



# General Assembly

Seventy-first session

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*President:* Mr. Thomson . . . . . (Fiji)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

## Agenda item 122

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

**The President:** The item before us today on Security Council reform goes to the very heart of the purposes and principles of the Organization. Since the United Nations was founded 71 years ago the world has changed dramatically, with population growth, economic and technological advancements and progress in human rights, the rising interconnectivity and mobility of people, the shifting global dynamics, climate change, environmental degradation, the growing frequency and severity of natural disasters, and the sheer nature and complexity of global security challenges that are increasing greatly.

Indeed, the number of States Members of the United Nations has quadrupled over those years. The rise of terrorism and violent extremism, the expansion of asymmetrical warfare, the risk of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of non-State actors, and the illegal proliferation of small arms and light weapons in both inter- and intra-State conflicts are all threatening international peace and security and challenging the capacity of the United Nations to respond.

As we meet, the world is facing the worst humanitarian refugee crisis since the Second World War, and the United Nations is responding to the highest

number of simultaneous security and humanitarian crises in its history. It has become a well-founded priority for all Member States to ensure that the Security Council, as the organ of the United Nations with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, is representative, responsive, effective and efficient.

Institutional reform of the United Nations is not only possible, but has already taken place in recent times. We have also seen greater coordination between the General Assembly and the Security Council, not least during this year's appointment process for the new Secretary-General. I applaud those developments. However, it remains clear that much work remains to be done. Advancing Security Council reform will remain a key priority for the General Assembly at its seventy-first session as we look to take forward discussions, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and decisions.

During the seventieth session, the General Assembly decided at its last plenary meeting on this item (see A/70/PV.113) to immediately continue the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform in informal plenary meetings during the seventy-first session. To facilitate those negotiations, I have appointed Ambassador Mohamed Khiari of Tunisia and Ambassador Ion Jinga of Romania as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. I am confident that they will steer those negotiations with great skill. I thank them for taking on that critical role on behalf of the Assembly, and I call upon all Member States to extend their full support and cooperation to

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the co-Chairs in order to comprehensively advance the process, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions. I would also like to take this opportunity to warmly thank Ambassador Sylvie Lucas of Luxembourg for her work as Chair of the negotiations on Security Council reform during the seventieth session.

As we embark on the next phase of this Member State-driven process, we should all acknowledge that meaningful progress will require genuine and open dialogue, bringing and receiving new ideas and working together to find areas of agreement. While the sensitivity and difficulty of those issues is well understood, in order for reform to occur Member States will need to engage with greater flexibility in a process leading to substantive results. I will remain engaged in the process throughout the seventy-first session and will provide all necessary support to the co-Chairs. My door is always open to any delegation wishing to discuss this matter.

If the United Nations is to be responsive and meet the challenges of our times, reform of the Security Council is essential. We must ensure that the Council reflects the realities of the twenty-first century and that it is able to deliver on the purposes and principles and promise of the Charter of the United Nations. Saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war is an extraordinary responsibility shared by us all. It is a responsibility that we must not shirk and will not shirk.

**Mr. Sumah** (Sierra Leone): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the States members of the African Union. I thank you profusely, Mr. President, for your very thoughtful and timely decision to convene today's plenary debate on agenda item 122, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council". We take note of and thank you for your remarks.

Let me congratulate Mr. Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Mr. Mohamed Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We also express our support and readiness to work with them in building on the gains made so far in the reform process.

At the outset, I would like to reiterate the commitment of Africa to this very important issue and look forward to working with you, Sir, and engaging

the membership in building a consensus that is in concurrence with decision 62/557 and favourable to the common African position, succinctly articulated in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration.

During the seventieth session, we held myriad debates on all of the five negotiable clusters, which, regrettably, led to the production of an element paper that focuses on only two of the five key issues of the Security Council reform, namely, the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, and the size of an enlarged Security Council and its working methods. At this juncture, I would like to reiterate that a document that addresses only two of the five key issues of Security Council reform cannot be a true basis for informing the future work of the intergovernmental negotiations, nor can it adequately maintain the momentum we all seek to enable us to move towards text-based negotiations. From those exchanges, it is apparent that many Member States believe that the Security Council should be reformed to represent today's global political realities, which are profoundly different from those that were extant at the inception of the United Nations 70 years ago.

