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28th plenary meeting

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Official Records

President: Mr. Bozkir (Turkey)

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Elsonni (Libya),
Vice-President, took the Chair.*

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

Agenda item 127 (continued)

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

Mr. Gafoor (Singapore): I join others in thanking the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during the seventy-fourth session, Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Ambassador Joanna Wronecka of Poland, for their efforts to try to take the intergovernmental negotiations process forward during the extremely challenging conditions caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Alya Al-Thani of Qatar on her appointment and Ambassador Wronecka on her reappointment as the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations process for the seventy-fifth session.

Today's meeting of the General Assembly to debate Security Council reform and the work of the intergovernmental negotiations process marks the first time since early March that issue has been discussed. The COVID-19 pandemic has unfortunately delayed the work of the intergovernmental negotiations. In the year that the United Nations celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary, it is disappointing that the intergovernmental

negotiations process could not produce any outcome. This has been a lost year and another lost opportunity for the intergovernmental negotiations process, meaning that the intergovernmental negotiations process has a lot of catching up to do when it begins the next cycle of meetings.

From Singapore's point of view, reform of the Security Council is needed to make the United Nations effective, efficient and responsive. The international community needs a Security Council that is able to act swiftly and decisively when confronted with global crises. The discussion on Security Council reform here in the General Assembly and in the intergovernmental negotiations process is therefore an important part of strengthening the multilateral rules-based system.

The intergovernmental negotiations must resume work as soon as possible. Further, we believe that the intergovernmental negotiations must be prepared to work in a virtual format, if necessary, in the event that in-person meetings become impossible due to a further deterioration of the COVID-19 situation. We believe it is important to continue the informal discussions, even if held in a virtual format, so as to build trust and confidence among delegations. Our concern is that, were informal discussions to stop, there could be a breakdown of trust and confidence in the intergovernmental negotiations process. We do not want that to happen.

In that regard, we are also of the view that it is not the number of meetings that is important but the quality of the discussions. My delegation will be open to more

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meetings if they can be helpful in contributing to progress. We will be guided by the two co-facilitators in that regard. However, my delegation would not be in favour of additional meetings just so we can all repeat well-known positions that we have all heard before.

Singapore has reiterated its position on Security Council reform each year at the annual debate on this agenda item in the General Assembly. We believe that reform of the Security Council is necessary to ensure that it remains credible, that it is accountable and that its decisions enjoy legitimacy. The composition of the Council must therefore reflect the current realities and diversity of the United Nations membership. There must be greater geographical representation and inclusivity in the Council, especially with regard to underrepresented regions such as Africa.

Singapore continues to support the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. However, the intergovernmental negotiations process must not become an exercise that accommodates only the interests of large- and medium-sized countries. In any reform exercise, small States should not be disadvantaged or further marginalized. In that regard, we believe it is important to enhance opportunities for small States, in particular small island developing States, to be represented in the Council.

It is notable that the overwhelming majority of United Nations Member States that have not yet served on the Security Council are indeed small States. This month, the Security Council is being presided by one of the smallest nations in the world — Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. However, that is a very rare occurrence, and we have to find ways for other small States to have the opportunity to serve on the Security Council in the future.

Next year will mark the thirteenth year of discussions on Security Council reform in the intergovernmental negotiations format. The urgency for the intergovernmental negotiations to produce concrete results cannot be emphasized enough. If we are unable to make tangible progress, then we will have to ask ourselves some hard questions: are the intergovernmental negotiations a vehicle that is capable of facilitating Security Council reform? Or have the intergovernmental negotiations become an outdated mechanism that facilitates the maintenance of the status quo? The answer to those questions will depend very much on what we are able to achieve in the

intergovernmental negotiations process this year and next year.

The key point to note is that we should not damage the credibility or legitimacy of the intergovernmental negotiations process. In our view, there are merits to the intergovernmental negotiations process, such as its informal and intergovernmental nature. It is not a given that a shift to a more formal process will guarantee success; however, if the intergovernmental negotiations process is to be regarded as credible and effective, then it must deliver some signs of progress and take steps forward. In that regard, it is also important to have a single consolidated draft document on which to focus our attention that will facilitate text-based negotiations. To be frank, it will be difficult to take the intergovernmental negotiations process seriously if, year after year, it is not able to show any signs of progress.

I will make three points on what my delegation would like to see from this year's resumption of the intergovernmental negotiations process.

First, it is critical that Member States acknowledge and build on the work and progress of previous years. We must expand the areas of convergence to find compromises in the areas where there continue to be differences. Singapore continues to view the 2015 framework document as the most important reference document that reflects Member States' views on Security Council reform. The framework document should continue to inform our work, even as we move discussions forward on the basis of the revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration. At the same time, we must continue to listen to the views of all Member States and ensure that all options remain on the table.

Secondly, we must build confidence and increase the level of trust in the way delegations engage with each other on this issue through the intergovernmental negotiations process, informal discussions and also, if need be, informal small group discussions. The pandemic has interrupted and even stalled that engagement, and it is important that all sides resume their conversations. Reform of the Security Council can succeed only if there is a strong foundation of trust, understanding and convergence among Member States to strengthen the multilateral system.

Related to that point, we believe that it is particularly important for the permanent members

of the Security Council to reflect on their role and responsibility with regard to the reform of the Council. By virtue of their privileged position, the permanent members have a special and greater responsibility to provide leadership in the reform process. Ultimately, any reform of the Security Council that enhances its legitimacy will also enhance the legitimacy of the status of its permanent members.

Thirdly, important steps have been taken to improve the working methods of the Security Council, in particular its transparency, efficiency and engagement with non-members. We commend the work done by the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions in recent years under the chairmanship of Japan, Kuwait and now Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Indeed, we have seen some signs of good progress on the working methods of the Security Council in recent years, which is encouraging.

We welcome the fact that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Security Council was the first organ of the United Nations to adapt its practices to ensure business continuity without sacrificing transparency and accountability. We also welcome the earlier submission of this year's annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/74/2), and we encourage the Council to adhere to the new timelines stipulated in presidential note S/2019/997 for the submission of future annual reports in order for the General Assembly to hold robust discussions on the work of the Security Council. At the same time, we hope that the Informal Working Group will continue its efforts to implement presidential note S/2017/507 and to improve the Council's working methods in the longer term.

Singapore looks forward to the early resumption of the intergovernmental negotiations process, as well as to working constructively with all delegations to make progress on this important issue.

Mr. Aidid (Malaysia): Allow me at the outset to congratulate Her Excellency Ms. Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland, on her reappointment and Her Excellency Ms. Alya Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar, on her appointment as the co-Chairs of the current session of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. My delegation welcomes their early appointment as it provides an opportunity for Member States to engage on the subject in a

more productive and timely manner. We also thank the previous co-Chairs for their work during the past session.

My delegation has been consistent in reiterating our position that, in order to make the Security Council more legitimate, representative, democratic, accountable and transparent, its reform should be comprehensive, both in terms of its working methods and the expansion of its membership. We believe that an enlarged Council with fair regional representation would not only reflect the current United Nations membership but would also enhance the ability of the Security Council to represent the interests of all Member States.

Having said that, we recognize the complexities and challenges associated with the reform process. In that regard, we urge all Member States to demonstrate openness, flexibility and political will to work towards a mutually acceptable conclusion. We also call on all Member States to work collectively in exploring pragmatic approaches aimed at moving the reform process forward, particularly in the areas where there are still significant differences.

We have not witnessed any substantial progress on the reform process in the 15 years since the 2005 World Summit. We must do our best to avoid the repetitive nature of the discussions and demonstrate considerable flexibility throughout the negotiations. In that context, Malaysia continues to call for a text-based negotiation, as we believe it constitutes the ideal step forward in the reform process.

Malaysia continues to call for the abolishment of the veto, as the current veto mechanism is undemocratic. Since 1946, the veto has been wielded more than 200 times. It is open to abuse, be it sanctimoniously, hypocritically or to uphold wrongdoings. On 26 September at the general debate, my Prime Minister also reiterated our strong position on the use of the veto (see A/75/PV.12). While my delegation continues to advocate for abolishing the veto system, the veto in its current format should be used only in cases of international crimes of the most serious nature, such as instances of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

In more recent times, we saw how the threat of use of the veto contributed to the initial paralysis in the Security Council in adopting a resolution on the appeal for a global ceasefire amid the coronavirus disease pandemic. Resolution 2532 (2020) was finally

adopted on 1 July following the strong call of the vast majority of the United Nations membership, including through the issuance a week earlier of a joint statement endorsing the global ceasefire that was signed by 170 United Nations Member States, a non-member observer State and an observer.

The seventy-fifth anniversary of our Organization this year is an opportune time for us to elevate this important issue to a higher level in the interest of international peace and security and prosperity. Let me conclude by assuring members of Malaysia's commitment to moving the process forward.

Mr. Vorshilov (Mongolia): First of all, I would like to reiterate Mongolia's strong commitment to working with all Member States to achieve an early and comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

I wish to extend our thanks to Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, and Ambassador Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of Poland, for their leadership as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly.

The world has changed dramatically in the past 75 years and since the historic year of 1945, in which the United Nations was founded. The Security Council must become more inclusive and transparent in order to better reflect contemporary and geopolitical realities, as well as to be able to deliver on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Therefore, advancing Security Council reform must remain a top priority at the current seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, which is taking place during unprecedented times as the entire world is grappling with the coronavirus disease pandemic.

Mongolia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on behalf of the L.69 group (see A/75/PV.27).

I wish to take this opportunity to reaffirm Mongolia's long-standing principled position on the five core reform issues.

Council membership should be extended in both the permanent and non-permanent categories to reflect the evolving realities of the United Nations membership.

It is our view that the veto power should be abolished; however, we support the restricted use of the veto power in the Security Council, in particular with regard to decisions related to Chapter VII of the Charter. As long as the veto exists, it should be extended to all new members in the permanent category of the Security Council. All new permanent members must enjoy all the prerogatives and privileges of the permanent membership category, including the right to veto.

The adequate representation of all regions, particularly those that are unrepresented or underrepresented, must be duly considered in both categories of the Security Council. Equitable geographical distribution should be ensured through an emphasis on unrepresented and underrepresented groups, particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Both analytical and special reports, as well as adequate consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries, will play a key role in the strengthening of the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

As for the non-permanent categories, strengthening a fair and equitable rotation system within the regional groups is of high importance to my country. In that respect, my delegation also supports the allocation of additional seats to the current regional groups, while ensuring the representation of small island developing States.

In conclusion, I would like to express my delegation's continued commitment and full support with regard to making progress on the vital issue of Security Council reform.

Ms. Chan Valverde (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica welcomes today's annual plenary meeting on agenda item 127.

We would also like to commend the Permanent Representative of Poland and the Permanent Representative of Qatar for their appointment as co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations. We thank the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates for her dedication, leadership and excellent work in leading the process.

Costa Rica shares the concerns and suggestions expressed by the representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus Group (see A/75/PV.27). In our

national capacity, Costa Rica would like to make the following points.

First, the intergovernmental negotiations should have a single objective — to seek a profound, comprehensive, fair and equitable, effective, representative, realistic and democratic reform of the Security Council. The reform should enhance the capacity of the Security Council to prevent conflicts and respond more efficiently to threats to international peace and security.

