforts of the successive co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, including those made during the seventy-second session by two able Ambassadors, Ms. Lana Nusseibeh and Mr. Kaha Imnadze, Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Georgia, respectively. We also welcome the decision to reappoint Ms. Nusseibeh as co-Chair of the negotiations at the current session, along with the appointment of the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg. They will build on the work of previous sessions to ensure consensus and confidence-building among all States and groups. We wish them every success and underscore our full support for them.

The United Nations is currently undergoing many reform efforts and processes that can strengthen its ability to achieve the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and enable it to address new and contemporary international challenges. That will reinforce our belief in the importance of genuine and comprehensive reform of the Security Council as an essential basis of United Nations reform, particularly because the Council is responsible for maintaining international peace and security under Article 24 of the Charter.

That Article states that the Council fulfils its responsibilities on behalf of all the States Members of the United Nations, which logically raises a number of questions. How can the Council represent the Members of the United Nations if the Council itself does not equitably represent all the Members and groups of the Organization? Can equitable representation exist when the number of Council members has not increased since 1965? The number of States Members of the United Nations has risen from 117 to 193, representing an increase of almost 40 per cent in that time.

Moreover, can we preserve the credibility of the Security Council and the legitimacy of its decisions if one of the main regional groups — the Group of African States, which represents more than a quarter of the membership of the United Nations — is not represented at all among the permanent members and very little in the Council as a whole? Those are not new questions.

They have been discussed in the General Assembly for the past two decades, but over the years the need for answers to be put forward has become more pressing.

I affirm Egypt's strong commitment to the Common African Position, as contained in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. It has been reaffirmed at various African summits and offers a global vision for Security Council reform, particularly on the question of the right of veto. The increasing in support for the Common African Position reflects a growing recognition among the Members of the General Assembly of the need to end the historical injustice that has been committed against the African continent. That would enable Africa to play its due role as a full partner in the Council's decision-making in general, and with regard to the African issues on the Council's agenda in particular, considering the fact that African issues represent the lion's share of the Council's work.

I also stress the importance of responding to the Arab States' legitimate demand for equitable representation on an enlarged Council by granting them a permanent seat with all the related powers in any future Council enlargement, notably because an increasing number of the issues of which the Council is seized concern the Arab region. I must commend the historical position of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on Security Council reform, as reaffirmed recently during the Movement's Ministerial Conference held in Baku in April, affirming that enlarging the Council and reforming its working methods must make it more democratic, representative, effective and accountable. The Council must incorporate the interests and needs of developed and developing countries alike into its work, in an objective and non-selective way.

In that regard, Egypt believes that there can be no true reform of the Security Council without resolving the prevailing structural imbalance, which is the hegemony of permanent members over the Council's work, since they possess the exclusive right of veto. That demonstrates the rightness of the Common African Position, which calls in principle for the abolition of the right of veto. Until that happens, new permanent members should have all of the prerogatives enjoyed by the permanent membership, leading to equitable representation. That is the main objective of the reform. In that regard, any proposal that calls for enlarging the permanent membership without resolving the veto question once and for all, and ensuring equality among all present and future States, would not establish true

or fair reform of the Council and could even exacerbate its structural imbalance.

Egypt reiterates the importance of continuing to work within the intergovernmental negotiations in a transparent manner, ensuring inclusiveness and national ownership of the reform process on the part of all Member States so as to achieve an agreed solution that enjoys the widest political acceptance with regard to the five main negotiated issues, as provided for in decision 62/557, while also upholding paragraph (d) of that decision. The intergovernmental negotiations must be based on proposals from Member States. We fully believe that those clear parameters will form a frame of reference for the work of the negotiating group during the current session.

In that regard, the efforts deployed throughout the three most recent negotiating cycles have focused on producing documents that reflect the areas of commonality and divergence of all positions and proposals. To make progress during this session, we must focus on having a true discussion on the positions and proposals while understanding the various points of divergence, in order to move closer to one another and achieve solutions that can enjoy the widest political acceptance. That is what we must do rather than focusing disproportionately on making cosmetic changes to the document's content in an effort to gloss over those differences without making real progress on finding solutions.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Egypt's commitment to working with all Member States within the African and Arab Groups to achieve comprehensive reform that will enable the Security Council to play its full role in maintaining international peace and security.

Mr. Pildegovičs (Latvia): I thank the President for convening this annual debate.

Since the 2005 World Summit, many calls have been made for reforming the Security Council as soon as possible, making it more representative, efficient and transparent, in order to reflect the political realities of the twenty-first century. It is now the end of 2018, and we have still made little progress. As in previous years at this debate in the Assembly, Latvia would once again like to emphasize that Security Council reform is long overdue. We should all aim to strengthen that important organ's legitimacy.

As we await the beginning of the next round of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, we note that some progress has been achieved in previous sessions, helping to clarify Member States' positions on various aspects of the reforms. Those efforts include the 2015 framework document, which reflected the positions of more than half of the United Nations membership; the paper on the elements of convergence on some aspects of the reform, discussed in 2016; and the paper on the elements of commonality and issues for further consideration, which we have worked on during the previous two intergovernmental negotiation sessions. In that regard, Latvia sincerely appreciates the efforts of all of the former co-Chairs to coordinate the work of the intergovernmental negotiations. We also appreciate the support of the current President of the General Assembly and her predecessors for advancing reform.

Despite the many calls for starting a real, text-based negotiation process, clearly expressed during the previous session of the intergovernmental negotiations, the cycle of repeating well-known positions has continued. While we do not expect these negotiations to be fast and easy, we believe it is important to try taking further steps by starting negotiations on a concrete text. We agree that the result must be achieved through careful consensus-building and must receive the widest political acceptance. Latvia stands ready to take part in negotiations to achieve the long-awaited reform of the Security Council, which should be the true goal of our deliberations.

I will now move on to specific aspects of reform. In our view, to ensure its legitimacy, all regions must be adequately represented on the Council. The reform should ensure the equitable geographic distribution of both permanent and non-permanent seats in the Council, including allocating 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 the adequate representation of small and medium-sized Member States.

The question of the veto is clearly a very important part of Council reform. While the discussions of the use of this special power in certain circumstances should continue, some things should not be beyond debate. Blocking the work of the Council in matters related to mass atrocities is unacceptable. The Council's

permanent members should refrain from using their veto in situations of mass-atrocity crimes, and we therefore support the French-Mexican initiative in that regard. Latvia has signed the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, and we are pleased to see that 118 Member States have joined this important initiative to date.

We also support improving the Security Council's working methods to increase the transparency, inclusiveness and representativeness of its work. We have noted some positive efforts demonstrated by Council members in recent years in the direction of transparency, and we believe that such approaches enhance the Council's legitimacy and facilitate the implementation of its decisions.

In conclusion, Latvia believes that the capacity of the United Nations to address current global challenges largely depends on our political will to advance Security Council reform. We look forward to working with the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, the representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg, along with other Member States, in order to make progress on reform during this session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Carazo (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to thank the President for convening this annual debate on the issue of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. At the outset, we would like to thank Ambassadors Kaha Imnadze of Georgia and Lana Zaki Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates for their hard work and dedication during the previous session of intergovernmental negotiations for Security Council reform, and to take this opportunity to recognize the reappointment of Ambassador Nusseibeh and the new appointment of Ambassador Christian Braun, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, as the facilitators of the process that we will resume in the next year. We reiterate our support for them and wish them every success in their work.

We started this process 10 years ago, during which time we began to listen to each other, exchange opinions, identify aspects of divergence and also find various elements of convergence, which we firmly believe we can and must continue to build on. During the previous session of intergovernmental negotiations we made progress, especially in identifying the points

of convergence that constitute positive steps towards a reform based on consensus, in line with current international geopolitics and rooted in the principles of democracy and representativeness, which in our view continue to be the cornerstones of the Organization.