It is clear that a considerable number of Member States support comprehensive reform, in accordance with decision 62/557. In this regard, I wish to reiterate that despite our tremendous differences on how to guide and move the reform process forward, Africa supports a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in a membership-driven manner and is against any piecemeal reform. As we have often stated, the Common African Position emphasizes that reform of the United Nations system should be all-inclusive and encompass all components. The reform process should not become an endless cycle — which undoubtedly runs counter to an early reform of the type set forth by the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. At this stage, we must endeavour to reach an agreement on how to move forward with the positions and proposals of Member States that were circulated on 31 July 2015, during the Assembly's sixty-ninth session, which could be a good starting point towards the harmonization of positions and the eventual commencement of text-based negotiations.

During the general debate at the General Assembly this year, several Heads of State and Government affirmed the need to reform the Security Council in order to make it broadly representative, efficient and transparent, and thereby further enhance its

effectiveness and legitimacy in the implementation of its decisions. Similarly, more and more countries are questioning the legitimacy and credibility of the Security Council, in which they have no effective voice or equitable regional representation. It is now time for us to walk the talk with a view to reaching an agreement on a reform model that takes the core values of the United Nations into consideration.

On two occasions, by letters dated 23 December 2009 and 22 April 2015, we submitted our position on all five clusters with respect to the previous tiers. Africa's position on Security Council reform is well known. Specifically, it is the only region that is not represented in the permanent category while being, at the same time, underrepresented in the Council's non-permanent category. As a continent, Africa continues to demand the redress of this historical injustice.

Given the changing international landscape, we believe that the obsolete composition and the absence of adequate representation of an entire region is a deficiency that risks compromising the legitimacy of the Council's decisions. In this vein, we call for an expansion of the permanent and non-permanent categories of the Security Council, as well as the granting to the new members of all of the prerogatives and privileges of permanent members, including the right of the veto — if it continues to exist. The need to correct the grossly unjust scenario suffered by a continent comprising 54 countries and accounting for 70 per cent of the work of the Council is fundamental and long overdue.

In pursuit of that objective, we remain committed to building alliances with diverse interest groups and Member States on the basis of the Common African Position, with a view to bringing about the reform of the Security Council. It must also be borne in mind that, in the business of maintaining international peace and collective global security and contributing to peacekeeping operations, Africa, like the rest of the world, continues to pay the ultimate price — which is by no means quantifiable in material or monetary terms. Africa's demand for at least two permanent seats and two additional non-permanent seats is a matter of common justice. Africa has the right to have an equal say in decision-making on issues of international peace and security, and in particular those that concern our continent, which is why we continue to demand our rightful place in the maintenance of peace and security.

It is common knowledge that support for the Common African Position has gained momentum and continues to receive large support in the deliberations on Africa's legitimate claim. Since this claim is without controversy, it has been recognized and acknowledged as legitimate by the general membership. By virtue of that, the demand ought to be redressed without further delay, which would mean no longer perpetuating a more than 50-year-old injustice, which has in effect denied the region its dignity and rightful place in a major decision-making organ of the Organization.

On behalf of the African Union member States, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the delegations and interest groups that continue to support the Common African Position. As we have often reiterated, Africa stands ready to work with all delegations and interest groups for the purpose of achieving a solution that can garner the widest possible political acceptance. For Africa, as represented by the Committee of Ten on Security Council Reform, the necessary political will for reform without further procrastination is present and propelled by a common determination.

In conclusion, we hope that under your charismatic leadership, Sir, the session will build on the progress made thus far and increase the momentum for a more frank and interactive debate that will aggregate the political will present across the member States of the African Union, which will, we trust, lead to the early reform of the Security Council, in accordance with the vision of our world leaders, expressed in unanimity at the 2005 World Summit. In this regard, we look forward to further engaging the entire membership and the Chairs in good faith and mutual trust. We will remain open to working together with any other initiative that will take into account the level of momentum and support the Common African Position has gained thus far. We also look forward to more constructive and forward-looking intergovernmental negotiations during the seventy-first session and urge all Member States to work together towards moving the reform process to text-based negotiations.

**Ms. Rambally** (Saint Lucia): It remains my great honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the L.69 group of developing countries, indeed a diverse group of more than 42 countries from the developing world, from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia and the Pacific, which continue to be united

by a common cause, namely, achieving lasting and comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

Mr. President, we would like to begin by congratulating you on commencing this process in earnest, with your letter of 26 October 2016. We welcome the appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations of our colleagues the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Romania and the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Tunisia. I wish them every success during their tenure in this task that is so critical for all of us who compose the United Nations system. I wish to assure the co-Chairs of our Group's full support and cooperation in the period ahead. Our Group also wishes to place on record our appreciation of the contribution made by Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, the former Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, as Chair of the negotiations at the seventieth session.