Secondly, the reform cannot and should not be an instrument for granting privileges to some States over others that are equally sovereign. All Member States, in particular small, medium-sized and developing States, which account for the majority of Member States, deserve an opportunity to make a larger contribution to the work of the Council. That goal will be ensured only through an increase in the number of long-term non-permanent members, with the possibility of immediate re-election, and an increase in the number of two-year non-permanent seats.

Long-term seats will respond to the legitimate aspiration of some Member States to contribute to the work of the Council, while simultaneously encouraging a fairer rotation system. That rotation, combined with regional representation, would also allow for better balance in the membership of the Security Council. In that way, innovative voices and attitudes from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean will be heard in a reformed Security Council. Greater diversity in representation would also substantially increase the likelihood of being elected to the Council, thereby benefiting small countries in particular, which make up the majority of the Organization.

Thirdly, reform must improve the working methods of the Security Council. Improving its working methods will not only facilitate the work of the Council; it will also strengthen the relationship among the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Greater transparency, in addition to being a requirement, will increase the Council's sense of representativeness, strengthen its legitimacy and allow it to draw on more relevant input from all Members of the Organization. Proceedings must be conducted in a larger, clearer, more predictable, systematic and transparent Council.

Fourthly, the letter and spirit of decision 62/557 must continue to guide the intergovernmental negotiations. Sub-paragraph (d) of that decision clearly states that the intergovernmental negotiations will be based only on proposals made by Member States, in a clear exercise of national ownership and full responsibility for the proposals. In addition, sub-paragraph (e) of the decision explicitly specifies the basis for the intergovernmental negotiations, including the five major interlinked issues, which are comprehensive and inseparable and must be agreed upon together.

In recent years, the work of the non-permanent members of the Security Council has been noteworthy. Their voices have proven to be innovative, inquiring, proactive and independent. They have also demonstrated that non-permanent membership does not preclude their substantive impact on the work of that organ, while addressing the various threats to international peace and security. Their non-permanent membership has never been a hindrance but rather an opportunity for those countries to promote proposals and important resolutions. For all those reasons, let us adhere to the content of decision 62/557. Let us negotiate a comprehensive reform of the Security Council that addresses the five main issues, based on the proposals of each and every Member State, in good faith and in an open, flexible, transparent manner, but without artificial dates or imposed texts, in order to achieve the broadest possible political agreement.

The reform of the Security Council must be an opportunity to transform the United Nations into a more effective and representative Organization. It must be a reform for all — not a reform for a few. Costa Rica reiterates its full willingness to collaborate in the process in a constructive and proactive manner.

Mrs. Tzerova (Bulgaria): I would like to begin by expressing our appreciation to the presidency for convening today's plenary dedicated to the central issue of Security Council reform and to welcome the commitment of the President of the General Assembly to encouraging enhanced dialogue among member States in order to move forward this important process.

Fifteen years after the adoption of the World Summit Outcome Document (resolution 60/1), the question of Security Council reform, as an essential part of the overall effort at making the United Nations better prepared to address contemporary challenges, remains as relevant as it was in 2005. The Bulgarian

delegation expects that during this year's jubilee seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, building on achievements of previous years, we will be able to reach tangible progress. My delegation calls for transparent, text-based intergovernmental negotiations, oriented towards attaining concrete results.

Bulgaria remains fully committed to the comprehensive reform of the Security Council, with the aim of turning it into a more broadly representative and more efficient body, better reflecting today's geopolitical realities. Let me reconfirm our view that greater legitimacy and representativeness of the Council could be achieved with the expansion of both existing categories of membership. The criteria for the selection of new permanent members should be the proven commitment and capacity to contribute extensively to the maintenance of international peace and security and the other purposes of the United Nations.

When expanding the non-permanent category, the need for an adequate and proportional representation of the current regional groups should be taken into consideration. In that context, Bulgaria reiterates its position on the need for allocating at least one additional non-permanent seat in the future enlarged Council to the Group of Eastern European States, whose membership has more than doubled in the past 30 years.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Wronecka and Ambassador Al-Thani for their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, and to pledge Bulgaria's full support for their endeavours to push the reform process forward.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): We welcome the convening of today's important and highly relevant debate 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 appreciate that the President has identified the reform of the Security Council as one of the key priorities of the presidency.

We would like to congratulate Ambassador Joanna Wronecka of Poland and Ambassador Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani of Qatar on their appointments as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations process on Security Council reform. I would like to reassure them of my delegation's unwavering support for the reform of the Security Council and trust that,

through their leadership, progress is possible in moving the intergovernmental negotiations process forward towards a tangible delivery of reform of the Council.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on behalf of the L.69 Group and the representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/75/PV.27). We wish to make the following additional remarks.

This year marks the seventy-fifth year since the Security Council was established in 1945. It also marks 55 years since the only expansion in the membership of the Security Council, which was limited to the non-permanent membership category only. In a little less than a month, on 11 December, we will mark the twenty-eighth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 47/62, which initiated the process in the General Assembly of the agenda item dealing with Security Council reform.

This year also marks 12 years since the start of the intergovernmental negotiations process in the hope that it would invigorate the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council that presented it, as well as 15 years since the 2005 World Summit, which unanimously agreed on an early reform of the Security Council.

It is with deep regret that, despite those efforts and dates we just mentioned in the intergovernmental negotiations process of reform, the Security Council has not produced any significant results. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations is a milestone in the history of the world. The theme of this year is the only option to deliver on the resolve of the Organization's collective membership to shape "The future we want, the United Nations we need".

Let us be clear — the Council of today is not reflective of the current realities of the world we live in. A broader membership has for over half a century rightfully reached a point where it demands to be represented in all organs of United Nations in a fully representative and equitable manner, which includes developing countries having a voice in both membership categories of the Security Council. Given the reality that most peace and security issues on the Council's agenda relate to our continent, Africa cannot remain unrepresented and excluded from being represented in

the permanent membership category of this organ of the United Nations.

Speaking from this very rostrum during the seventy-fourth session, on 28 September 2019, Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor underscored South African's priorities, when she made the following observations,

“[w]e remain gravely concerned that 74 years after the founding of the United Nations, key decisions on peace and security are the de facto domain of only five countries. Twenty years of discussions on reform of the Security Council have yielded no movement towards a more representative and inclusive body.

“We believe that the time has come for the broader membership to heed the overwhelming call for Africa to obtain at least two permanent seats, with all the prerogatives of permanent membership, as well as five non-permanent seats, as embodied in the Common African Position, adopted in the Ezulwini Consensus. In that regard, we must see an invigoration of the negotiations on reform at the intergovernmental negotiations, including by ensuring that we move to text-based negotiations.” (*A/74/PV.11, p. 46*).

It is with that in mind that South Africa urges all Member States, under the leadership of the co-Chairs, to take full advantage of the intergovernmental negotiations process during the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly to exert all their efforts towards achieving reform of the Security Council. We join other Member States that have called for us to explore options for moving forward the negotiations process, including the start of text-based negotiations and the establishment of a road map with clear time frames for the immediate normalization of the intergovernmental negotiations process.

South Africa believes the time has come for the intergovernmental negotiations process to adopt the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which would normalize the process and bring it into conformity with all other negotiations processes undertaken by this very important organ at some time in the Assembly Hall so that, in the end, Member States — not co-facilitators — own the outcome document and conclusions. That is normal.

We reiterate the view that we do not need to reinvent the proverbial wheel in the intergovernmental

negotiations process. The current revised document, produced during the seventy-first session of the intergovernmental negotiations process, is a positive step that we could build on. In our view, the revised document is far from perfect but is a move towards the next logical step of give-and-take negotiations. We believe that we will fulfil our mandate to reform the Security Council only when we are able to negotiate in an open and transparent manner, on the basis of a comprehensive operational text.

South Africa will also welcome an improved reflection of the Ezulwini Consensus in the revised document and an accurate articulation of the overwhelming support that the Common African Position has received. In a letter from the co-facilitators to the President of the General Assembly, they stated that,

“[t]here was a growing support expressed to redress the historical injustice against Africa and to ensure better African representation in the reformed Council in line with the Common African Position”.

And I would add — in line with the Ezulwini Consensus.

We will also continue to advocate for the expansion of permanent and non-permanent membership to ensure that all five subregions of Africa are represented in the Council. The reformed Council should have at least 26 seats.

Furthermore, my delegation welcomes with appreciation the unwavering support for the Ezulwini Consensus, voiced by more than 120 Heads of State of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM) during the eighteenth NAM summit, held in Baku last year, as reflected in the Baku outcome document. The movement, which comprises almost two thirds of all Member States of the United Nations and the General Assembly, is to be commended for joining the overwhelming support for the Common African Position, which includes the expansion of the permanent category.

We also call on the President to extend the intergovernmental negotiations process until August 2021, to make up for the loss suffered during the previous session when the process was so unceremoniously cut short due to the coronavirus disease pandemic. By not utilizing our time efficiently, we deny the process an adequate opportunity for the full discussions that can help us to deliver the United Nations we need. The

ending of the intergovernmental process four months before the session ends creates the impression that there is no urgency to this very important and long-standing process. It is therefore imperative that we invest time in the future we want and the United Nations we need.

The intergovernmental negotiations process should be concluded with a concrete outcome in the form of a formal General Assembly resolution, as opposed to continuously subscribing to an oral rollover decision that only perpetuates the state of inaction experienced in the intergovernmental negotiations.

Having said the aforementioned, my delegation would like to emphasize and reiterate the urgent need for a speedy reform of the Security Council. The world and the work of the Council have evolved and have become more complex, and indeed more pressing, over the past 75 years.

The unreformed structure of the Security Council runs the risk of losing legitimacy if the Assembly fails to urgently implement the necessary reform. The current stalemate in the Council and glaring failure of the Council in carrying out its historical mandate on the maintenance of peace and security is largely attributable to its current configuration, which is outdated. To put it simply, it no longer reflects the United Nations we need. It is for that reason that South Africa calls for urgent, practical steps to be taken during the thirteenth session of the intergovernmental negotiations process.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm my delegation's commitment to the comprehensive reform of the Security Council. In that regard, we remain committed to working with the President and other Member States to ensure that this session of intergovernmental negotiations is indeed a success. We reiterate our call to restore the credibility and legitimacy of the Council as one of the critical organs of the United Nations. We have an obligation to deliver on the mandate given to us by Heads of State in 2005 with regard to the reform of the Security Council. There can be no greater achievement during the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations than to have text-based negotiations.

Mr. Sparber (Liechtenstein): Liechtenstein thanks the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, the Permanent Representative of Poland and the Permanent Representative of Qatar, for taking on the demanding task to chair the intergovernmental negotiations. Liechtenstein will be a constructive voice in those

negotiations and support the co-Chairs' efforts to the best of its abilities.

Liechtenstein has consistently and actively contributed to the intergovernmental negotiations, first and foremost due to our belief that the mandate of the process, which is to reform and enlarge the Security Council, has not become less urgent, even if the protracted stalemate in our discussion might, at times, create a different perception. Liechtenstein continues to be hopeful for progress throughout this session if delegations are willing to overcome long-held positions and explore all avenues for compromise.