We have built our position on those principles, as reflected in the representative of Italy's statement on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/73/PV.36), which explained in detail our proposal, which we believe has the potential to deliver the greatest benefit to all States. The group's proposal seeks to create non-permanent seats for longer periods, with the possibility of re-election, as well as an increase in the number of non-permanent seats, with the main objective being a more equitable distribution of seats among regional groups and a fairer and more transparent rotation system, which through periodic elections would also deepen the democratization of the Council and States' accountability for their actions in the Council.

Costa Rica believes firmly that only open and honest dialogue can enable us to make progress in this exercise. In the previous Assembly session the Uniting for Consensus group held a series of bilateral consultations with other groups, in which we had the opportunity to explain our positions and identify common concerns, enabling us to move still closer towards our shared objective, which is a Security Council in which all States feel truly represented. As part of Uniting for Consensus, Costa Rica will continue to promote a constructive exchange of views, guided by a sense of commitment and the quest for consensus, which will strengthen the intergovernmental negotiating process.

Our main aim is to achieve a Security Council that is truly representative and effective in carrying out its tasks in the maintenance of international peace, security and stability. The process reflects the essence and foundation of multilateralism, and we must therefore undertake it responsibly, with the aim of invigorating the Security Council, and with the ultimate goal of achieving a more efficient Organization that responds appropriately to the current global environment and whose fundamental objective is the general welfare of all its Members. Our country stands ready to achieve this objective.

Mr. Bin Momen (Bangladesh): We thank the President for convening this meeting as a curtain-raiser to the work of the intergovernmental negotiations on

Security Council reform during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

Bangladesh reaffirms the central role of the Assembly on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters relating to the Council. We emphasize the importance of sustaining the momentum of discussions to identify elements of convergence among Member States on the five interrelated and mutually-reinforcing issues within the purview of this agenda.

Bangladesh welcomes the appointment of the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations and looks forward to seeing an outline of their plan of work as soon as possible, with suggestions on the format and purpose for the discussions going forward. We reiterate the importance of commencing text-based negotiations with a view to achieving tangible and meaningful outcomes. In the last couple of years, we have seen active interest among a large number of delegations in taking the discussions forward in a decisive direction. We have also seen others open to engaging in free, frank, interactive dialogues to explore answers to certain outstanding issues.

It is critical that we bear in mind the comprehensive nature of the Council's reform agenda and the primacy of a set of objective, rational and non-arbitrary criteria to inform and guide the outcome of the ongoing negotiations. It should be in the shared interest of all Member States to maintain the forward-leaning thrust of those discussions in a collegial atmosphere.

The last intergovernmental negotiations session yielded a paper that should form the basis of our work next year. There is no need per se to repeat the positions of different groups and delegations, with which we are more or less familiar. We continue to recognize the importance of a document that describes all the different positions on issues for further consideration so that there can be actual negotiations among Member States. It is incumbent on all of us to preserve the gains that have been made in the previous intergovernmental negotiations sessions and to continue to build on them.

To briefly recapitulate our position, Bangladesh reiterates its support for enlarging the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. We subscribe to the view that the size of the enlarged Council should be in the mid-twenties range and ideally 26. There should be adequate representation

for different regional blocs, especially those that are disproportionately underrepresented in the current composition. The case for the representation of Africa on the Council has been convincingly made at intergovernmental negotiations sessions, and deserves to be considered in the right context.

We consider it advisable to apply restraints on the exercise of the veto by permanent members of the Council in cases of the gravest crimes under international law. The outstanding issues related to the Council's working methods, including its provisional rules of procedure and the enhanced role for elected members, should be addressed without unnecessary delay.

The entry into effect of various reform measures at the United Nations starting next year should create momentum for demonstrable reform in the Security Council. As other delegations have indicated, the imminent seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations is an opportune target date for achieving concrete progress in that regard. The renewed and overwhelming political support we are witnessing for multilateralism should propel us to forge a Security Council that reflects the realities and aspirations of the twenty-first century.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): France congratulates Ambassadors Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, and Christian Braun, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We know that we can count on their dynamism and determination, as well as their ability to bring positions closer together through a constructive dialogue. France will fully support them in order to ensure the success of their mission.

Let us be clear. Year after year, we take up the same discussions on Security Council reform without initiating real negotiations. However, during recent sessions the Chairs have made real efforts in a particularly difficult context that have led to the adoption of useful documents. By way of illustration, we have the drafting under the leadership of Ambassador Courtenay Rattray of a framework document during the sixty-ninth session that could lead to global negotiations, the elements of convergence adopted under the leadership of Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, and the common points established under the leadership of Ambassadors Mohamed Khaled Khiari and Ion Jinga,

and subsequently of Ambassadors Nusseibeh and Imnadze, whom I warmly thank for their patient and deliberate efforts during the previous session. But those developments must not hide our collective inability to move forward on this issue, despite its importance for the Organization, and to bring about the strengthened, exacting and evolving multilateralism that we are calling for, a modern multilateralism capable of responding to the global challenges of our time.

However, the situation is urgent and crucial to the relevance, credibility, equity and effectiveness of our Organization. The issue of Security Council reform is now as pressing as it was at the 2005 World Summit, when we adopted resolution 60/1, calling for reforming the Council in order to make it more representative and legitimate. Given the lack of progress since then, the impatience and weariness of States and peoples is growing and understandable. We must reiterate that the Assembly should assume its responsibilities and conduct frank and comprehensive negotiations.

This reform is critical. The Security Council must better reflect the realities of today's world, while strengthening its capacity to fully assume its responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security. Reform is all the more essential as the Secretary-General is undertaking the ambitious reform of the Organization's three pillars — peace and security, development and the management of the United Nations — with the support of the General Assembly.

Like a very large majority of delegations, France believes that to make such decisive progress, it is essential to start text-based negotiations as soon as possible. We are counting on the new Chairs to work towards that goal.

France's position on the substance of reform is consistent and well known. We hope that the Council will take into account the emergence of new Powers that have the desire and capacity to assume the responsibility of a permanent seat in the Security Council and that are in a position to make a significant contribution to the Council's work, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. In this regard, France supports the candidacy of Germany, Brazil, India and Japan as permanent members of the Security Council, and endorses increasing the presence of African countries among the permanent and non-permanent members. This essential change is overdue.

As President Macron stated when he addressed the General Assembly in September, our response to crises must not be hindered by Security Council divisions (see A/73/PV.6). It was in that spirit that France proposed several years ago that the five permanent members of the Council voluntarily and collectively suspend the use of the veto in the event of mass atrocities. This voluntary approach requires only a political commitment, not a revision of the Charter.

Today, this initiative, which we have implemented jointly with Mexico, is supported by 101 countries. In the same spirit, the code of conduct drawn up by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, which France supports, has also attracted a very large number of backers. With this momentum, we urge the other Member States to join us. It is in the common interest of all Member States that the Security Council fulfil its mandate and play its full role, particularly in situations of mass atrocities. The initiatives on the framework of the right of veto, which make for a fairer, more responsible and more effective Council, complement the overall reform of the Council, which France will continue to champion with passion and determination.

It is up to us collectively to assess our responsibilities to change the status quo in the interest of the United Nations. The difficulty of such a reform must not detract from its urgency.

Mr. Inguanez (Malta): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's meeting. Malta would like to express its appreciation to the outgoing Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Georgia, for their service and work during the past session. We would also like to congratulate the new Chairs of this session, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates again and Luxembourg, and to assure them of Malta's support and constructive engagement in the process.

Malta aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Italy, who spoke on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/73/PV.36). I would also like to add the following in my national capacity.

Lately we have been hearing a lot about the pressures on multilateralism today. Indeed, several speakers today, including the one who immediately preceded

me, have referred to the issue of multilateralism. By way of providing a contribution from a small State to the discussion on the Security Council, today I want to elaborate on the term "multilateralism" and to share our thoughts.

The reform of the Security Council can be observed from a multitude of angles. There is the internal aggregate perspective, which relates to the workings and the balance of authority within an enlarged Security Council. There is also the individual Member State perspective, which relates to the respective interests, concerns and positions of Member States or groups of countries. Additionally, there is the external view of Security Council reform, which relates to how a new and enlarged Security Council would bring relevance to today's world challenges and to the ever-important notion and practice of multilateralism. We all agree that all of those angles are key to our discussion, yet they also prove to be delicate and sensitive. However, perhaps part of the greatest impact of Security Council reform will be on the last-mentioned aspect, which will affect the conduct of multilateralism, and more so now that the international rules-based order is under strong pressure and criticism.