Mr. President, in your letter dated 26 October 2016, you encouraged Member States to continue moving the process forward through negotiations, building on the progress made at the sixty-ninth and seventieth sessions and the framework document and its annex, dated 31 July 2015. It will therefore be important, in the next round of intergovernmental negotiations, that we commence the process with negotiations and build on the texts agreed by consensus — an absolutely essential step for moving forward. The L.69 group of developing countries is now eager to engage and would like to work with you and the co-Chairs to steer this process towards text-based negotiations for the meaningful, no longer early but absolutely necessary reform of the Security Council.

Our group is bound by the firm conviction that expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership of the Security Council is imperative to better reflect contemporary world realities and to achieve a more accountable, representative, transparent and, above all else, a more relevant Security Council. With the complex challenges before our world today, that need is both major and urgent. At the most recent session of the intergovernmental negotiations, it was clear to us all that there were convergences among the positions of Member States on all five pillars of Security Council reform. As the elements paper of the Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations summed up convergences in only two of the five reform pillars, however, the task remained unfinished. We would urge the co-Chairs to finish the task by summing up

the convergences among positions of Member States in all five pillars of Security Council reform, as was reflected in the statements made by Member States during the seventieth session. I would like to add that, in completing that important task, the co-Chairs can rely on the support of our Group from beginning to end.

We very much welcome the newly formed Group of Friends on Security Council Reform, of which the L.69 group is a member. The Group of Friends will work together with the aim of accelerating the negotiations process for meaningful reform of the Council based on three principles: early or urgent reforms, text-based negotiations and the expansion of both categories of membership. We welcome other Member States that want to join the Group on the basis of its principles.

I would like to reiterate our Group's support for your efforts, Mr. President, and look forward to your continued engagement in the process throughout the session.

**Mr. Cardi (Italy):** Mr. President, on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) group, I wish to thank you for convening the annual debate on Security Council reform, and to express our appreciation for your engagement in the reform process with a new and fresh approach. The first concrete sign of that engagement was your decision to appoint Ambassadors Ion Jinga and Khaled Khiari as co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations. We warmly welcome them in their new capacities, and wish to immediately offer our full cooperation and support in their new pivotal responsibilities.

The appointment of two co-facilitators attests to the need to explore alternative approaches, as emerged during the seventieth session of the General Assembly. In particular, the search for broad convergences among Member States, pursued during the previous session under the stewardship of Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, exemplifies the consensual path we believe is key to achieving concrete results. Hence, for this session of work, the UfC reiterates the need to stay on this path and focus on the real convergences in the remaining clusters of the reform process. Our work must be done in a true spirit of compromise while putting aside what has hampered the achievement of a common goal for too many years.

A new Security Council, grounded in a democratic and inclusive vision, remains the political priority of the Uniting for Consensus group. That inclusive



vision goes hand in hand with the conviction that the reform cannot but be consensual. We are certain that the reform of the United Nations body responsible for international peace and security requires the support of the entire United Nations membership. After all, it was along that very same path that we were able to change the method of selection and appointment of the head of the Organization, proving that consensual reform is possible.

I think we are all aware of the frustration felt by Member States owing to the lack of progress in a reform that has been discussed for over 20 years. The Uniting for Consensus countries, as well as influential external observers, have stated that the evidence clearly points to the only true obstacle to reform: the call for an increase in the number of permanent members of the Council — with the veto, without the veto or with a suspended veto. In our view, this is the only reason for the stalemate we have been experiencing in the reform process. In our view, no Member State should be scared of facing elections — certainly not those who own all the means of succeeding and contribute substantially to the work of the Council. That is why we invite all Member States to genuinely commit to reforming the Council, together with Uniting for Consensus countries, in a manner that takes into account all views.

There is no Member State in the Hall today that disagrees with the idea of expanding the number of non-permanent seats on the Council. No Member State is against such an increase, which will favour countries belonging to the underrepresented regions of the world. In contrast, a very significant and growing number of Member States has opposed an expanded use of the veto and, rather, supports its limitation. In our view, that is the common ground on which to base the solution that will finally unlock the reform process. We owe this attempt to those who believe in a renewed Organization and therefore in a modern Security Council that is more representative, democratic, accountable, transparent and effective.