The difficult circumstances in which we find ourselves due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic should be further encouragement to use our best collective efforts for a United Nations that is effective and truly representative, including its most powerful Charter organ.

As is well known, Liechtenstein has suggested for the enlargement discussion an intermediate model with long-term renewable seats, without any additional veto rights. The intermediate model has the potential to better represent the geopolitical realities of today as well as the current membership of the United Nations. It is unacceptable that some regions, in particular Africa, are seriously underrepresented in the Security Council, while our own part of the world continues to be overrepresented.

However, enlargement does not equal reform or improved performance. Liechtenstein strongly believes that an enlarged Security Council also needs to improve its working methods. Who serves on the Council is certainly an essential question for its perception and credibility. How the Council goes about its daily business — how it carries out its functions — is no less important. While the current size and geographical representation of Security Council membership call for urgent reform — our lowest common denominator in the Assembly Hall — better work by and functioning of the Council in its current shape is also necessary, and maybe even more urgent.

Seventy-five years into its existence, at a time when the international rules-based order is under increasing pressure, the United Nations requires a Security Council able to tackle manifold and complex global challenges in a manner that better reflects the views of the membership of the Organization. As the COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to the

world, it has also instilled a deep and widespread sense of insecurity among our societies and accentuated the need for a more comprehensive security approach to the problems of today.

The Security Council has engaged in a welcome series of discussions on the broader security implications of the pandemic, as well as on climate change and other global challenges. It should systematically incorporate that broad security perspective into its work, thereby not only improving the impact of its deliberations and decisions but also contributing to the larger goals of the Organization, such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Yet we see the gap between the Council's mandate and its performance increase. The use of the veto to block Council decisions against a quantitative majority of nine votes has played a significant role in that respect. The effects of the increased use of the veto are detrimental to the United Nations as a whole, and the General Assembly has a legitimate interest in discussing situations on which the veto prevents the Security Council from acting.

Finally, Liechtenstein is committed to participating in the intergovernmental negotiations as frequently as the co-Chairs convene States, as we continue to believe in the importance of that exercise. The role and authority of the intergovernmental negotiations process depend on the good faith effort of all States, in particular those with fundamentally opposing positions, to indicate as much flexibility as possible, as well as the readiness of all to engage in true negotiations to find a way forward in a debate whose importance for the United Nations could hardly be overstated.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): I align myself with the statement made by His Excellency Mr. Alie Kabba, Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, in his capacity as Coordinator of the Committee of Ten of the African Union (see A/75/PV.27).

Allow me to begin my statement by reiterating the Republic of Equatorial Guinea's congratulations to the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session on his election and sincerely thanking him for convening today's debate on agenda item 127, on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and others matters related to the Security Council.

Allow me also to sincerely congratulate Her Excellency Ms. Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of Qatar, and Her Excellency Ms. Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of Poland, on their appointment and reappointment, respectively, as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on the question of the equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. I assure them of the full support of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea as they discharge their duties.

We thank and commend co-Chair Her Excellency Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, for her work and effective leadership of the intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-second, seventy-third and seventy-fourth sessions of the General Assembly.

The United Nations marked 75 years in existence in 2020. That is to say, the Organization is in its old age. A 75-year-old will have experienced significant physiognomic and physiological changes over time. However, to date there has been no significant change to the United Nations in general, or to the Security Council in particular. Although the number of States Members of the United Nations has quadrupled since its establishment in 1945 and the volume of work on its agenda increases daily, there has been no substantive change to its highest decision-making organ — the Security Council. The only change recorded was in 1965, when four non-permanent members were added.

For nearly two decades, the African Union has denounced the historical injustice of being the only region not represented with a permanent seat in the Security Council, despite having 54 members, or one third, of the number of United Nations Member States. African issues constitute 75 per cent of the items on the Security Council's agenda, and the African Union has remained firm in its support for decision 62/557, concerning a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects, taking into account their interrelationship.

Africa demands two permanent seats on the Security Council, with all the prerogatives enjoyed by other States in the same category, and two additional non-permanent seats, as clearly articulated in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. Are not 75 years enough time for the claims and aspirations of an entire continent of 54 countries to be recognized?

We have witnessed a number of sad episodes in which the Security Council has taken certain decisions in spite of the fact that all 54 African countries were against them. Therefore, Africa has experienced at first hand and more than any other group the negative effects of the current configuration of the Security Council.

At the virtual general debate of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly in September, His Excellency the President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, said:

“The organ that best portrays the current immobility of the United Nations is the Security Council, which clearly no longer reflects the reality of today’s world. Therefore, Equatorial Guinea remains firmly aligned with the demands contained in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, which state, in short, that Africa must not be underestimated or disadvantaged in any way. The historic injustices against the African continent must be repaired. It is ironic that, while African issues make up 75 per cent of the agenda of the Security Council, Africa’s voice is stifled and underprivileged in that organ when it comes to addressing issues of vital importance to the continent.” (*see A/75/PV.9, annex III*)

It is time for the principles of good governance, democracy, transparency and justice advocated by the United Nations to be reflected in the reform of its organs, especially the Security Council. It is time for genuine negotiations on the reform of the Security Council to take place within the intergovernmental negotiations process, and not simply as a dialogue, as is currently the case.

African demands are gaining increasing support from the majority of United Nations Member States. Let us therefore work with determination to correct the historical injustices suffered by the African continent by recognizing and fulfilling its demands and aspirations. In this new phase, despite the critical situation the world is currently facing due to the coronavirus disease pandemic, let us obtain tangible and concrete results for the reform of the Security Council.

Mr. Zuhuree (Maldives): I thank the President of the General Assembly for presiding over this debate on the important question of Security Council reform. I would also like to thank the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, the Permanent Representative of the United

Arab Emirates and the Permanent Representative of Poland, for their work in guiding us forward through this necessary process.

During an unprecedented worldwide pandemic, we are seeing more clearly than ever how the gravest threats to the security of our peoples can be addressed only through global cooperation and multilateral action. Rather than embracing such an approach, the Security Council has for too long left discussions of the most pressing security issues to a small, unrepresentative group of Member States and consolidated absolute decision-making authority in the hands of even fewer States.

The result is a Council whose membership and processes do not align with the provisions set forth in the Charter of the United Nations. Smaller States have unique perspectives and experiences to bring to the indispensable work of the Security Council, while larger States have a duty under the Charter to ensure that they are able to do so.

The Maldives believes that, in order to achieve equitable geographical distribution in the Security Council as required by Article 23 of the Charter, the number of permanent and non-permanent Council members must be increased. In order to fully reflect the diversity of United Nations Member States, such equitable distribution must also include membership for small and developing States, which face unique and equally pressing security challenges.

If Security Council membership is to sufficiently encompass small and developing States, increasing its membership will not be sufficient. The way in which members are elected must also change. It has become commonplace for Member States to spend heavily on election campaigns, to the disadvantage of States with limited resources and personnel. That disparity of resources is one of the very reasons that developing States must be better represented on the Council, and it should not represent a cost-prohibitive barrier to membership. To address that inequity, discussions on Security Council reform should include the topics of campaign transparency and spending limits.

Reform is necessary to ensure that the Security Council can capably address emerging and non-traditional security threats and threat multipliers, including climate change, rising sea levels and pandemics. The Maldives commends the efforts of the Security Council members that have sought to insert

climate-related issues in the Council's agenda, but in order for the Council to fully comprehend and address the intersection of climate and security, the voices of small island developing States must be more prominent on the Council itself.

The Maldives has also proposed more routine dialogue among the Security Council, the General Assembly and other relevant United Nations bodies to ensure that the Council can meet those and other emerging security challenges as effectively as possible.

As the most empowered organ of the United Nations, it is imperative that the Security Council remain representative of the Organization's general membership, responsive to Member States' security concerns and legitimate in the eyes of those Member States and their citizens. It is clear that the Security Council as it was designed in 1945 is no longer fit for those purposes. If the Security Council is to protect the peoples of the world from today's security threats, it must be reformed without delay to reflect today's political realities.

Mr. Espinosa Cañizares (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to begin my statement by thanking Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Ambassador Joanna Wronecka of Poland for their leadership during the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform.

We regret that the complexities of the process have been compounded by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which will undoubtedly impact this year's discussions. I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Wronecka and Ambassador Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of Qatar, on their appointments to co-Chair the process, which we must now accelerate.

Ecuador will continue to advocate for the urgently needed reform of the Security Council. We need a more democratic, representative, transparent and effective Council that reflects the reality of today's world and the membership of the Organization. We must achieve a broader and more participatory Council for Member States. We note with concern that, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Security Council has become even less participatory.

For example, we regret that countries that have not held a seat in the Council since April are not allowed to contribute to open debates except in writing, even though the technology exists to overcome that problem. That shows that the provisional rules of procedure are not sufficient to achieve a more inclusive Council. We need to broaden our discussions to move towards intelligent reform.

We must end the underrepresentation of developing countries from some regions, such as Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. We must provide fair representation for the various transregional groups of developing countries, such as small island States. The reform must also include dependable mechanisms for coordination, feedback and information for States Members of the United Nations. In order to achieve a more transparent Council, we must give special attention to promoting a genuine modernization of working methods. We must prioritize public Council meetings.

If we contrast the joint statement signed by 172 countries in support of the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire with the nearly four-month delay until the Security Council adopted resolution 2532 (2020), on COVID-19, we can clearly see that something fundamental is not working in the Council. The reform we seek must end the hierarchical nature of its membership, in which the power of the veto plays a negative role. Security Council privileges resulted from geopolitical scenarios that no longer exist and correspond to the realities of the past century.

That brings me to my next point. Reform is urgently needed, but it cannot be just any reform. The reform we are to achieve should not increase inequalities among States but rather diminish and ideally eradicate them. Neither should that reform be at the expense of the security and stability achieved so far at the global level. It would be a mistake to think of negotiations on Security Council reform as a zero-sum contest between a more participatory model and a peace and security compact.

Is there any better way to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations than to bring about more solid and effective bodies? In order for any such reform to be substantive and lasting, it must be comprehensive and the product of broad and meaningful input from the membership. Whatever its outcome, it will impact the United Nations system and, consequently, multilateralism itself.

To that end, we must pursue the process in a spirit of flexibility and mutual respect to garner the greatest possible amount of support. Achieving results requires flexibility on the part of all delegations, not just certain groups of determined countries. Accordingly, Ecuador believes that sufficient time should be provided for the intergovernmental negotiation process, which should begin as soon as possible during this session and should not be ended by artificial deadlines before discussions have been exhausted on all substantive issues in the course of 2021.

Ms. Bavdaž Kuret (Slovenia): I thank you, Sir, for organizing this important yearly debate. As in previous years, the hope is that the process of reforming the Security Council will gain enough momentum to make substantial progress.

At the outset, let me thank the co-Chairs of the previous process, my dear Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates, Lana Nusseibeh, and Joanna Wronecka of Poland. I would like to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Poland, Joanna Wronecka, once again, and the Permanent Representative of Qatar, Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, on their appointments as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly. They have a difficult task ahead of them, but they have our support and we are confident in their abilities to steer us forward.

I will focus my remarks on six key points for Slovenia.