Multilateralism is not only weakened when States decide to move in an isolationist and unilateral manner and stop working together with other States to achieve something or deal with a problem. It is also significantly weakened when the foundation of the very body that represents the epitome of multilateralism is flawed. True and effective multilateralism occurs when international governance is based on equal and non-discriminatory power-sharing among the players that compose it, where each and every State has the same weight of power and plays on the same level playing field.

It is true that the only universal multilateral organization, which is the United Nations, cannot be called perfect. It is also true that the United Nations of today does not reflect twenty-first-century realities. That is why we all agree on the idea of reforming and improving it. However, improvement in multilateralism does not come by or through an increase in the number of the haves as distinct from the have-nots. On the contrary, such an increase can only vitiate multilateralism further. It will not make the United Nations more equal or more multilateral. It will accentuate the class-based view that the United Nations, unfortunately, holds at the moment.

Genuine improvement in multilateralism will happen when the only universal multilateral body is reformed in such a way that the gap between what the haves have and the have-nots do not is reduced. Admittedly, it is hard to get those who have to have less. But it is more feasible to add something to the basket of those who do not have. We therefore need more commitment to strengthening multilateralism, and investment in multilateralism is well worth it and will contribute significantly to the sustainability of multilateralism. That is what the Uniting for Consensus group has painstakingly tried to do throughout the years.

I think it is valuable to keep in mind that when it comes to talking about constructive dialogue, the Uniting for Consensus group has presented a model and not just a proposal. It has presented a model that is complete rather than one that leaves substantial parts still to be negotiated, which could then lead to an unravelling of the checks and balances and the compensatory measures that exist in the whole package of reform. It is a model that is egalitarian in approach, because it does not give one country or group of countries an advantage over others. It is a model that is comprehensive, because it advances everybody's aspirations and interests in what is of course a realistic and pragmatic scenario. It is a rectifying model, since it seeks to correct past imbalances and injustice. Above all, it is a counterbalancing model, because it seeks to counterbalance the weight of the permanent five of the Security Council vis-à-vis the other elected members of the Security Council.

We are under no illusion as to the magnitude of the challenge ahead. Yet it is only over time that an objective idea can be formed of the impact that what is being discussed today might have on the multilateralism of tomorrow. It is only time that will enable Member States to reflect on the way multilateral diplomacy will unfold in the years to come, through the discussions of today.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to congratulate the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, Ms. Lana Nusseibeh, on her reappointment as co-Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, as well as the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, Mr. Christian Braun, on his appointment to the other co-Chair position.

Security Council reform is an integral part of United Nations reform. In that respect, we consider that the important reforms initiated by the Secretary-General since his mandate began are part of the desire to ensure that the United Nations is an organization that keeps pace with global change and the realities of our times. We will therefore continue to call for rapid reform and the enlargement of the Security Council, with a view to increasing its representativeness, effectiveness and legitimacy.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Sierra Leone, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Kuwait, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/73/PV.36). In addition, I want to highlight the following in my national capacity.

The framework defined by decision 62/557 remains appropriate for advancing our discussions and engaging us in real negotiations. Reform of the Council should be comprehensive, taking into account the five clusters and their interrelatedness. It should enable it to be more representative, but not at the expense of its effectiveness or efficiency, and especially not its accountability. As far as Morocco is concerned, the Charter of the United Nations has designated the Security Council as the main body responsible for maintaining peace and security in the world. That is a clear and unambiguous mandate. Any contribution by the General Assembly to matters of peace and security can therefore be conceived only if it is in conformity with the respective mandates of the two organs and in full compliance with Article 12, paragraph 1, of the Charter.

Africa is the only region not represented in the permanent-member category of the Security Council. That historical injustice against Africa should impel all of us to rectify the situation. That can be done by ensuring adequate African representation in the permanent-membership category and strengthening Africa's presence in the category of non-permanent members. Indeed, the African request is clear. It should have no fewer than two permanent seats, with all their prerogatives and privileges, including the right of veto — if that continues to exist — and five non-permanent seats.

We are pleased with the consensus among Member States on certain issues, including Africa's position on the Security Council and the redress of the historical injustice done to the continent. In that regard, I wish to

reiterate that Morocco, which subscribes to the Common African Position espoused in the Ezulwini Consensus, supports the fair and equitable representation of Africa in both categories of seats, as previously described. It will then be up to Africa to decide on its representatives in the reformed Security Council.

Similarly, the absence of permanent representation for the Arab countries, despite the fact that they, like the Group of African States, are extremely involved in the issues that the Security Council deals with, is highly unfortunate. A permanent Arab seat, with all of its prerogatives, as well as adequate representation in the category of non-permanent members, would make it possible to meet the legitimate demands of the Group of Arab States.

While recognizing the critical and challenging issues that we will need to address, as well as the challenges that we will have to overcome, we believe that we must speed up the intergovernmental negotiation process, as the credibility of our work and of the process itself is at stake.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my delegation's support for the two co-Chairs, and our hope that the next session of the intergovernmental negotiation process will provide a genuine platform for dialogue and constructive exchange that will enable our positions to converge. Finally, I want to assure the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform of my delegation's full support in the conduct of our work and the fulfilment of their mandate.

Mr. Licharz (Germany): Germany aligns itself fully with the statement delivered by the representative of India on behalf of the Group of Four (see A/73/PV.36). Allow me to add a few remarks.

After listening carefully to today's debate, we have to say that it greatly resembles last year's debate and those of previous years. We must realize that if we continue like this, not only will we miss a historic opportunity to lift the United Nations into the twenty-first century, we will miss our historic obligation to do that very thing. If we continue in this way, we risk failing the test of time.

Germany, along with the Group of Four and other supporters of Security Council reform, has reached out to as many Member States and groups as possible. We will continue to do our utmost to garner the broadest

support possible for the much-needed Security Council reform. The vast majority of the statements in today's debate are once again reassuring in that respect.

However, the intergovernmental negotiations appear less and less capable of achieving real progress on this extremely important issue. The focus on consensus decisions in the negotiations rewards the naysayers, as Ambassador Akbaruddin has very aptly pointed out. We cannot allow the great majority of Member States, which want to make progress, to be held hostage by a small number of States that refuse to move from a circular discussion to a real negotiation process.

Germany agrees with those who ask for as broad a consensus as possible. That is what we have always striven for in the General Assembly. What is alien to our work in the Assembly, however, is the requirement that we arrive at some prior consensus before even starting to negotiate. We have to work the other way around. We need to start negotiating in order to finally come to that broad consensus.

If we do not succeed in reforming the Security Council, it will lose even more of its already damaged credibility and will be overshadowed by other global decision-making bodies or, even worse, by unilateral decision-making alone. Surely we cannot allow the Security Council to remain captive within a structure that mirrors the past rather than the present or the future. The Council needs the political backing of the broader membership, or its ability to resolve international crises will suffer further. We need a strong, legitimate and representative United Nations that can help to restore confidence in global governance and cooperation.

That is especially true in these trying times. Many of us are worried that the rules-based international order is under threat. Many leaders have lamented the resurgence of unilateralism during the general debate from this very rostrum. We need to stand up together for the preservation and further development of an order that helps to overcome nationalism and unilateralism. We need to make the United Nations work, and for that we need a representative Security Council.

Today the vast majority of Member States have once again expressed the need for real Security Council reform. We need to move forward and not waste more of the precious time that is running out if we wish to safeguard a strong United Nations. In that sense, we very much look forward to working together with members, including Ambassadors Lana Nusseibeh

of the United Arab Emirates and Christian Braun of Luxembourg, whom I congratulate on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, as well as with the President of the General Assembly.

Mr. Moraru (Republic of Moldova): At the outset, I want to express our appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for convening the annual debate on Security Council reform.

