

**Statement by H.E. Sanita Pavļuta-Deslandes, Permanent
Representative of Latvia to the United Nations
Informal meeting of the plenary on the intergovernmental
negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and
increase in the membership of the Security Council and other
matters related to the Council**

13 December 2023, Trusteeship Council

Honorable Co-Chairs,

I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Permanent Representatives of Austria and Kuwait for conveying this meeting and leading the Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Security Council reform. **Latvia welcomes your efforts to make these discussions more transparent by webcasting and record-keeping.** Please count on our continuous engagement and support.

The calls for reform that we have heard today and will continue to hear are not merely an echo, **it is our plea for inclusivity and responsiveness.** Our world has transformed since 1945, and Security Council must evolve accordingly. Latvia believes that it is important for all regions of the world to have the opportunity to voice their opinions and contribute to the work of the Security Council. **The composition of the Security Council should mirror the geopolitical realities of the 21st century,** ensuring that power is distributed equitably among nations.

Africa, Latin America and Small Island Developing States are diverse regions with important perspectives on global issues such as human rights, disarmament, nonproliferation, climate change and other important peace and security related topics. Likewise, we see a merit in the allocation of additional elected membership to the Eastern European Group.

Distinguished colleagues,

The issues that the world is facing today demand an effective Security Council that adequately responds to all security challenges while protecting the core values vested in the UN Charter. We need a Security Council that effectively fulfills its responsibility to protect and promote peace, justice, human rights, rules-based order and equality among nations.

Further on, while the veto is an important tool, it's been increasingly used at situations when Council needs to take urgent action. In this context, we believe that the **use of veto or a threat to use it cannot be justified in the case of aggression and annexation of a territory of another UN member state**, inter alia.

Honorable Co-Chairs,

We commend the initiative launched by France and Mexico in 2015. We also support the Code of Conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, which urges all members of the Council to not vote against UNSC resolutions that are aimed at preventing or ending genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We believe these initiatives provide necessary impulses for a change in Council's working methods to increase accountability, transparency and inclusiveness. Only **together we can strengthen the norm against veto use in the cases of atrocity crimes**. We call on all UN Member States to join this pledge.

At the same time, we strongly support the veto initiative adopted by the General Assembly last year upon the proposal by Liechtenstein. There should be no excuses for not fulfilling the latter commitments to safeguard civilians and strengthen the Council's moral standing.

We firmly believe that no matter the size, **all countries can have an impact on the work and outcomes of the Security Council**. We are

strongly committed to further demonstrate that smaller countries, including Latvia, can positively contribute to solving global challenges.

Colleagues,

Latvia regrets the lack of progress made regarding the Security Council reform. We advocate for a meaningful and results-oriented reform in pursuit of a strengthened United Nations, increased ownership of the Council's work and its accountability to Member States. We would like to reiterate our call **to start the text-based negotiations without any hesitation.**

In conclusion, I would like to underline **the transparency and accountability must be the cornerstone of this reform.** The decision-making processes of the Security Council should **be open, accessible, and comprehensible to all member states.** The work of the Council should reinforce the principles of fairness and justice upon which the United Nations was founded. As an ACT member, Latvia stands ready to continue its work towards accountability, legitimacy and transparency by enhancing the working methods.

In this regard, Latvia as a candidate for **election to the Security Council in 2025**, commits to contribute to these principles.

I thank you!