First, with regard to reform: it is high time to commit to the reform of the Security Council to make it more representative and reflective of the realities in the international community, as well as more accountable, effective and transparent.

Secondly, with regard to the process, we would like the intergovernmental negotiations to be a more efficient and effective process. That means a process that is results-oriented. One way to achieve that goal is to start a proper negotiation process on the basis of a concrete negotiating text, with a view to narrowing gaps and facilitating consensus. The intergovernmental negotiations should also be a more transparent and open process, which could be achieved by applying the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

During the previous session, the intergovernmental negotiation process was cut short by the coronavirus

disease pandemic. However, two meetings were held, and we should avoid wasting time by repeating them. For the sake of efficiency, the intergovernmental negotiations during the current session should be a continuation of the previous ones.

Thirdly, with regard to working methods and their relation to the General Assembly, the Security Council and the General Assembly should work in a mutually reinforcing and complementary way. The revised elements paper prepared during the seventy-third session provides a wide range of ideas and best practices. We also value the submission of more analytical annual reports by the Security Council to the General Assembly. We join others in calling for a more timely, substantial and analytical annual report.

Fourthly, with regard to the question of representation, we support the calls for more equitable representation in the Council. We believe that Africa has a particularly strong case for demanding more seats in the reformed Council. A greater voice should also be given to small developing States, while ensuring that the elections process allows all countries an equal chance of being elected. We believe that some groups are underrepresented on the Council, and we call for a non-permanent seat for the Group of Eastern European States. It is a fact that the membership of the Group has tripled in the past 30 years.

Fifthly, with regard to the use of the veto, the right of the veto should never be abused or used in a way that blocks action where action is most needed. As a member of Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, Slovenia advocates the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, to which more than 120 countries have subscribed.

Sixthly, with regard to the categories of membership, the Charter of the United Nations provides for two categories of membership — permanent and non-permanent. For any change in either of those categories, we believe that the Charter would have to be amended accordingly. However, we support the expansion of membership in both categories, and we welcome discussion of other possible solutions.

This process started decades ago when reform of the Security Council was urgently needed. That has not changed. It remains needed more urgently than ever. We are facing an ever-growing number of global challenges. At the same time, we are in the grip of a

global pandemic. This year we are marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. Let us make it count with concrete progress in our discussions.

Mr. Takht Ravanchi (Islamic Republic of Iran): The international community continues to call for Security Council reform, which emanates from the fact that the Council is not keeping pace with the significant changes of our time. Its actions have not been consistently in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, and it is not truly representative, transparent, accountable and rules-based. Likewise, in many cases, the Security Council has been inactive and ineffective. In certain cases, its actions have been *ultra vires*, and it also has been seriously exploited by certain permanent members.

The Council's legitimacy and credibility crisis, as well as its serious trust and confidence deficit, is the direct result of that situation. At a time when the promotion of multilateralism is a high priority for the overwhelming majority of Member States, the Council's reform is both critical and urgently needed because a truly reformed Council can greatly contribute to multilateralism.

Nevertheless, in carrying out that highly sensitive task, all five core issues must be discussed comprehensively in a package, and none of them should be considered less important than the others. That must be done with the utmost prudence, while taking into account the lessons learned and the realities of our time. For example, if we cannot ensure that the members of a reformed Council are accountable for their action or inaction, we will certainly face the same problems that we want to address now.

While developing countries must be more fairly represented in the Council, its reform should not be reduced to, or be equated solely with, its enlargement, as the Council's expansion is not an end in and of itself but a means to an end. The Security Council's enlargement must be only one of our multiple objectives. An expanded Council will be useful only if the enlargement can transform it into a truly democratic, representative, transparent, efficient, effective and, above all, rules-based and accountable body.

The composition of an expanded Council must also be balanced, both geopolitically and geographically. While the Group of Western European and other States is overrepresented in the Council, the other regional groups are poorly represented in terms of number and

enjoy fewer rights and privileges in terms of permanent membership. In order to prevent the domination of a certain regional or geopolitical group over the Council, that disproportionality and injustice must be addressed and rectified and the provision of equal opportunities for all States to become a Council member must also be ensured.

We strongly reject the use of the Security Council as a tool to pursue national political interests and agendas. Therefore, necessary measures must be taken to ensure that the decisions of a reformed Council will be not be based on the national interests of its members but the common interests of the entire United Nations membership. It is also critical to ensure that a reformed Council will be prevented from considering situations that do not constitute a threat to international peace and security, or issues that are related to the internal affairs of States, which is explicitly prohibited by the Charter.

At the same time, it is essential to reform the Council's working methods to ensure its transparency and accountability, as well as strict adherence to the Charter. That would prevent the Council from resorting to its Chapter VII functions too frequently or hastily. As stated by many Member States during the intergovernmental negotiations meetings, Chapter VII functions, including sanctions, must be applied only as a measure of last resort, if necessary, and after all means of peaceful settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the Charter have been exhausted and a thorough consideration has been undertaken of their short-term and long-term effects, thereby avoiding unintended consequences, in particular for civilians and the provision of humanitarian assistance.

Sanctions are a blunt instrument, the use of which raises fundamental ethical questions about whether suffering inflicted on vulnerable groups is a legitimate means of exerting pressure on the targeted country. In addition, transforming the Council into a truly rules-based and accountable body must remain a top priority. Likewise, the issue of the veto must remain as one of the main elements of deliberations.

In addition, the deliberations of the intergovernmental negotiations process should impose neither delay nor hasty decisions, nor artificial deadlines. At the same time, text-based negotiations at this stage seem to be premature. Likewise, any possible decision on the subject at any stage must be adopted only by consensus.

Mr. Fodda (France) (*spoke in French*): Every year, many of us speak in the general debate to stress the importance of the reform of the Security Council. The successive co-Chairs of the process initiated by the General Assembly have redoubled their efforts to enable the adoption of useful documents. Nevertheless, real negotiations have yet to take place.

The process has been long and frustrating in many ways. The useful framework provided for by the intergovernmental negotiations must lead to tangible and substantial results, or will risk losing the confidence of States Members. Although the health crisis interrupted our discussions during the seventy-fourth session, it is not too late to create new momentum during the anniversary year of the Organization.

To that end, we must establish a framework. In that regard, we first of all welcome the early appointment of the co-Chairs. We congratulate Ambassadors Wronecka and Al-Thani on their appointments and underscore the crucial role conferred upon them.

Secondly, we share the hope that the intergovernmental negotiations will begin in January 2021, while ramping up the pace of our discussions into the summer. We also believe that now is the time to decide on what measures should be taken to ensure the continuity of our work, should Headquarters close once again owing to the pandemic.

Finally, we support the proposals to provide greater transparency concerning the negotiations. In that regard, we would like to see the positions of all groups and Member States compiled and made freely accessible.

Like many other members of the Assembly, France believes that negotiations must be launched based on a draft text. That familiar process, which the Organization uses systematically, will enable us to avoid the endless repetition of positions that we are already familiar with. We acknowledge that is a difficult task, but we can capitalize on the work done in past sessions. In particular, decision 73/554, adopted during the seventy-third session, limits to two the number of documents serving as the basis for discussions, thereby preventing the fragmentation of our work.

The current goal is to arrive at a single document. To that end, we call on all delegations to work in a collective spirit so that we can transform divergent elements into convergent ones during this session. We are convinced that it is indeed up to the Assembly and

each Member State to assume its responsibilities in that regard.

Concerning the reform as such, France's position is consistent and well known. We would like the Council to take into account the emergence of new Powers that are willing and able to assume the responsibility of a permanent presence on the Security Council and that are in a position, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, to make a significant contribution to the Council's work.

France is in favour of the Council's expansion in both membership categories. We therefore support the candidacies of Brazil, Germany, India and Japan as permanent members of the Security Council. We also wish to see a stronger presence of African countries among both the permanent and non-permanent members. An enlarged Council could have up to 25 members, including new permanent and non-permanent members, which would make the Security Council more representative of today's world and strengthen its authority while preserving its executive and operational nature.

In addition, with regard to the issue of the veto, which we know is a highly sensitive one, it is up to the States requesting a permanent seat to decide. In that context, the objective must remain twofold: on the one hand, the legitimacy of the Security Council must be consolidated; on the other, its capacity to fully assume its responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security must be strengthened.

In that spirit, 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. That voluntary step does not require a revision of the Charter but a political commitment by the permanent members. That initiative, which we are promoting jointly with Mexico, is supported by 105 countries. We call on all Member States that have not yet done so to support the initiative, especially the other permanent members of the Security Council, in order to swiftly reach the symbolic two-thirds majority of the General Assembly.

Mr. Hossain (Bangladesh): I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the President for convening the meeting and for his commitment to pursuing the process of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform.

I join others in congratulating Her Excellency Ms. Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland, and Her Excellency Ms. Alya Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar, on their appointments as the co-Chairs of the current session of the intergovernmental negotiations. I also commend the valuable work done by the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, Her Excellency Ms. Lana Nusseibeh, over the past years.

As we celebrate its seventy-fifth anniversary, the United Nations stands at a crossroads. It has recorded many successes; however, it has been marred by a litany of challenges as well. The United Nations needs to be further strengthened in order to achieve more successes in the future.

Reforming the Security Council to make it more inclusive, representative, transparent and effective and to demonstrate greater cooperation and consensus-building therefore remains critical to the Organization's overall success. Unfortunately, we have spent far too long on the question of Security Council reform. It is high time that we come to grips with the difficult choices to be made. That is ever-more important in the present context, in which there is rising concern worldwide about the possible decline of multilateralism.

We are encouraged by Member States' resounding call to States for reform. That united voice should guide us in taking the intergovernmental negotiations process forward in a meaningful way. A significant number of Member States are working to carry forward the intergovernmental negotiations discussions in a decisive way. We also noted the interest of some Member States in an inclusive approach based on dialogue and in-depth discussions. Building on the important work done in past sessions would be useful in that regard.

The due representativeness of the Council, taking present day realities into account, lies at the core of its reform. We are of the view that Council membership should be enlarged in both categories, yet the expansion should not be so great as to affect its effectiveness and operation. Any size in the mid-twenties range would perhaps do justice to the larger membership.

Yet it should not be about the numbers alone, but rather about the makeup of representation. In that context, we agree with many other Member States that certain underrepresented regions, such as Africa, ought to have due representation in the enlarged Council. Asia-Pacific and Latin American countries deserve

the same. The representation of small and developing countries also warrants due consideration. Regional representation is expected to create opportunities for all interested Member States to have a presence at the Council, but that has to be calibrated and optimized within the overall expansion of the Council. That will add to its envisioned representativeness.

As for Council working methods, generally we wish to see a more accessible, transparent, accountable, democratic, responsible and effective Security Council. The global coronavirus disease pandemic presents an opportunity for the Security Council to adjust to new working methods and adapt to provisional measures. We have been working under the new realities for several months, demonstrating that, if Member States are willing and exercise nimbleness, it is possible to explore ways of becoming more transparent, efficient and effective while also forging closer ties with the broader United Nations membership.

On the question of the veto, our delegation will go along with the emerging convergence among Member States, yet the call for ensuring the judicious application of the veto, perhaps in the form of limiting its application in certain situations, cannot be ignored.