My delegation welcomes the appointment of Ambassadors Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Christian Braun of Luxembourg as co-Chairs of the next round of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We would like to express our support for their future work.

For more than 25 years Security Council reform has been comprehensively debated at the United Nations, including within the framework of the intergovernmental working group. Member States have been able to achieve a certain amount of progress, which is attested to by our increasing convergence on some important elements of reform. Yet there are still differences of opinion about how we should conduct the negotiations and the text they should be based on. My delegation welcomes all efforts to move the debates forward. The Republic of Moldova has always pleaded for an enlarged and more democratic Security Council. The Council should better reflect the contemporary world, and that means more representation for Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

Like many other Member States, we believe that any reform of the Security Council must go beyond just increasing the number of seats. There have been too many instances in which the Security Council did not discharge its functions in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. It is therefore important that the intergovernmental negotiations deliver an outcome that will strengthen the effectiveness, accountability, inclusiveness and transparency of the Council.

Reform should also ensure that the Security Council and its members act in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and that the Council's decisions reflect the collective will of the general membership. The threat of the use of the veto is one of the biggest obstacles to the effective performance of the Security Council, irrespective of its configuration. As a general principle, we view the reform as a possibility

for minimizing the use of the right of veto rather than creating pretexts for its expansion, which could jeopardize the Council's effectiveness. As a signatory to the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, the Republic of Moldova advocates against the use of the veto in cases of mass-atrocity crimes and welcomes the pledges made so far in that regard.

Reform must also bring improvements in the Council's working methods, potentially leading to gradual approval of the Council's rules of procedure so that they are no longer provisional. The Council's working methods and its relationship with the General Assembly are indeed very important matters, as they determine the daily dynamics of the system. A large number of delegations have contributed to finding commonalities during the intergovernmental negotiations process, most recently including through their inputs into the revised elements paper that resulted from the five intergovernmental negotiations meetings during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly.

In that context, I want to express our gratitude to the previous co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, Ambassadors Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Kaha Imnadze of Georgia. Their approach to steering the discussions by ensuring the transparency and inclusivity of the process was much appreciated, and we believe that those principles should guide future deliberations of the working group.

The five clusters related to Security Council reform — the membership categories, the veto question, regional representation, the size of the enlarged Council and its working methods, and the relationship between the General Assembly and the Council — are certainly not simple matters, but the difficulty of such reforms does not diminish the pressing need for them.

As we enter the next phase of the intergovernmental negotiations on reform, we have to build on the progress achieved in the past. That is where flexibility is so essential, especially from the five permanent members, who enjoy most of the prerogatives and powers not only in the Council but throughout the United Nations system. Obviously, the result of the negotiations must be backed by all Member States. In our opinion, only a broad-based consensus can ensure that we will be able to fully implement an agreement once negotiations are

concluded. The Republic of Moldova will continue to support an accelerated and outcome-driven process and a Council that serves the purposes of the Charter and our common vision of a rules-based and peaceful world.

Finally, I would like to conclude by expressing my delegation's readiness to work with the President of the General Assembly and the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform with the goal of achieving a meaningful outcome.

Mr. Amayo (Kenya): I thank the President for convening this important meeting, which we believe is crucial not only to the advancement of multilateralism but also for its relevance to the very core of the future of the United Nations, including its aims and purposes.

At the outset, Kenya aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/73/PV.36).

My delegation's position on the reform of the Security Council is consistent and well documented. The Common African Position on this important agenda item is clearly expounded in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. Africa's goal is to be fully represented in all the decision-making organs of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council. In that regard, Kenya continues to call for the expansion of the Security Council in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent, with no less than two permanent seats, and two additional non-permanent seats, for Africa. We reaffirm the African position that the enlarged Security Council should consist of not less than 26 members and that Africa should retain the responsibility for selecting its candidates for the enlarged Council. As a matter of principle, the new members of the Council should have the same responsibilities and obligations as the current members.

Africa is the largest region in terms of United Nations membership and figures directly in the bulk of the topics on the United Nations agenda, particularly the Security Council's. As such, any reform of the Security Council should ensure Africa's legitimate right to fair and equitable geographical representation in the Security Council.

The five key reform issues identified in decisions 61/561 of 2007 and 62/557 of 2008 remain the guiding principles for our work in the intergovernmental negotiations. They include the categories of membership

to the Council, regional representation, the question of the veto, the size of an enlarged Council and its working methods, as well as the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly. Those issues are important areas in our quest for finding a more inclusive and representative body that can handle the challenges of the twenty-first century on matters of peace and security, as well as related aspects.

While divergent opinions remain, we are fully convinced that all of the five clusters of the reform under consideration by the intergovernmental process are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. As such, we should endeavour to bring our positions closer, and we hereby urge all delegations to muster the necessary political will to do so. My delegation believes that the Common African Position is a solid basis for bridging the divergent positions in this process, as it provides the main areas for discussion on issues affecting many countries.

Kenya recognizes that most States Members of the United Nations participating in successive intergovernmental negotiations sessions favour the expansion of the Security Council. That is important, as it is now all the more evident that the global environment has become more uncertain, and multilateralism itself appears to be on trial. The legitimacy and effectiveness of the Security Council will increasingly be called into question. We believe that the time has now come to respect and facilitate the legitimate aspirations of the majority of Member States.

Nonetheless, we commend the constructive and courageous efforts made during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly to improve the Security Council's relationships with other United Nations organs, as well as with regional organizations such as the African Union. We also welcome the developments in the direction of enhancing the Security Council's working methods. We hope that the same commitment will be maintained during the current session.

In conclusion, my delegation welcomes the initiatives from the Office of the President of the General Assembly aimed at moving the reform process forward. We look forward to further engaging in open, transparent and inclusive deliberations on this important agenda item during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Tshosar (Bhutan): At the outset, my delegation would like to thank the President for convening

this important meeting on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council.

I take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, for his leadership, as well as to the two co-Chairs, Ambassadors Kaha Inmadze of Georgia and Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates, for their contribution and hard work in steering the work of the intergovernmental negotiations process during the seventy-second session.

Bhutan welcomes the appointment of Ambassador Christian Braun of Luxembourg and the reappointment of Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates as co-Chairs of the negotiations during this session. We believe that Ambassador Nusseibeh's reappointment will ensure the continuity of the process and Ambassador Braun will bring in fresh ideas to take the process forward. I want to assure them of my delegation's full support and cooperation, and we wish them every success.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on behalf of the L.69 group (see A/73/PV.36). I would also like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

We meet yet again this year to deliberate on this important issue. We have been debating this matter for more than 25 years. Unfortunately, meaningful progress has eluded us, owing to strong divergences of views on how to achieve reform. As we embark on a new phase of intergovernmental negotiations, we hope to see tangible progress, because otherwise, the legitimacy of the intergovernmental negotiations process will be in question.

During the high-level week of the current session of the General Assembly, most of the Heads of State and others underscored in their addresses to the Assembly, as well as in various other forums, the importance of strengthening multilateralism. Reform of the Security Council is an integral part of strengthening multilateralism.

Bhutan, like many other Member States, believes that reforming and expanding the Security Council are essential to its continued legitimacy, effective

decision-making and greater accountability to the general membership. Every institution must adapt and evolve in order to stay relevant and fit for purpose so as to be able to address the multifaceted challenges of the twenty-first century.

My delegation reiterates its position in support of equitable geographical representation aimed at ensuring the adequate representation of under- or unrepresented regions. At present, entire continents and regions are either underrepresented or have no representation on the Security Council at all. Bhutan also supports the expansion of the Security Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent membership categories.

Bhutan believes that the membership of the Security Council should come from both developed and developing countries, including small island developing States and small States. Every country, regardless of its size or might, must be given the opportunity to serve on the reformed Council, especially given the fact that small States make up about 20 per cent of the United Nations membership. Small States also bring important and unique perspectives on a variety of issues that are being considered at the General Assembly.