A more representative and democratic Security Council means offering an equal opportunity to all Member States to serve periodically on the Council itself, as well as enhancing the right of the membership to decide and adapt the Council's composition on a regular basis. In line with this perspective, the Uniting for Consensus countries are committed to a reform that increases, rather than reduces, the democratic nature of the Council — a reform that is centred on elective,

non-permanent seats in the belief that, in the twenty-first century, this is the only formula that can have a positive and credible impact on the legitimacy and authority of the United Nations body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security.

I think that there is no need to explain how such a reform would also have a tremendous impact on regional representation, by fostering a wider and fairer rotation within regional groups. In addition, it will create a favourable ratio of non-permanent members to permanent members in the Security Council. Such a change will improve the Council's working methods, augment its decision-making capacity, present a democratic challenge to the veto and improve the overall relationship between the Council and the General Assembly.

Any decision in the near future on the Security Council reform process will require true flexibility and willingness to compromise. Over the years, the UfC Group has tried to capture those new elements emerging from discussions in the intergovernmental negotiations that could bridge the gap with other negotiating groups. In that perspective, the increasing support for what is known as the intermediate approach represents a new factor in the search for a compromise solution and deserves our full attention.

The UfC countries are proposing that, in addition to an expansion of non-permanent seats, a new category of longer-term, non-permanent seats, with the possibility of an immediate re-election, should be established. Those new seats would not be reserved for a selected group of countries; all Member States willing to make a larger contribution to the work of the Council would have the right to contest elections for a longer-term seat on the basis of equitable geographical distribution and a fair system of rotation. Periodic elections would ensure the accountability of the longer-term members.

The Uniting for Consensus group stands ready to cooperate with you, Mr. President, the new co-Chairs and the whole membership for advancing this process in the firm conviction that Security Council reform is possible in the short term. In keeping with decision 62/557, we shall continue to work for a comprehensive reform that can gather the widest consensus. The UfC Group can be counted on to redouble its efforts in that direction.

**Mr. Alotaibi** (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group

of Arab States. At the outset, I would like to express the support of the Arab Group for your work, Mr. President, particularly in leading these negotiations. We welcome the appointment of Mohamed Khaled Khiari of Tunisia and Ion Jinga of Romania as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations process.

Security Council reform to ensure equitable representation is a key aspect of overall United Nations reform. It is all the more important as the world has been undergoing rapid change, which challenges us to step up efforts to revitalize the role of the Security Council with a view to making it more effective and enabling it to meet current challenges, while respecting the principles of transparency, neutrality and credibility. The debate on enlarging the Security Council and its working methods was started some considerable time ago. There are differing positions on the subject. We must once again turn our attention to this very important issue and seek consensual solutions.

The world has changed significantly since the establishment of the United Nations in 1945. It is therefore high time to embark on this reform. In that context, the Arab Group stresses that views on the question of the enlargement of the Security Council should be expressed in intergovernmental negotiations, in accordance with decision 62/557. The Arab Group believes that when the intergovernmental negotiations are relaunched at the current session, all the proposals put forward by members of the Arab Group should be on the table. This is the basis that should guide the co-Chairs' work, so that we can move forward on the question of Security Council reform.

The Arab Group reaffirms its strong position, which is founded on the principle of consensus among Member States. We are facing numerous challenges and disagreements on the issue of the excessive use of the veto by the five permanent Council members, which undermines the credibility of the Council's decisions and hinders its efficiency in maintaining international peace and security. The use of the veto by the five permanent members in recent years has allowed those members to defend their own narrow national interests and those of their allies. Despite the fact that the veto is being used less and less, it is still an efficient means for certain Governments to absolve themselves of responsibility. Over the past 20 years, the veto has been used 27 times, 15 of them to protect the activities of the Israeli authorities in the occupied Arab territories.

It is necessary to reform the working methods of the Security Council in order to make them more transparent and more efficient. We must also revise the rules of procedure of the Security Council and replace the provisional rules of procedure of many years' duration. It is also important to increase the number of public meetings of the Security Council and the number of meetings in general. We must allow non-members of the Security Council to participate. It is also necessary to decrease the number of closed meetings and informal consultations. It is imperative that the Security Council involve the States that will be affected by the decisions it takes when it considers agenda items that are of relevance to those States. The League of Arab States calls on the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council to inform all Member States of their activities. The position of the members of the Arab Group is that there should be a permanent seat and a non-permanent seat for Arab States on the Security Council.