We also reaffirm the central role played by the General Assembly in Security Council reform. The relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council has to be mutually reinforcing. Some form of institutionalization in that regard could be useful.

In view of the overwhelming call by Member States, we see merit in focusing our deliberations on commencing a text-based negotiation. Evolving convergence on the issue would be something to look at.

We remain committed to the reform of the Council, which in our view requires first and foremost the commitment and political will of Member States. We therefore continue to urge Member States to step up cooperation. We look forward to the outcome of the current session of intergovernmental negotiations with high expectations.

Ms. Mwangi (Kenya): Let me begin by thanking the President for prioritizing the inclusion of this agenda item on the reform of the Security Council, which is a demonstration of his commitment to moving the reform agenda forward.

Allow me also to commend the appointments of Her Excellency Ambassador Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland, and Her Excellency Ambassador Alya Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar, to co-facilitate this session of intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. They certainly have a challenging job ahead of them, but we have every confidence that they are equal to the task, and I assure them of Kenya's support.

Kenya aligns itself with the very comprehensive statement delivered this morning by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States on the Common African Position, as articulated in the Ezulwini Consensus and affirmed in the Sirte Declaration (see A/75/PV.27).

The reform of the Security Council is of critical importance, not only to the work of the Security Council but to the United Nations system as a whole. The coronavirus disease pandemic has highlighted not only the importance of multilateralism in dealing with global challenges but also the need for reform.

In our world today, we are facing the kind of challenges that, by character, transcend nation States and defy the pursuit of unilateral policies to address them. As the global situation continues to evolve, we too, in solidarity, must evolve. This year, as we celebrate 75 years of the United Nations, there is no better time for us to transform it.

The 2015 framework document, as well as the outcome papers of previous sessions, clearly indicates the various positions of Member States. We need to build on that work by capitalizing on the existing momentum. It is up to us to ensure that the reform of the Security Council moves forward in accordance with the five principles outlined in decision 62/557 in a comprehensive, transparent and balanced manner that takes into consideration all positions and all regions in order to garner the widest possible political acceptance by our members.

In conclusion, we take note with appreciation of the letter from the co-Chairs of the past session to the previous President of the General Assembly detailing the assessment of the session, especially its reflection on the broad support that the Common African Position enjoys among Member States, which we expect will be taken into account in moving this agenda forward.

Kenya looks forward to working actively with our delegations in the intergovernmental negotiations process towards our common goal of a Security Council that reflects today's integrated global society and adequately represents the diversity of Member States.

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): Allow me, at the outset, to join others in congratulating Ambassador Joanna Wronecka of Poland and Ambassador Alya Al-Thani on their recent appointments as co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We are grateful to them for taking up that important responsibility, and we look forward to working with them closely during this session.

The United Kingdom's strong support for Security Council reform is long-standing and our position is well known. The United Kingdom supports modest expansion of the Security Council in both its permanent and non-permanent categories. We support the creation of new permanent seats for India, Germany, Japan and Brazil, as well as permanent African representation on the Council. We also support a modest expansion of the non-permanent category of membership, taking the Security Council's total membership to somewhere in the mid-twenties.

Those changes, we believe, would enable the Security Council to better reflect the twenty-first century and the world as it is today, 75 years on from the founding of the United Nations. They would make for a more representative Security Council that is better able to address challenges to international peace and security by drawing on the perspectives and expertise of a wider range of the United Nations membership. It is also a model for reform that would preserve the Council's ability to respond nimbly and decisively to threats around the globe.

On the question of the veto, the United Kingdom has long maintained that disagreement in that area should not prevent progress in other areas where reform is possible. For our own part, the United Kingdom has refrained from using the veto since 1989 — over three decades ago. As supporters of the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, we remain committed to never vetoing a credible draft resolution preventing or ending a mass atrocity. We encourage all States, including other permanent members of the Security Council, to join us in that regard.

Before concluding, I will turn briefly to the upcoming intergovernmental negotiations at this session. We continue to believe that the intergovernmental negotiations process is a valuable mechanism for Member States to take the discussion on Security Council reform forward. Nevertheless, as we set out in this debate last year (see A/74/PV.34), we continue to sympathize with Member States that express concern and frustration over the lack of progress made to date. We remain open, as before, to all ideas for moving the process forward at an accelerated rate, including by formalizing and recording the intergovernmental negotiations or by moving to text-based negotiations.

Finally, as the President noted in his letter dated 30 October, the previous session's meetings were unexpectedly curtailed because of measures put in place to mitigate the coronavirus disease pandemic. During this session, we are open to all options that would allow us to work around the pandemic, including by participating in virtual meetings if required.

In the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1), we committed to instil new life into our efforts to reform the Security Council. We look forward to working this year to fulfil that commitment.

Mr. Tozik (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council must be able to respond to contemporary challenges. Adapting the Council to today's global realities is a prerequisite for the effective work of the United Nations. We welcome the efforts of United Nations States Members to establish a broad dialogue on the development of ways to reform the Council. We are actively participating in negotiations and are in favour of concrete models for reform, including those that propose creating additional seats in a renewed Council for the Eastern European regional group.

We reiterate that the movement towards reform must take into account the needs of each State, while remaining inclusive and based on dialogue and a common understanding of our shared goal. The principles of transparency and openness must not be neglected.

Discussing how the Council should be reformed is a process that belongs entirely to Member States. That is why all issues of reform must remain subject to consultations within the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations as the only legitimate instrument enshrined in the decisions of the General

Assembly. Any proposal to introduce non-consensual changes to the model of intergovernmental negotiations or to remove the dialogue from that universally recognized platform will lead to an impasse.

We need to adhere to a clear timetable for the holding of the intergovernmental negotiations. We believe that prolonging the meetings of the annual sessions indefinitely or arbitrarily increasing the number of rounds will not contribute to productive work.

The gap in the approaches of States to the parameters of reform is very wide. None of the proposed configurations have obtained any significant support so far. Again, it is impossible to resolve those contradictions by simply increasing the number of meetings.

It is extremely important that we adhere to a simple but fundamental rule: while the polarized views of States persist, we must continue to work through all problematic issues in a gradual and detailed manner through balanced and rational dialogue.

Once again, we draw attention to the fact that, given the shortcomings of the outcomes of the negotiation process on Security Council reform, talk of starting so-called text-based negotiations is premature. There are neither procedural nor substantive grounds for that. We believe that it is unacceptable to apply a majority formula in crafting the decisions of the negotiation process, which must be based exclusively on the principle of consensus.

Reform is our common goal and must be based on equality and mutual trust. It is aimed at improving the work of our Organization, in which all States of the world are represented without exception. To disregard the principle of consensus is to commit an irreparable mistake and to jeopardize the very functioning of the United Nations.

Mr. Koba (Indonesia): We thank the President for convening today's important deliberations.

We would like to join others in congratulating Ambassador Al-Thani of Qatar and Ambassador Wronecka of Poland on their appointments to steward the new round of intergovernmental negotiations. We also thank Ambassador Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and the reappointed co-Chair, Ambassador Wronecka of Poland, for their hard work and dedication throughout previous sessions.

Meaningful progress on the difficult issue of Security Council reform has been elusive thus far. As we commemorated the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations this year, our leaders adopted by consensus the vital Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1). Let us recall that they committed to instil new life into the discussions on the reform of the Security Council.

In our view, it is hopeful to see that the vast majority of United Nations States Members are in favour of the Council's reform. Those reforms will enable it to maintain international peace and security effectively, while ensuring that this crucial organ is democratic, accountable and representative of the world's plurality today. In that context, Indonesia underlines the following.

First, flexibility in ensuring business continuity in the intergovernmental negotiations must be strengthened. We had an opportunity, during the previous round of intergovernmental negotiations, to utilize the momentum of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. However, our meetings were unable to continue due to circumstances related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. We should not let that happen twice.

Indonesia is of the view that, whatever mix of in-person and online meetings is followed during the upcoming round, we must ensure that the intergovernmental negotiations process continues robustly. Not only the innocent people mired in conflicts around the world but our own people, too, want the United Nations to remain credible and to strengthen its efforts to maintain international peace and security through the Council reform process.

Secondly, we must prioritize practical ways to achieve the low-hanging fruit of this process. The world cannot wait indefinitely for the reform process to complete itself. While disagreements between certain countries and groups on some of the key reform questions are well known, they cannot be the fait accompli that prevents advancement.

Convergence is also present on a number of critical issues. For example, there is considerable support from a wide range of countries across different groups to have a voluntary mechanism against the use of the veto in the face of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.

An intermediate approach to membership categories, with a clear review mechanism, is also a concept that resonates with many countries, including Indonesia.

There is also a strong desire among the vast majority to improve the Council's working methods and make it more accessible and participatory for the non-permanent Council members and those outside the Council in a meaningful manner.

There are certain issues on which there would be fewer disagreements in the intergovernmental negotiations process, thereby making concrete outcomes more likely and enabling the Council to perform its work effectively.

That brings me to my third point, concerning the expansion of elements of convergence. While every country and group should continue to be free to restate their positions, the intergovernmental negotiations will benefit from more discussion with a view to enhancing convergence.

We appreciate the early appointment of co-Chairs by the President of the General Assembly and note the suggestion for an early start to the intergovernmental negotiations process in 2021. Since some important meetings of the previous session of the Assembly are being rescheduled in the current session, that is more of a reason to start early and have a wholesome and results-oriented discussion on the reform issue. The paper on revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration, which was prepared by the previous co-Chairs, constitutes one basis on which to activate our coming discussions.

Indonesia, for its part, will continue to offer its constructive approach. We will fully contribute to attempts to bridge differences so that the process can advance smoothly and a cogent reform can be realized.

As members may know, Indonesia will be concluding its two-year non-permanent membership of the Security Council next month. We participated in numerous initiatives with a view to strengthening the Council's working methods under the work of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, which met this year under the chairmanship of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

In May, the 10 elected members of the Council also delivered their second joint statement regarding working methods, addressing the issues of transparency, efficiency, effectiveness, inclusiveness and the equal

distribution of work among all members of the Council, as well as ensuring the agility of the Council during the unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic. That is a testament to our continued determination to make concrete steps in ensuring that the Council is more responsive to the multifaceted challenges before it.

In conclusion, allow me to stress how imperative it is for the intergovernmental negotiations process to be fully reflective of Member States' positions. But in order for it to bear fruit, all countries — certainly those with special Council privileges — need to work and cooperate constructively.

Indonesia will detail its positions on all five key Council reform issues at the upcoming meetings. We hope that all Member States will work together with a greater sense of collective responsibility and acceptance of practical approaches that can lead to concrete reforms that enjoy the widest political agreement.

Ms. Mägi (Estonia): Allow me to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's debate.

At the outset, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates and the Permanent Representative of Poland for leading the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during the previous session of the General Assembly. We also congratulate the Permanent Representative of Poland and the Permanent Representative of Qatar on their appointments as co-Chairs of the upcoming negotiations during this General Assembly session.

We take note of the fact that, after two sessions in February and March, the process of intergovernmental negotiations has since been halted due to the coronavirus disease pandemic.