As we embark on the eleventh session of intergovernmental negotiations, we would like to request that the new co-Chairs build on the outcomes of the previous sessions rather than start from scratch. As we are all aware, despite many years of deliberations on reform of the Security Council, there has been no tangible result. That is not due to a lack of views or proposals, but because of the absence of a negotiation text. It is therefore now imperative to take the logical step and commence real negotiations on the basis of a text, as with all other intergovernmental negotiation processes at the United Nations, an idea that the vast majority of Member States have expressed in their statements.

My delegation is hopeful that the coming round of intergovernmental negotiations will result in meaningful progress, in an open, inclusive and transparent manner, under the President's able leadership. To that end, we look forward to engaging constructively with all delegations.

Mr. Mayong Onon (Malaysia): I would like to commend the President for convening this important annual debate. Malaysia has been consistent in reiterating our position that the reform of the Security Council should be comprehensive, both in terms of its

working methods and the expansion of its membership, in order to make it more legitimate, representative, democratic, accountable and transparent.

We support the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership in order to strengthen the role and representativeness of the Council. An increase in non-permanent seats would allow more Member States to be elected to the Council and increase the frequency with which Member States can serve on the Council, thereby making the Council's decision-making process more inclusive.

On the question of the veto, Malaysia affirms its call for abolishing its use in its present form. A veto should require a negative vote not from just one permanent member but at least two, supported by three non-permanent members of the Security Council. We support and advocate for the current use of veto to be regulated in situations involving mass-atrocity crimes such as genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.

The current framework of the negotiations is not bringing us any closer to reforming the Security Council. To engage in robust negotiations, we need a working text. Malaysia reiterates that text-based negotiations are the ideal step forward in the reform process. The working draft should encompass all of the various proposals by Member States, as that would enable us to clearly identify areas where differences could be bridged. Negotiations could therefore continue to be conducted in an inclusive and transparent manner.

I want to conclude by assuring the President of my delegation's support for her, for the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations process and for all Member States. Let us all start the next round of intergovernmental negotiations with the intention of moving the reform process forward. We urge Member States to demonstrate openness, flexibility, sincerity and the political will to work towards a mutually acceptable conclusion. It is important that real progress be achieved during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Al Habib (Islamic Republic of Iran): I thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing this meeting to consider the issues relating to comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

Our deliberations on the issue for nearly the entire past 30 years have been based on the assumption

that the Council has failed to keep pace with the significant changes in the world. That assumption is stronger and more plausible and valid today than in the past. Nonetheless, our only achievement during that period has been some limited success with regard to the Council's working methods. It is clear, then, that significant progress has yet to be made concerning substantive matters, such as the size and composition of the Council, its accountability and the right of veto.

However, the complexity and sensitivity of the subject can in no way justify any further delay in that process. The diminishing trust in the Council and the erosion of its credibility oblige us to take our responsibility seriously. That of course requires political will, flexibility and a spirit of compromise. The Council must become more democratic, representative, effective and, above all, completely rules-based and accountable. The Council's composition does not correspond to today's realities. In order to be representative of the world that it is mandated to protect, that deficiency must be thoroughly addressed. To that end, among other things, developing countries should be more fairly represented in the Council. Likewise, the right of veto has always been a subject of criticism on the part of a significant majority of Member States. Addressing that issue should therefore continue to be one of the main elements of our deliberations.

The Council's failure to adequately improve its working methods and decision-making process has resulted in a deficit of trust and in the loss of a sense of the legitimacy of its decisions. Making the Council evolve into a rule-based and accountable organ should therefore be at the centre of our efforts. That could help to strengthen the legitimacy of the Council's decisions.

In recent decades, the Council has increasingly and excessively resorted to its Chapter VII functions, as if there were no other provision in the Charter of the United Nations. That particularly applies to the use of sanctions in cases in which no action needed to be taken. As a result, in some cases the sovereign rights of States, as well as human rights, have been seriously violated. Chapter VII must be invoked only as intended by the Charter. It is a measure of last resort. That trend continues to seriously undermine the legitimacy of the Council's decisions. Inasmuch as the Council acts on behalf of all Member States, it should therefore remain accountable to all States on whose behalf it acts.

That indeed is the *raison d'être* for Article 24 of the Charter, which obliges the Council to submit annual reports to the General Assembly, where all Member States are represented. However, not only do certain decisions of the Council not reflect the views of the United Nations general membership, in some cases they do not even represent the genuine opinion of its own membership. In carrying out its duties, the Council must be bound by the Charter. Nevertheless, it continues to take on issues that have been assigned by the Charter to the purview of other United Nations organs. That is an encroachment on the functions and powers of those other bodies.

Similarly, the overwhelming majority of Member States have always called on the Council to studiously avoid considering issues that do not pose a threat to international peace and security. In recent years, however, the Council has placed such issues on its agenda. Unfortunately, in certain instances they have been related to internal matters of States, interference in which is explicitly prohibited by the Charter. That is due to a clear tendency to downgrade the Council to the status of a tool in the toolbox of one or more of the Council's permanent members. On the other hand, in certain instances, the Council has failed to address issues of serious concern to international peace and security and to the general membership of the Organization. We should also not forget the instances in which the Council has been abused by certain members.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that if we want our world to be governed by law and not by power, making the Council and its members accountable is a must. Of course, that is possible only through a State-driven process involving comprehensive and meaningful reform of the Security Council.

Ms. Byrne Nason (Ireland): I thank the President of the General Assembly for scheduling this meeting on the critical, albeit difficult, question of Security Council reform.

I am well aware of the sensitivity of this issue and of the failure to make tangible progress despite nearly two decades of effort. That does not, however, give us an excuse to wash our hands of the process or consign it to a sterile series of ritualistic exchanges. The basic need for Security Council reform grows ever more pressing. As Ireland and many other States have repeatedly stated, the Council no longer represents the composition of the United Nations. The longer that

unacceptable position persists, the greater the threat to the legitimacy of the Council and its unique and vital role in maintaining international peace and security.

For Ireland, the unjust historical underrepresentation on the Council of countries from Africa is particularly egregious. We urgently need reform that will ensure a fair and equitable African say in Council decisions, something that Ireland has consistently supported. The reality is that such reform should be for the long term, and we see justice in that case on its merits. We also remember very clearly from our own membership in the Security Council from 2001 to 2002 that while issues relating to peace and security in Africa were central to the Council's agenda, African countries were not adequately represented on the Council, and we often had to go outside its doors to hear their voices.

Besides rectifying Africa's underrepresentation, we must also ensure that the voices of the most vulnerable are heard. That means that small island developing States, for example, should play a role in the Council that reflects the seriousness of the situation they face. Other regions have also made claims that we believe deserve a fair hearing, and we look forward to discussing them.

Smaller States, which make up a majority of the United Nations membership, must have their right to serve on the Council protected. The essence of the United Nations, and of multilateralism, consists of laws and structures that provide equal protection, respect and guarantees to the large and the small, and promote mutual benefits in addressing common challenges within our shared frameworks.

In addition to the issue of composition, Security Council reform should also make the Council more accountable, democratic and transparent. For example, Ireland believes that elected members must play a fully equal role in the Council, including having responsibility for drafting Council products and shaping all Council decisions. We welcome the proactive and effective role played in that regard by the 10 elected members in the recent period. We also favour greater interaction among the Council, the General Assembly and critical bodies such as the Peacebuilding Commission, which are well placed in their work to address the great challenges faced by countries experiencing conflict. Ireland is also a strong supporter of transparency, and we welcome the commitment expressed by many current Council

members to conducting the business of the Council clearly in the public eye.

We believe that the use of the veto is a responsibility, not a right. It has frequently been misused, and we favour its eventual abolition. In the meantime, we support the French-Mexican initiative and that of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group to prevent the use of the veto in cases of mass-atrocity crimes. Ireland strongly believes that reform should happen now, and we want an early move towards text-based negotiations. We do not believe that is in any way in conflict with the Member-driven approach that has been pursued to date. We strongly support building on the outcomes of the recent intergovernmental negotiations processes, including the framework document, its annexes and the elements of convergence and commonality, which have been prepared by successive co-Chairs.