As we are celebrating a remarkable achievement of multilateralism — the creation of the United Nations 75 years ago — we regret the lack of progress on the reform of the Security Council, which bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Estonia advocates for a meaningful, results-oriented process to reform the Security Council. The main goal of the reform endeavours should be a strengthened United Nations, increased ownership of the Security Council's work and the accountability of the Council to the United Nations membership.

Taking into account the reality of the considerable increase in the membership of the United Nations since the previous — and to date the only — enlargement of the Security Council's membership, in 1963, there is a clear need for increased membership of the Security Council based upon equitable representation.

In our deliberations concerning an enlarged Council, the question of the veto must be given careful consideration. The use of the veto or the threat of use of the veto by some members of the Security Council often renders the Council unable to react in situations in which its action is most needed.

It is Estonia's clear position that the permanent members of the Security Council should, voluntarily and collectively, commit to refrain from using the veto to block Council action to prevent or end situations involving mass atrocity crimes. Furthermore, as a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, Estonia actively supports the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Those two initiatives share a common goal and are complementary.

In conclusion, let me reiterate the call for concrete and meaningful steps by the United Nations membership to advance our common goal of making the Security Council more representative, effective, transparent and therefore more legitimate.

Mr. Vongxay (Lao People's Democratic Republic): Allow me to begin by thanking the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting and commending him for his commitment to the process of Security Council reform.

I also extend our congratulations to the Permanent Representative of Poland and the Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar on their appointments as co-Chairs of this session of intergovernmental negotiations.

As we mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations this year, we have witnessed how, despite remarkable progress, our global situation is becoming increasingly complex and unpredictable, which poses serious threats to peace and security and adverse impacts the development of countries and regions around the world. We therefore need a robust, responsive and effective United Nations that is relevant to all.

Against that backdrop, the United Nations, including the Security Council, must be reformed in a manner that would enable it better to fulfil its mandates and functions and respond to the current needs and challenges facing us. My delegation reiterates its support for the reform of the Security Council through the intergovernmental negotiations process, which remains a core platform and should be pursued in a comprehensive, transparent, inclusive and balanced manner.

In that reform process, the Lao People's Democratic Republic reaffirms its support for the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership of the Security Council by taking into account the interests of both developing and developed States Members of the United Nations and equitable geographic representation on the basis of the relevant decisions of the General Assembly, especially decision 62/557, in order to achieve a consensus outcome that is acceptable to all.

Let me conclude by reaffirming our full support for that process and expressing our hope that all positions and proposals of Member States will be carefully considered and that meaningful progress can be made in our collective efforts at this session.

Mr. Imnadze (Georgia): At the outset, let me join colleagues in extending my congratulations to our dear colleagues and friends Ambassadors Joanna Wronecka of Poland and Alya Al-Thani of Qatar on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations and to wish them every success. I also extend particular thanks to my dear colleague Lana Nusseibeh, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, for all her hard work throughout the past three years.

Georgia fully supports the proposal of the President of the General Assembly to start intergovernmental negotiations as early as 2021 and to increase the number of meetings at that session, considering that the seventy-fourth session was cut short owing to the mitigation measures aimed at containing the spread of the coronavirus disease. Furthermore, we are ready to resume our discussions and continue the previous session exactly from where we had to stop last year. Along with other countries and groups of countries, we support the initiative to start the text-based negotiations, as that is the normal practice of the negotiations process at the United Nations.

During past sessions, Georgia submitted and voiced its positions on Security Council reform, which cover all five aspects of the reform. We support the reform of the Council in terms of its equitable representation and enlargement. We encourage the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership, as that will increase the legitimacy, authority and credibility of the Council. Our particular priority is the allocation of additional seats to the Eastern European Group, so that we have better regional representation and parity in the Council. At the same time, we support the allocation of additional seats for the Group of African States, in line with the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. An unambiguous expression of support for the legitimate aspirations of the African continent is growing, and I am pleased to acknowledge that.

Furthermore, we stand for the inclusion of small States in decision-making in order for the basic principle of international law of sovereign equality between nations to be more explicitly reflected at the core of the international security architecture.

However, as we noted in past years, and based on our own gruesome experience, we believe that a meaningful reform should also imply reform of the use of the veto, the working methods and decision-making principles of the Security Council, as well as greater accountability before the General Assembly.

We are convinced that the right to veto should be restricted when the decision of the Security Council aims to prevent crimes against humanity, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and genocide and in cases where a Member is involved in the conflict under consideration and therefore cannot exercise its rights impartially. Important underpinnings for such a restriction already exist in the Charter of the United Nations, namely, in Article 27, which states that in a series of specific important decisions, "a party to a dispute shall abstain from voting". That principle of the Charter must be upheld, and the intergovernmental negotiations has to address this issue to find ways to ensure its effective implementation.

In that regard, let me once again reiterate my country's full support for the political statement on the suspension of the veto in case of mass atrocities, presented by France and Mexico during the seventieth session of the General Assembly, and the Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against

genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, spearheaded by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group.

We further believe that there must be greater openness in the work of the Council so that its deliberations are made in a more transparent and democratic manner.

In conclusion, let me underline that we firmly believe in the need for a stronger United Nations, which is more important than ever given the circumstances, and to make substantial progress in Security Council reform this year, and we stand ready to cooperate with the intergovernmental negotiations co-Chairs to advance that process. After all, as the President of the General Assembly mentioned in his opening statement (see A/75/PV.27), the United Nations has no other option but to reform, and the reform of the Security Council is, of course, at the very heart of it.

Mr. Tshosar (Bhutan): At the outset, my delegation wishes to thank the President of the General Assembly for having convened 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.

Bhutan welcomes the early appointment of Her Excellency Ambassador Alya Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar, and the reappointment of Her Excellency Ambassador Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland, as the co-Chairs of the current session of the intergovernmental negotiations. We wish them every success. We extend our appreciation to Her Excellency Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, for her contributions as co-Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations during the past three sessions.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on behalf of the L.69 group (see A/75/PV.27). Please allow me to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Equitable representation in the Security Council has been a feature of the General Assembly's agenda for more than 40 years. Yet we have so little to show for it in terms of progress due to the protracted divergence of views on how to achieve such reform. As we meet on this matter in the thirteenth year of the existence of the

intergovernmental negotiations, Bhutan believes that we must seize the opportunity provided by the seventy-fifth anniversary of our Organization to breathe life into language to which we all committed on that occasion to instil new life into our efforts to achieve Security Council reform.

Many world leaders, in their addresses to the high-level week of the current session of the General Assembly in September, underscored the need to strengthen multilateralism. My Prime Minister, His Excellency Lyonchen Lotay Tshering, strongly called for Security Council reform during the Assembly's general debate on 25 September (see A/75/PV.11). Indeed, as is the case with a number of addresses by the leaders of other Member States, this has been a consistent element in our national statements before the Assembly for a number of years.

My delegation considers that reform of the Security Council is an integral part of strengthening multilateralism. Bhutan, like many other Member States, believes that the reform and expansion of the Security Council are necessary for the Council's continued legitimacy, effective decision-making and greater accountability to the general membership. Every institution must adapt and evolve to stay relevant and fit for purpose in order to address the multifaceted challenges of the twenty-first century.

My delegation reiterates its position in support of equitable geographical representation so as to ensure adequate representation of under- or unrepresented regions. At present, entire continents and regions have no representation or are under-represented in the Security Council.

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

We are encouraged by the early appointment of the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations and are hopeful that this will lead to an early start of our meetings, as well to make up for the precious time

lost at the previous session owing to the coronavirus disease pandemic.

The call by vast numbers of delegations for the application of the General Assembly rules of procedure to the intergovernmental negotiations process must be heeded. We see the maintenance of records and live webcasts as essential to enhancing the openness, inclusiveness and transparency of the process.

As we embark on the next session of the intergovernmental negotiations, we request the new co-Chairs to build on the outcomes of previous sessions. Updating the elements paper after each round of meetings and introducing attributions of Member States' positions into the paper would greatly help that process.

My delegation is hopeful that this year's session of the intergovernmental negotiations will engender meaningful progress under the able leadership of the President of the General Assembly. To that end, my delegation looks forward to engaging constructively with all other delegations.

Mr. Shava (Zimbabwe): I wish to thank the President of the General Assembly for having convened this plenary meeting on the intergovernmental negotiations on matters related to the Security Council.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Committee of Ten of the African Union (see A/75/PV.27), and I wish to emphasize the following six points in my national capacity.

My delegation looks forward to working with the entire membership of the General Assembly in building consensus, in accordance with decision 62/557, and with the Common African Position, as espoused in the Ezulwini Consensus and reaffirmed in the Sirte Declaration. That position demands

“not less than two permanent seats with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership, including the right to veto, for as long as it subsists and as a matter of common justice to all permanent Council members”.

In addition, Africa demands five non-permanent seats and no less than 26 seats in total in an enlarged Security Council. The selection of African representatives to the permanent category and

the selection criteria will be determined by the African Union.

My second point is that the African position, which enjoys maybe the broadest support among Member States, is a viable option for making the Council more representative, democratic and more effective; therefore, it is not an option but an imperative. Any delay in addressing the status quo means perpetuating and compounding an injustice while also denying Africa's rightful place in a major decision-making body of the United Nations.

The overwhelming majority of African Members wish to take a holistic approach to the reform of the Security Council, engaging on substantive matters in all five key clusters of reform. It should be noted that achieving consensus on those matters would be the first step towards producing a text that takes into consideration the interests of all Member States. That approach, we believe, will ensure continuity in the work of the intergovernmental negotiations, leading to meaningful progress, bearing in mind that the intergovernmental negotiations process is Member State-driven. Any attempt to undertake a piecemeal approach would further undermine the Council's legitimacy.

While it is generally understood and accepted that all United Nations processes culminate in the drafting, negotiation and adoption of an agreed text, my delegation is of the opinion that given the divergencies still characterizing the process, that stage is still yet to come. Artificial deadlines may be premature and counter-productive at this stage.

My delegation also wishes to highlight the fact that the framework document remains the main reference document preferred by the Group of African States in the intergovernmental negotiations, as it is the only document that reflects the positions and views of more than 120 Member States, including the key elements of the Common African Position. In that vein, we believe that it is important during this session to discuss the status of the various intergovernmental negotiations documents and what needs to be done going forward. That is critical to making progress in the intergovernmental negotiations in order to rationalize the various views and positions of Member States.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for his commitment to the reform process and for having

appointed Ambassadors Wronecka and Al-Thani, of Poland and Qatar, respectively, to co-facilitate that process. We pledge to work with them in building on the gains made so far in the reform process and look forward to working with the entire membership in building consensus according to decision 62/557.

Mr. Heusgen (Germany): Let me at the outset align myself with the statement delivered by the representative of Brazil on behalf of the Group of Four (see A/75/PV.27), but first let me add a few words in my national capacity.

Once upon a time, in a world very different from today's, the United Nations was created. Since then, more countries have entered the scene, as have more people and new challenges, and we need to adapt the institutions that we have built in order to ensure their continued relevance and legitimacy and reflect those new realities. In September, our Heads of State and Government therefore reiterated their long-standing call for reform.

As I did last year, I will take up a fairy-tale theme for my speech and refer to *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. Like Grimm's prince, we need to urgently muster the courage to cut through the thick rose-hedge of cluster discussions, general statements and repetition of positions and finally enter the palace to kiss Sleeping Beauty to fulfil the task given to us by our Heads of State and Government. We must, to quote those Heads of State and Government, instil new life into the discussions on the reform of the Security Council.