In negotiations, we want to see a successful outcome and are willing to consider any model capable of commanding sufficient consensus. While creating new permanent seats has not been our preferred model in the past, we would agree if that approach enjoyed sufficient support. Sticking rigidly to positions for 20 years has clearly not achieved success for any of us. We therefore appeal to all countries that support reform to consider how such a change can be achieved. Flexibility could now be combined, for example, with a commitment to looking again at the structure of the Council after a fixed period. The purpose of such a review would be to assess whether the new arrangements are fair, equitable and reflective of the continuing evolution of the global order.

My country, Ireland, might be said to have a vested interest. We aspire to membership of the Security Council for the 2021-2022 term. We have been critical of the Council and its composition and operation, because it matters to us and the United Nations. Today, more than ever, the Council holds much of the fate of the multilateral system in its hands. The wider multilateral system takes its lead from the example set by the Council. We want to see the anachronisms of representation set aside so that the Council can better deal with the urgent tasks it has been mandated to perform. Ireland's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister addressed that issue during the recent open debate (see A/73/PV.13). He said that he strongly believes that reform of the Council would inevitably lead to a greater sense of participation, responsibility and ownership among United Nations Members, and

that it could surely only have a positive effect on the functioning of the United Nations more widely.

At this time, when multilateralism itself is facing stiff challenges, there is an extra responsibility for States that strongly value the United Nations to see how they can contribute to such an important reform. My country, Ireland, will certainly approach the next set of negotiations on Security Council reform with an open mind and a constructive spirit. We are used to being, and are willing to be, bridge builders and a voice for fair and equitable reform of the Security Council.

Mr. Valenzuela Marzo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Permanent Representative of Italy has already presented the position of the Uniting for Consensus group to this annual debate (see A/73/PV.36). The Spanish delegation joins her in that position, as we share the conviction that the reform of the Security Council plays an important role in achieving effective multilateralism.

I join previous speakers in welcoming the new co-Chairs, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg, and expressing Spain's support for their work during the forthcoming intergovernmental negotiations during this session.

I would like to share with the Assembly our thoughts as to why it is crucial to provide the Security Council with a new dynamism for the sake of the United Nations reform process and for the legitimacy and effectiveness of multilateralism.

The current international environment, as we all know, is very different from that of the post-war years. The need to ensure peace in a world divided into blocs was decisive in enshrining the functions and composition of the Security Council in the Charter of the United Nations. The success of one of its major tasks, decolonization, completely changed the size of the membership and the multilateral dynamics of the United Nations. We are now facing the challenges of the twenty-first century and the need to provide a new sense of legitimacy through which all Members and regional groups of the General Assembly feel they are represented on the Security Council. That same new configuration must ensure the functionality required to address the challenges associated with climate change, migratory flows, the defence of human rights, gender equality and more equitable and less disparate development, while at the same time maintaining and re-establishing peace as a common good.

The Uniting for Consensus proposal seeks to integrate all of the aspirations of the various regional groups to contribute to and play a decisive role in the joint solutions entailed in our cross-cutting twenty-first-century agenda. We are not merely calling for the addition of one more group but rather for seeking out a coherent consensus framework as the basis for negotiations leading towards the reform of the Security Council. The proposal has been circulating for more than a decade. Yet current circumstances urgently demand a restoration of the multilateral procedures in the face of new challenges, procedures that do not consist in the abstract idea of conceiving a new balance of power but in forging an integrated method for jointly identifying and solving issues on the shared agenda of humankind.

The Security Council is the cornerstone of multilateralism, United Nations reform and collective intervention for the common good. We are seeking a more democratic, representative and transparent Council, with a higher level of effectiveness, a Council that will ultimately be more representative and legitimate and better prepared to confront the global challenges facing us in the twenty-first century. Our position, and that of the Uniting for Consensus group, seeks to reach an agreement on what we all mean by a more democratic, transparent, effective, accountable and representative Council. The change in the Charter of the United Nations demands a consensus as broad as the one that made its adoption possible, while ensuring that all Member States, in accordance with their legitimate interests and with a view towards the common good, are called on to contribute to addressing the challenges we face.

Our position has evolved. It is flexible and balanced at the same time. It is based on the conviction that participating in the Security Council is not a privilege but a service to the international community. We believe that all peace-loving Members of the United Nations have the right and even the obligation to provide that service to our community by virtue of their presence on the Council. We are convinced that the best way to strengthen multilateralism, to which we aspire, and must aspire, closely resembles the model for reform of the Security Council proposed by the United for Consensus group. In that light, I therefore encourage everyone to consider the two charts that accompanied the statement delivered by the Ambassador of Italy on behalf of our group (see A/73/PV.36). It will be noted

that that proposal is not merely about Security Council reform but is part of a broader United Nations reform proposal, which we believe will be instrumental in strengthening confidence in the international system and in the ability of Member States to adapt to the new challenges the Organization faces today.

Mr. Auväärt (Estonia): We are all convinced that the United Nations has to be fit for purpose and that the Security Council reform should help to make the United Nations stronger and more credible. The Security Council needs the capacity and readiness to adequately respond to all of the world's challenges and live up to its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. Unfortunately, this has not always been the case. I would like to thank the Permanent Representatives of Georgia and the United Arab Emirates for their hard work in leading the intergovernmental negotiations at the previous session of the General Assembly.

With respect to the most important issues for Estonia in the Security Council reform process, we have had to witness how, on numerous occasions, some members of the Council have used or threatened to use the veto, leaving the Council paralysed and unable to react to situations that most need action. Estonia will continue to highlight its position that permanent members of the Security Council should voluntarily and collectively commit to refraining from using their veto power to block Council action aimed at preventing or ending situations involving mass atrocity crimes.

As a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, Estonia also supports the code of conduct calling on all members of the Council to refrain from voting against credible Security Council resolutions aimed at preventing or ending genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. We welcome the wide-ranging support that 117 Member States have expressed for the code of conduct. Hopefully, more countries will be lending their support to it in the immediate future. Estonia has also reiterated its support for the initiative led by France and Mexico on the use of the veto. We believe that those two initiatives are complementary and share a common goal.

I also want to highlight another issue that is important to Estonia with respect to the expansion of the Security Council. The United Nations must adapt to the realities of today. Estonia believes that every country, small or large, should have the opportunity to

be represented on the Council, but a stronger voice for small nations, especially small island developing States, is absolutely vital. In addition, we fully empathize with the Common African Position, which would increase the representativeness and legitimacy of the United Nations as a whole and is the only way to rectify the historical injustice endured by the African continent with regard to the composition of the Security Council.

When considering the relevance of the work of the Security Council, we should reflect on the agendas and substantial matters discussed in Security Council meetings. The notion of peace and security is expanding. There are new challenges that could be severe obstacles to global peace and security and should therefore be debated in the Security Council. For example, climate change and cybersecurity are two challenges of growing importance and urgency that clearly need to be addressed.

Finally, I want to emphasize that small steps in improving the working methods of the Security Council can have a much wider positive effect. Estonia would like to see greater accountability, coherence and transparency in the Council's activities through increased inclusiveness and targeted action. These principles are key to governing our State. We apply them conscientiously, as we believe they will make our governance more effective and better understood by our people. We believe that the same principles would have a larger effect at the regional or global level and should therefore be cherished and used by different international organizations, including the United Nations. The Security Council, as a body representing all of the States Members of the United Nations, could also benefit from the application of these principles.

In conclusion, I would like to reconfirm Estonia's commitment to engaging constructively in the intergovernmental negotiations. I would also like to congratulate the newly appointed Chairs, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg, and confirm our full support to them.

Mr. Balé (Congo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting on the weighty question of Security Council reform.

The Congolese delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, Coordinator of the African Union

Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government, on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/73/PV.36), and we would like to take this opportunity to make a few additional remarks in our national capacity.

First of all, I want to thank all of the facilitators of the successive intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform and acknowledge their commitment to and enthusiasm for moving forward with the process, which, over the nine years since it was launched in February 2009, has shown itself to be more complex than we might have thought. I would also like to congratulate the incoming Chairs who will continue the endeavour.