We need a representative Security Council to deal with the complex challenges to international peace and security that the world faces today. Together we need to finally start to address the issue in a meaningful way. We therefore agree with the many here today who stress the need for a renewed sense of urgency in the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. By merely stating repetitions of issues, we run the risk of turning this process into a vehicle for maintaining the status quo, and we cannot accept that. We will not accept seeing our carriage turn into a pumpkin again at the arrival of summer in the next rollover decision.

We therefore trust our skilled co-facilitators, Ambassador Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of Poland, and Ambassador Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of Qatar, to immediately get to work and restart meetings in

whatever format to allow for a meaningful engagement and effective negotiations.

The early appointment bodes well. Like the good fairies in *Sleeping Beauty*, we count on them to resist those who would like to derail the process, either openly or in a rather opaque manner. We count on both of them to live up to their role as facilitators by doing their utmost to propel the reform forward and guide the intergovernmental negotiations in the right direction as it enters its thirteenth year. Let the number 13 be our lucky 13.

As our former Indian colleague so aptly said in one of the only two intergovernmental negotiations sessions we had this year, what we need is "a little less conversation, a little more action". As fish live in water, United Nations diplomats work on texts. It is what we do, and it is what we should be doing. We need an actual outcome: a single, consolidated text. The need for such progress is clear. Without enhanced representation of countries with the capacity and willingness to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, in particular those from Africa, the Council is losing its credibility and the political backing that it needs for the peaceful resolution of crises.

The Group of Four agrees with other reform-minded countries and groups on the need for a representative Security Council to help us restore confidence in international cooperation and global governance in these testing times. We intend to make a united push, and we have therefore supported the Common African Position, as stipulated in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

Just like the entire palace staff waking up in the fairy-tale after 100 years of slumber, we need to wake up to an open, inclusive and transparent process with webcasting, record-keeping and the application of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

It must not take 100 years for us to do so. Forty years of deliberations are more than enough. At the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, it is time to infuse the United Nations with new vitality, with reforming the Security Council as a central element.

I would like to ask you, Mr. Vice-President, to convey a message to Mr. Bozkir, President of the General Assembly. The UN75 Declaration asks that new life be instilled into the Security Council discussions. To speak in the language of our fairy-tale, the President of

the Assembly, as king of the General Assembly, bears a specific responsibility for Sleeping Beauty to be kissed.

The Acting President: I will do my best to share the representative of Germany's last note to the President.

Mr. Ke (Cambodia): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for having convened this plenary meeting to discuss Security Council reform.

I would like to congratulate Ambassador Wronecka, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland, and Ambassador Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar, on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. My thanks also go to the previous co-Chairs for their contributions to the process.

I am confident that under the able leadership of the President of the General Assembly and the newly appointed co-Chairs, we, the Member States, will be able to make progress during the next round of the intergovernmental negotiations. My delegation pledges its full support to the co-Chairs in their efforts to bring the negotiations forward.

The coronavirus disease pandemic has exacerbated the current challenges to global peace and security. As such, we need a Security Council that is effective and responsive in order to address the global challenges that we are facing. It is therefore necessary that Security Council reform should move ahead with urgency. Flexibility, compromise and bridge-building are key components for the intergovernmental negotiations to make substantive progress towards a successful conclusion.

In that context, Cambodia is of the view that the composition of the Security Council should reflect the realities of today and that that organ should be expanded in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership in an equitable manner. Opportunities should be given to developing countries, especially small States, to increase their representation in the Security Council so as to make the Council more representative, inclusive and democratic.

I would like to stress that the intergovernmental negotiations would be the main mechanism for discussion and negotiation of Security Council reform, with a view to reaching a consensual agreement among Member States, in accordance with General Assembly decision 62/557. All proposals in all clusters and

their linkages should be adequately addressed by the intergovernmental negotiations as we work towards building convergence.

My delegation believes that consensus should be a fundamental principle upon which an agreement is to be reached regarding Security Council reform, as this will help smooth the process and effectively implement the future outcome of the reform.

Cambodia reiterates its commitment to Security Council reform and will constructively engage in the intergovernmental negotiations process with all Member States, and it looks forward to a fruitful outcome of our negotiations.

Mr. Ngoyi (United States of America): The United States continues to believe that the intergovernmental negotiations remain the most appropriate forum to discuss any changes to the Security Council permanent membership. We remain open to any form of negotiation within the intergovernmental negotiations framework as long as the format allows for broad consensus.

Wide agreement across the intergovernmental negotiations is the only way reform will ultimately succeed.

As we have previously stated, the United States remains open in principle to a modest expansion of the Security Council for both permanent and non-permanent members. We believe that this must be pursued in a way that will not diminish the Security Council's effectiveness or efficiency and that will not alter or expand the veto.

We recommend carefully considering the ability and willingness of any potential Council member to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security. A Member State's capacity to shoulder the considerable responsibility that comes with sitting on the Security Council should be taken into account.

The Security Council is an important tool to address some of today's most pressing threats to international peace and security, but it occasionally falls short. A well-executed expansion of the Council could help modernize the body to better reflect twenty-first century global realities and increase its effectiveness. We remain firm, however, that any alteration of the current structure must be agreed by consensus.

Mr. Altarsha (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Before I make a statement on behalf of my

country, I want to inform the General Assembly that the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Syrian Arab Republic, Mr. Walid Al-Moallem, passed away this morning. My country has lost one of the most important pillars of its diplomacy for many years. He was a man who always defended the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. He believed in the sanctity of this Organization and the importance of collective work under its umbrella. He also instilled in us good values and was a role model for all Syrian diplomats, especially the young, including myself. The knight of diplomacy got off his horse. His Excellency Minister Walid Al-Moallem was our father and tutor. May his soul rest in peace.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate the two co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on the item under discussion, and I wish them every success. I also express my gratitude to Her Excellency the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates for her outstanding performance.

My country's delegation expresses its full support for the statements made by the representatives of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation (see A/75/PV.27). We emphasize our ongoing support for 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 Council. We appreciate the progress made within the intergovernmental negotiations to achieve equitable and balanced representation on the Security Council, while supporting its role in maintaining international peace and security, ensuring its integrity, transparency, effectiveness and balance of its work in accordance with applicable multilateral and preventive diplomacy truly and fairly. That would be based on the principles of justice, equality, the right of people to self-determination and the implementation of their national policies without external interference so as to ensure security, prosperity and development for all peoples of the world without exception, discrimination or double standards.

My country's delegation suggests with all sincerity and transparency that the Working Group should avoid issuing prepared texts and calling Member States to negotiate them, because the item under consideration is sensitive and there are many deep divisions among Member States with regard to the principles of reform. Any conclusion reached in a transparent,

fair and balanced manner should reflect the views of participating States and geographical groups, in particular the Group of African States.

We must understand that we are living in a world dominated by new forms of disputes and wars, where there is a tendency towards the use or threat to use military force while exploiting the political and economic influence of certain Governments to impose unilateral coercive economic measures on other States that disagree with them vis-à-vis their positions and policies, instead of focusing on achieving the objectives and goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Fair representation on the Security Council will continue to face deep-rooted obstacles as long as some still ignore the developments in international relations, which have become more tense and complex due to the political, economic and military polarization of certain Governments. My country, Syria, still considers the intergovernmental negotiations to be the only platform for discussing the process of reform, as it allows for transparent negotiations related to the positions and suggestions of all Member States leading to consensus. My country also considers that avoiding any exclusionary trends means achieving consensus on the objectives and principles of reform, while ensuring a balanced process that deals with the five main issues in a parallel and balanced way. Texts that are not consensual must not be imposed on Member States as a basis for any negotiation process. Any artificial and non-realistic time frame must also not be imposed.

With the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Organization, the genuine reform of the Security Council must be strictly based on the principles of justice and equality. There is a need to ensure an increase in representation on the Council based on the intergovernmental negotiations and decision 62/557, which is the basic document and the cornerstone that ensures the smooth conduct of the negotiations.

Mr. Itegboje (Nigeria): Nigeria commends the determination of the President of the General Assembly to move the intergovernmental negotiations process on Security Council reform forward during the seventy-fifth session. We thank him for convening today's important meeting and affirm that, as always, we are ready to engage constructively on this important topic.

His commitment to the process was amply demonstrated by the prompt nomination of the

co-Chairs, which, we hope, will facilitate the early holding of meetings and ensure meaningful engagement and effective negotiations. We appreciate the efforts for progress made during the seventy-fourth session, despite the challenges caused by the coronavirus disease, under the guidance of his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, as well as the co-Chairs, the Permanent Representatives of Poland and the United Arab Emirates, Their Excellencies Ms. Joanna Wronecka and Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, respectively, whom we thank for their exemplary leadership.

We welcome the appointment of Ambassador Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of Poland, and Ambassador Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of Qatar, as the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during the seventy-fifth session. We join others in congratulating them on accepting that responsibility and assure them of our full cooperation in their efforts.

Against that backdrop, we must strive to build on the gains recorded during the past sessions of the intergovernmental negotiations in order for tangible progress to be achieved in the course of the seventy-fifth session. Those expected gains comprise, among others, a change in the format of the rollover decision, with the recognition of and emphasis on an early comprehensive reform, as well as the more concise referencing of the framework document, which remains to date the most comprehensive reflection of the positions of Member States and the only current revised paper. The successes recorded have helped to restore faith in the purpose and progress of this critical process, and we hope to continue to build on and consolidate those gains.

Nigeria lauds Member States for the overwhelming support displayed, as always, for the Common African Position, although we believe more needs to be done to ensure a proper reflection of the Common African Position, as espoused in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. The recent outcome document of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries fully captures the stated support of 120 Member States on this issue.

Having said that, let me highlight a number of issues that need to be addressed in the intergovernmental negotiations.

First, there is a need for the co-Chairs to accurately reflect the views of Member States, as expressed in all meetings, in any outcome document at the end of the seventy-fifth session. That will not only enhance

the trust in and credibility of the process but also encourage more Member States to participate in the discussions. In order to achieve effective negotiations, the call for attribution becomes essential, as it would facilitate a more focused and results-oriented process and encourage the desired text-based negotiations.

Despite the enumerated gains, further aspirations remain in order to achieve our ultimate objective; hence the urgent call by world leaders during the seventy-fifth high-level plenary of the General Assembly for urgent and comprehensive reform of the decision-making structure of the United Nations, including the Security Council. It is pertinent to reiterate the fact that, more than four decades after the inclusion of the question of equitable representation in the Security Council on the General Assembly agenda, no meaningful progress has been made given the current composition of the Council, which has yet to reflect the current geopolitical realities.

We believe that, for tangible and meaningful progress to be made in completing the mandate of our leaders, we must incline towards steps that ensure the Organization's importance by working assiduously during this session to accomplish meaningful reform. The United Nations ought not to be burdened by the question of equitable representation in all its organs, in keeping with the spirit of its establishment. With the comprehensive participation of all sovereign States and their regional groupings in all spheres of the United Nations system, the multilateral organization must strive for a more balanced, fair and well-articulated position on matters, devoid of isolated areas or regions that are expected to be bound by all its rules, norms and values.