What are we really talking about here? The very title of agenda item 124 — the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council — delves into the issue and allows for a straightforward understanding of Council reform. The current representation on the Security Council is not equitable. We must establish a balance. The Council's membership must be increased, because its current composition is not representative of today's 193 States Members of the United Nations.

What are the related issues? Decision 62/557, which remains the basis for reform of the Security Council, as well as the five key elements of reform that the decision outlined, represents the guiding principles for the negotiations established by the decision. It also delineates and sheds further light on the challenges and issues that we face.

The necessary reform of the Security Council is within the purview of the General Assembly. In this regard, I simply want to highlight the Assembly's successive decisions to continue the informal negotiations from one session to the next. The steadfast statements of support for the process are also proof of that shared view.

What plans are in place for 2019? In about two months, the informal intergovernmental negotiations process on reform of the Security Council will mark 10 years of its existence. What assessments can be made on that decade of discussion on reform of the body that is quite rightly considered the cornerstone of the United Nations? Looking beyond the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations that began in February 2009, many of us would add that the debate on reform of the most powerful body of the United

Nations has ultimately consumed the energy of more than a generation of diplomats. Indeed, if we refer to past reform initiatives, dating back to the 1960s, and even including some of the efforts made in the 1990s, we may be tempted to think, and understandably so, that since that time, the negotiation process has yet to produce any result that could be viewed as a noticeably positive development.

The stakes are high, given that the Security Council can make decisions that Member States are obliged to enforce, and that the Charter grants it the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. This shows the importance of our leaders' vision from the 2005 World Summit, which invited us to make progress so as to bring about a more representative, democratic, effective and transparent Security Council in order to strengthen the legitimacy of its decisions.

We can all recognize that the world has changed and that we face new geopolitical challenges that have led to the emergence of new forces on the international scene. Today more than ever, at a time when multilateralism is under threat, we reaffirm our faith in the United Nations, which we hope will become more transparent, dynamic and democratic. It was not intended that the United Nations be frozen in time. As President John Kennedy so aptly pointed out in his address to the General Assembly from this rostrum,

“The United Nations cannot survive as a static Organization. Its obligations are increasing as well as its size. Its Charter must be changed as well as its customs. The authors of that Charter did not intend that it be frozen in perpetuity” (*A/PV.1209, para. 74*).

Today, the United Nations is committed to reforms that can make it a more effective instrument for promoting peace, development and human rights. In this dynamic, the Congo believes that reform of the Security Council is possible and even urgent. For the Congo, the geographical representation of Africa on the Security Council is a matter of justice, equity and regional balance within the Council, in accordance with the principles, objectives and ideals of the Charter of the United Nations.

The document entitled “Revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration”, distributed on 14 June by the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, ranks the crucial

points with regard to increasing the size of Council, its geographical representation and the power to veto among several items to be further considered (see A/72/PV.104). We can clearly see the interconnected nature of all of the issues being negotiated in the context of Security Council reform.

As we all know, the enlargement of the Council is linked to the issue of increasing the number of members of the Council in both categories of membership. If the principle of increasing the number of Council members is unanimously agreed on, my delegation must conclude that opting to expand both categories of its membership would be the best way to reflect equity, representativeness and regional balance. In this regard, the Congo supports assigning two members in the permanent category and an additional two members in the non-permanent category to Africa.

Africa's proper representation on the Council would merely redress the historical injustice to which Africa has always been subjected. It is barely conceivable that an Africa of some 1.2 billion souls, including 54 States Members of the Organization and with estimates projecting that its population will double by 2050, is underrepresented at this high level of decision-making. We should also not forget that in the current context, the majority of Council decisions are relevant to Africa.

The Congo welcomes the growing support and backing from several groups of States and stakeholder groups for ensuring that Africa is represented in the permanent membership. But the question of the veto, which is closely tied to the status of permanent membership on the Council, remains one of the greatest challenges of the intergovernmental negotiations. However, if we accept Africa's representation with permanent membership in order to remedy the existing injustice, failing to recognize the privileges that come with that status, including the power of the veto, would merely continue the injustice to which it has been subjected. For the principle of equality to be meaningfully implemented, it would be wise to extend the veto privilege to all States designated permanent members of the Security Council. There can be no other option, unless we agree to outright abolition of the veto for all permanent members of the Council, as set forth in the Common African Position outlined in the Ezulwini Consensus.

The question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council

and other matters related to the Security Council is so important that it deserves the sustained attention of the General Assembly, the principal organ of the United Nations, in order to make the United Nations more representative, and therefore truly universal and democratic, and capable of leading the reform process towards concrete results within a consensual framework.

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): I want to express my gratitude and that of my country to Ambassadors Nusseibeh and Imnadze for their excellent leadership of the intergovernmental negotiations process during this year. I would like to congratulate Ambassador Nusseibeh on her reappointment and Ambassador Braun on his appointment as Chairs for the upcoming session.

It is increasingly clear that the appetite for reform of the Security Council is growing among States Members of the United Nations. That is with good reason. The world has changed, but the Security Council's composition has not responded to that change. It is only right and fair that the world's principal organ for the maintenance of peace and security represents the world it seeks to protect.

The United Kingdom continues to be a long-standing and firm supporter of Security Council reform. That reform must consider the size of the Council, its representativeness, the way the Council functions and its working methods. We support efforts to modernize the Security Council's working practices and welcome last year's agreement on a new note by the President of the Security Council on the subject (S/2017/507). Our priority is now to implement the provisions of the note with the aim of ensuring that the Council conducts its business in an efficient, inclusive and transparent manner, which includes focusing the Council's time on the most important issues of international peace and security, and not yesterday's conflicts. We look forward to working on those issues in the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Matters, under the chairmanship of Kuwait.

When we consider Security Council reform, we must always ensure that the Council's effectiveness is not compromised. Too great an increase in size risks a cumbersome and slow decision-making process, undermining the Council's ability to respond appropriately and quickly to issues of international peace and security. With the enormous and grave challenges before us, that is a risk we simply cannot afford to take.

By the same token, we cannot allow the issue of the veto to slow our progress on the expansion of the Council. The United Kingdom is proud not to have vetoed a resolution since 1989, and we would only do so in the most exceptional circumstances. We are signatories to the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group and committed to never voting against a credible draft resolution on preventing or ending a mass atrocity, and we encourage all permanent and non-permanent members to join us in supporting this initiative. Too often 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.

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 we should collectively pursue. Member States must work together in a flexible and creative manner to find areas of convergence so that we can finally make progress on this issue.

Members will be aware of our support for permanent seats for Brazil, Germany, India and Japan, alongside permanent African representation, in order to better reflect the realities of the world we face today. That support is steadfast, and I look forward to working through all available avenues to reach the more representative and effective Council that we seek.

Mr. Mero (United Republic of Tanzania): My delegation would like to thank the presidency of the General Assembly 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.

My country aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Sierra Leone, who spoke on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/73/PV.36).

In my capacity as the representative of Tanzania, I would like to congratulate the Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations at the seventy-second session of the General Assembly on their stewardship of the process and would like to add that Tanzania stands ready to work with the new Chairs announced today.

Like many others, my delegation is concerned about the slow pace of the process. Africa, which is the only continent underrepresented on the Security

Council, continues to suffer. It should be underscored that a majority of the Security Council mandate has been exercised in African countries that have come of age and taken up responsibilities contributing to peacekeeping on their own continent and beyond. We have been participating in mediation and peacekeeping operations, which have come at a cost to Tanzania and many other African countries in the form of losses of peacekeepers they have contributed. The political will behind peacekeeping and security is of intangible value and should be treasured.

The Common African Position, as set forth in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, is well known to the Assembly. We demand no less than two permanent seats with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership, including the right of veto, and five non-permanent seats. Although Africa is opposed to the veto in principle, we are of the view that as long as it exists and as a matter of common justice, it should be made available to all permanent members of the Security Council. My delegation is also concerned about the note of the Chairs entitled “Revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration”, which was circulated on 14 June by the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session. It was a welcome step in identifying areas of commonalities around which Member States can unite for consensus-building. However, the note did not adequately or accurately reflect the Common African Position.

In conclusion, the United Republic of Tanzania is looking forward to a pivot in the right direction on that matter when consideration of the Security Council reform process is resumed, at which time we believe that we will all give the Common African Position our attention.

Ms. Jáquez Huacuja (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today’s plenary meeting, as well as for the appointment of the new Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, who count on the support of my delegation for their work on this item of great importance for my country, but above all also crucial for the United Nations.

Mexico endorses the statement by Ambassador Maria Angela Zappia of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/73/PV.36), and I would like to add the following points in my national capacity.

We need the new session of the intergovernmental negotiations to continue addressing pending issues with

the aim of finding new convergences. This process will move forward to the extent that we can find common ground and concentrate on what unites us, on the basis of agreed principles. In other words, the process should not be restricted to compiling proposals, but should also extend to analysing and earmarking those that can really generate consensus and results that benefit the entire membership and global interests rather than forcing artificial convergences.

Security Council reform must be guided by the common objectives identified in the intergovernmental negotiations process — the efficiency, transparency, representativeness and democratization of the Council. At the same time, the enlargement of the Council in the category of non-permanent members, which from the perspective of Mexico and the Uniting for Consensus group is the only basis for the reform that can result in an efficient and democratic reformed Council, must be based on the principle of equitable geographical distribution. Any modification to the composition of the Council must therefore also reflect the current membership of the Organization, enabling an adequate representation of the five different regional groups on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, as established in Article 23 of the Charter of the United Nations. The size of the enlarged Council will be decisive in restoring this balance while preserving its efficiency.

However, we cannot speak of adequate representation based on equitable geographical distribution without considering the direct link that the issue has with the discussions on the dimension of the enlarged Council, through which the number of additional seats to be granted to each regional group will be determined. Transparency and effectiveness must also be primary objectives of Security Council reform. Mexico agrees that the Council should be more transparent and accessible to non-member States, so that there is better accountability and more effective decision-making.

The Security Council is the organ that guarantees international peace and security. However, the scope of its working methods and the control exercised by permanent members over certain agenda items close to their national interests have meant that the Council cannot be effective in resolving conflicts that threaten international peace and security and affect its image and legitimacy. The Council must therefore act promptly

and transparently in the face of the international crises that require its attention.

While in recent years the Security Council has improved in the area of transparency and inclusiveness, this has been largely due to the impetus of non-elected members. We are among a large majority of States that oppose the use of the so-called veto and call for its abolition or voluntary restriction, particularly in cases of mass atrocities. Most Member States, including Mexico, agree that enlarging the Council and reforming its working methods will substantially improve the effectiveness of the body by recalibrating the existing balance of power. That will also make it possible to give more weight to the positions of non-permanent members and make progress on issues that have traditionally paralysed the Council's action.

The relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly must be approached from a perspective of accountability and transparency. In order to achieve greater accountability in the Council, the periodic election of all new members of the Council by the General Assembly should therefore be maintained.

We reiterate that new intergovernmental negotiations must be conducted based on the principles of transparency, impartiality, objectivity and inclusiveness. They must take up the lessons learned in past sessions as well as the mistakes made in the process, and we invite States Members of the United Nations to consider the United for Consensus proposal as a serious attempt to advance real reform of the Security Council. The United for Consensus proposal responds to the principles set forth in decision 62/557, since it was formulated in good faith and is a compromise designed to achieve a more representative, transparent, democratic, effective and accountable Security Council.

Our proposal is inclusive because it seeks to give opportunities to all Member States and all regions, particularly those underrepresented in the current configuration of the Security Council, such as Africa. The Uniting for Consensus proposal addresses the ambitions of some States that legitimately desire greater responsibility in the Security Council. Mexico recognizes the interest expressed by all the negotiating groups in continuing the intergovernmental negotiations. We therefore urge all Members to continue the work of the negotiations, coordinate their individual interests and pursue the good of the Organization in

order to garner the broadest possible support for a viable proposal for an enlarged Security Council in line with the realities of the twenty-first century and based on multilateralism.

Mr. Cho Tae-yul (Republic of Korea): I thank the President for convening today's annual debate on Security Council reform.

My delegation warmly welcomes the appointment of Ambassador Christian Braun of Luxembourg as co-Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. We also extend our congratulations to Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates as she continues in her role as co-Chair. I have every confidence in their leadership and ability to facilitate this difficult process under the twin guiding spirits of transparency and fairness.

At the outset, my delegation aligns itself with the statement by the Permanent Representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/73/PV.36). I will now make some comments in my national capacity.

The Republic of Korea has long believed that Security Council reform is critical to the Council's effective functioning and the future of the United Nations. This issue takes on even greater urgency today. Indeed, as we collectively face mounting international challenges, the role of the Security Council is increasingly vital in responding to these changing realities. However, in order to fulfil its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security and to meet the challenges of tomorrow as well as today, the Council must be transformed into a more equitable, representative and efficient entity. Further, as Secretary-General Guterres is leading United Nations reform in such areas as peace and security, development and management, it is essential for the Security Council to work in lockstep with the ongoing reform efforts. The stakes are too high for the Council to remain static as the world and the United Nations continue to change.

The real need for reform of the Security Council does not stem from our respective capitals. Rather, it is the people on the streets in Palestine and in the neighbourhoods of Syria who truly yearn for a reformed Security Council. We owe it to them to deliver on what the Charter of the United Nations promises, namely, to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

Today I would like to propose that we all sit back for a moment to reflect, logically and reasonably, on what we now know and what will ensure that the Council is reformed in the right way. I ask representatives to momentarily ponder where we stand today, not through the prism of any national or group interests, but through the objective prism of someone who genuinely cares for the future of the world.

We all know that expanding the Council to a membership larger than the mid-20s will seriously affect its effectiveness. We all know that outside the permanent five there exist 188 Member States, and possibly even more in the future, all of which aspire and deserve to serve on the Council. We all know that those 188 countries have to compete strenuously with one another and invest massive political capital over many years to win election onto the Council. We all know that non-permanent members are democratically elected. We all know that a mere single term of two years is just not enough for many countries to build institutional memory, and sometimes it is hard in the beginning, or even in the first year, to get up to speed with all of the critical issues.

For example, we all know that adding four seats for the Group of Four, two from Africa, one from the Arab countries and one from Latin America would at a minimum bring us to 13 permanent Council members, which means that the maximum number of additional seats allocated for the rest of us would be only two or three. We all know that adding only two or three seats to the 10 existing non-permanent seats for 180 countries — or more, in future — is not only unfair but unsustainable. We all know that if we keep the current ratio of one to two between permanent and non-permanent seats, it will result in gridlock, in a Council composed of 39 members with 13 members with veto power, which can never function effectively or equitably.

We all know that the world is not static, and that the large and contributing members of today will be joined

by other large and contributing countries of tomorrow. And all of us know that we have a clear mandate to reform the Council following the five principles — democracy, representativeness, transparency, accountability and effectiveness — that were laid down by our Heads of States and Governments in 2005.

I believe that we all recognize, if not publicly, that the Uniting for Consensus proposal of increasing non-permanent seats favouring underrepresented regions of the world without expanding the veto best reflects the broad convergences among Member States. It will also help achieve a reform of the Council that is not only anchored by the five principles we have all committed to, but is also the most viable formula and one that would enjoy the widest possible support. This proposal would add 11 more non-permanent members, all of which would be democratically elected, fully represented by each group based on equitable geography and held accountable periodically based on their contributions in the Council. That in turn would ensure that the Council functioned in a more effective and transparent manner, with a minimum number of vetoes and the right size of membership. Furthermore, many of us will be able to secure our seats long enough to build our institutional memory and serve longer if we perform well as Council members.

We are all gathered here today fully aware of the fact that the Council must be reformed if it is to continue to fulfil its mandate and evolve with changing realities. The Republic of Korea, alongside the Uniting for Consensus group, will continue its endeavours to reform the Council by balancing the ideals of the founding fathers of the United Nations with the new challenges we face today.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 124.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.