Let me sum up the key areas of concern that should be addressed to engender an open, inclusive and transparent process. There is an urgent and growing need within the intergovernmental negotiations for an open, inclusive and transparent process, with webcasting, the keeping of official records and the application of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. In addition, we advocate for a single consolidated text, preferably with attribution, in order to start text-based negotiations. That is undoubtedly the best way to arrive at real negotiations and avoid the simple repetition of statements at every session.

In conclusion, we continue to acknowledge the intergovernmental negotiations as the legitimate

forum for the achievement of our shared and common aspirations for the promotion of a fairer and more just world through equitable representation on the Security Council. We look forward to a constructive working relationship with the President and the entire membership of the Assembly within the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations, with a view to building on the progress made during the previous sessions of the General Assembly.

Mr. Song Kim (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland, and Ambassador Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar, on their appointments as the co-Chairs of the current session of the intergovernmental negotiations. I highly appreciate the leadership of Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, during the previous session of the intergovernmental negotiations.

Taking note of the results of the intergovernmental negotiations last year, my delegation wishes to state the following viewpoints on the agenda item under consideration.

First, the Security Council should strictly adhere to international justice and impartiality in its all activities. Until now, even 75 years since the founding of the United Nations, the Security Council has not extricated itself from the stigma of an undemocratic organ, devoid of impartiality. As is well known, illegal armed invasions and air strikes against sovereign States resulting in civilian deaths are left unquestioned, whereas righteous self-defensive measures for safeguarding sovereignty and even the exploration of outer space for peaceful purposes are labelled and condemned as threats to international peace. Even more shameless is the unauthorized interference in issues, including human rights, that go far beyond the Council's competence.

Secondly, Security Council reform should be carried out based on the principle of ensuring the full representation of developing countries. The current composition of the Security Council does not reflect today's reality, where the membership of the United Nations has substantially increased since its foundation, or properly represent developing countries, in particular. Developing countries, which now make up the majority of Member States, should be given not

only non-permanent membership but also permanent membership of the Security Council so that they can be heard and equally represented among the international community. This is also urgently required in order to ensure impartiality and transparency in the activities of the Security Council.

Thirdly, even in the case that the permanent membership were expanded, countries such as Japan should never be eligible to be a member of the Security Council. Japan inflicted immeasurable misfortunes and suffering on humankind by invading many Asian countries, including Korea, and provoking the Pacific War in the previous century. In Korea alone, Japan committed massive crimes against humanity, unprecedented in human history, such as the forcible drafting and abduction of 8.4 million people, the massacre of 1 million and the sexual slavery of 200,000 women for the Japanese army. However, Japan has yet to apologize for such acts.

Such a country is seeking permanent membership of the Security Council, whose main responsibility is to maintain international peace and security. If Japan is allowed to become a permanent member of the Security Council, it is crystal clear that it will only repeat its past, which is stained with aggression and plunder, far from contributing to maintaining international peace and security.

In conclusion, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea hopes that the deliberation of this agenda item will actively contribute to reforming the Security Council into a fair and accountable organ.

Mr. Dogan (Croatia): Let me begin by congratulating Ambassador Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland, and Ambassador Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar, on their appointments as the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations for this session. Allow me also to congratulate and thank Ambassador Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates for her co-chairmanship over the past few years.

We have been debating the issue of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council for decades. Croatia shares the view of the majority of Member States, namely, that the present structure and functioning of the Council do not properly reflect the geopolitical

realities of the contemporary world or the composition of the United Nations membership in the twenty-first century. Let us just remember that the previous expansion in the membership of the Security Council dates back to 1 January 1966, with the decision being taken on 17 December 1963 (resolution 1991 (XVIII) A and B) — that is, more than half a century ago. The world and our Organization were quite different then.

With respect to the substance of our debate, Croatia supports the Security Council's enlargement in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. We believe that the Group of Eastern European States should be awarded an additional seat in the non-permanent category of membership of a reformed and enlarged Council, since the membership of the Group has more than doubled since the previous expansion of the Council, that is, from 10 to 23 countries. We also advocate for greater African representation in the enlarged Council.

As we all agree, in principle, on the need for reform, it is painfully obvious that we have divergent views on the ways in which to approach that reform, especially regarding the size and the membership of an enlarged Council. We believe that, since it has been ongoing for such a long time, this process has reached its limits and, for further progress to be made, text-based negotiations are needed.

Apart from the expansion, the issue of the veto power is one of the most important matters. Croatia firmly supports the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, as well as the French-Mexican initiative, whereby the five permanent members of the Council would commit to refraining from using the veto in cases where the commission of mass atrocities has been proved. Both initiatives reflect the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and the intention "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". In a practical sense, it is crucial that those initiatives not require an amendment to the Charter, which, as we all know, is extremely difficult because of the procedural requirements, as well as the vested interests.

Let me conclude by extending our full support to the co-Chairs. We are confident that, under their able leadership, our work during this session will bring us closer to our common goal of a reformed and improved Security Council.

Mr. Flynn (Ireland): I thank the President for convening this meeting on a long-standing issue of critical importance to the work of the Organization — the question of Security Council reform. It is a question that we have been dealing with for many years and to which we have not yet found the answer.

The essence of the United Nations and of multilateralism is laws and structures that provide equal protection, respect and guarantees to the large and small alike. The system must work to promote mutual benefits in addressing common challenges within shared frameworks.

For Ireland, like so many others in this Hall today, the fundamental problem is clear: the Security Council no longer adequately reflects the composition of the United Nations. The longer that this unacceptable situation persists, the greater the threat to the legitimacy and authority of the Council and its unique and vital role in maintaining international peace and security.

The unjust historic underrepresentation of countries of Africa is particularly egregious. We need to act now to bring about a fair and equitable African say in Council decisions. African countries rightly point to their lack of a permanent seat as evidence of an unfair and unjust distribution. We also need to ensure that the voices of the most vulnerable are heard. That means that small island developing States, for example, must be able to play a role on the Council that reflects the seriousness and urgency of the situations that they face. Smaller States, which make up a majority of the United Nations membership, must also have their right to serve on the Council protected.

Such issues will not come as a surprise to any of us. The repetition of the same statements at every session simply perpetuates the status quo. The very fact that such an observation itself has become a cliché is an indictment of our collective failure to make progress. Reform must happen. It is long overdue.

Ireland welcomes the appointment of the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations for this session, and we look forward to meaningful, constructive engagement with them and the entire membership so as to bring about tangible progress. In our view, progress will occur only once we begin to engage in substantive text-based negotiations. That is not a new idea or a novel way of working. That is how we, the United Nations, operate and reach consensus,

frequently on extremely challenging issues. It is a tried and tested method.

The unique challenges posed by the issue of Security Council reform should not deter us from taking meaningful steps now in order to achieve our ultimate ambition. With goodwill and flexibility, we can achieve that necessary and overdue reform, and one that commands the widest possible support. It is for us, the Member States, to determine what such a reform will look like. Sticking rigidly to positions for 20 years or more has not achieved success. We therefore appeal to all countries that support reform to consider how such a change can be achieved. For our part, we are willing to support any model of reform capable of commanding sufficient consensus.

In just over a month from now, Ireland will take its seat on the Security Council. We are deeply appreciative of the trust that the General Assembly placed in us by electing us to the Council. We know that, when we take our seat on 1 January, we do so backed by the legitimacy of the support that we received from the Assembly. We are determined to play a full and equal role in the Council over the next two years, and we are committed to promoting greater transparency and accountability in its work.

Mr. Maung (Myanmar): My delegation wishes to thank the President for convening this important debate. We welcome the early appointment of the co-Chairs of the current session of the intergovernmental negotiations process on the reform of the Security Council.

During today's debate, many representatives expressed their views with regard to Security Council reform, echoing a number of viewpoints. Myanmar wishes to express its support for the efforts to reform the Security Council so as to ensure that it is more representative, effective, credible and transparent, reflecting the changing circumstances and realities of the world today. We support fair and equitable geographical representation on the Council, aimed at rectifying the insufficient voice of developing countries, especially African ones, in the Council's decision-making role.

In order to enhance the credibility and accountability of the Council, cooperation and coordination between the Security Council and the General Assembly should be strengthened, while upholding their respective functions and mandates, as provided for by the Charter of the United Nations. Efforts in the area of the Council's

working methods should continue to be intensified in order to ensure greater efficiency and transparency.

We emphasize that Security Council reform measures should be comprehensively addressed so as to achieve a balanced consensual solution to all key interconnected issues set out in decision 62/557. While noting a number of common views expressed on the reform, we also acknowledge that there are divergent positions. We are of the view that a consensus-based approach is the only way forward. Therefore, in order to bring those positions closer together, continued engagement and in-depth consultations among Member States are needed within the intergovernmental negotiations process through procedures and steps that enjoy consensus among all Member States.

We sincerely hope that the upcoming intergovernmental negotiations session will find ways to narrow the prevailing gaps with regard to the reform of the Council and move forward towards a consensus outcome that is acceptable to the entire United Nations membership.

Mr. Edlie (Ethiopia): I assure the President of the full support of my country. Let me take this opportunity to join my colleagues in congratulating him on the appointment of the two co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations.

Ethiopia aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/75/PV.27), and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

As a founding member of the United Nations, Ethiopia attaches great importance to support for the reform of the Security Council, as it is the core component of the overall reform of the United Nations system. My country supports the calls for a more democratic, representative, inclusive and transparent Security Council. In that context, we remain committed to decision 62/577 and other relevant resolutions on Security Council reform regarding all five clusters.

Ethiopia supports the Common African Position laid out in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. The Ezulwini Consensus requires that the Security Council be enlarged with no less than two African countries having full-fledged permanent membership with all the prerogatives, including the right of the veto, so long as the veto arrangement exists.

In addition, the number of African non-permanent seats must increase to five seats. As we all know, at the time of the establishment of the United Nations, Africa was not fully able to allow the negotiation of its position in our common institution. That notwithstanding, we have been a steadfast supporter of multilateralism and supported the growth of the norms and institutions of the United Nations. Evidently, the decisions of the United Nations have the most direct repercussion on the continent and its over 1 billion people. Furthermore, the other fundamental element of the Ezulwini Consensus — the autonomy of the African States in determining the criteria for the selection of African members of the Security Council — needs to be respected.

Africa's representation on the Security Council is a matter of necessity. In that regard, we are encouraged by the growing support for the African Common Position. It is certainly appropriate that the voice of 54 States Members of the United Nations be moved to the "Commonalities" section and the state of the section be issued for further consideration. We expect further transactions on the matter.

With regard to the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, it is our belief that the relationship should be mutually reinforcing

and complementary. In doing so, we shall be guided by the respective functions: the authority, power and competency of both organs as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Finally, I would like to underscore the necessity of building an environment of understanding culminating in outcomes adopted by consensus.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item for this meeting. We shall hear the remaining speakers tomorrow afternoon at 3 p.m. in this Hall.

Before giving the floor to speakers in the exercise of right of reply, may I remind delegations that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Kawase (Japan): I would like to exercise my right of reply in response to the statement by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is regrettable that a groundless statement in reference to Japan was just made in this Hall.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.