To conclude, we commit to participating in the next round of intergovernmental negotiations with a view to reaching a consensus decision that will allow us to comprehensively reform the Security Council.

**Mr. Braun** (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Four (G-4): Brazil, India, Japan and Germany.

To begin, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for personally reaching out to groups and Member States in the run-up to the intergovernmental negotiations at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly. Let me join other previous speakers in congratulating our colleagues, Ion Jinga and Khaled Khiari, whom you have appointed to chair the intergovernmental negotiations. I wish them great success in their critical task and pledge our support to their work and to yours.

Let me share three thoughts with everyone assembled here today.

First, reform is urgent. As far back as 2005, our Heads of State and Government underscored the need for an early reform of the Security Council, yet little to no real progress has been achieved since then. Here in New York, we painfully observe the shortcomings of the Security Council in its outdated composition, reflecting the year 1945, and its inadequate working methods. The Security Council must be rendered fit for purpose in order to be able to face the global challenges of peace and security in the twenty-first century. Unfortunately, and painfully, those challenges remain before us in

their cruel brutality every day. Fit for purpose means that all regions, including the developing world, must be adequately represented in order to ensure legitimacy and effectiveness. Hence, I have no doubt that all of us here agree on the importance of the assignment on reform we have been given and that an actual negotiation and a decision-making process are due now.

Secondly, there are sufficient grounds for real negotiations. Some perpetuate the myth that the States Members of the United Nations are opposing one another in irreconcilable positions on reform. That is false. The most recent session of the intergovernmental negotiations amplified what has been visible for years already. There exist real convergences among the positions of Member States and convergences in all five pillars of Security Council reform. The elements paper issued at the end of the seventieth session summed up convergences in only two out of five reform pillars. However, there were convergences even in the most disputed fields. To cite just one example, a large and growing majority of Member States supports expansion of the Council in both categories of seats. Earlier on, that fact had been confirmed in documents by the Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations in 2009, 2012 and 2014. That and all the other convergences should be the guide for our current negotiation process.

Thirdly, there is a legitimate basis for negotiations. During the sixty-ninth session, Member States were invited to record their positions on all five pillars of Security Council reform in writing. That led to the compilation and adoption by consensus of one of the most democratically legitimate documents on Security Council reform in existence — the framework document and its annex, as circulated by the then President of the General Assembly in his letter dated 31 July 2015. That is the most comprehensive and legitimate basis for negotiations that we have to date. By the way, for those who have not contributed to the document so far, to my knowledge the invitation remains open to come and have their positions included as well.

Those facts lead to a profound conclusion: real, text-based negotiations must begin now, in the intergovernmental negotiations at the seventy-first session. We therefore request that the co-Chairs use the text of the existing framework document and its annex as a basis for negotiations in the intergovernmental negotiations. The aim should be to condense that text step by step and to create a workable document in the course of this session of the Assembly.

In that regard, we very much welcome the newly founded Group of Friends on Security Council Reform. Representatives at the ministerial or senior official level of Member States belonging to reform-oriented groups — including the Committee of Ten, the Caribbean Community, the G-4 countries and the L.69 group — and representatives of Nordic and Eastern European countries, as well as France and the United Kingdom, all met in New York on 21 September in the margins of the General Assembly to discuss the issue of Security Council reform. They underlined that 11 years after the 2005 World Summit, when all Heads of State and Government unanimously called for an early reform of the Security Council, it was high time to finally move forward. They agreed to work together with the aim of accelerating the negotiating process for a meaningful reform of the Council. The Group of Friends is based on three principles: early reform, text-based negotiations and expansion in both categories of seats. They welcome other Member States joining the group based on those goals.

In conclusion, in the light of those principles, we strive for nothing less than meaningful text-based negotiations in the intergovernmental negotiations. We call on you, Mr. President, to let your leadership reflect that level of ambition among the vast majority of Member States. Last but not least, we count on the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations to aim high, to put our long-standing requests into action and to start the negotiations now.

**Mr. Sauer** (Finland): I am speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries — Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Finland. The Nordic countries welcome the appointment of Ambassador Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, as co-Chairs of this round of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We would like to express our support for their work.

Our common objective should be to make the Security Council more representative, transparent, effective and accountable than is currently the case. An enlarged Security Council would need to better reflect today's world, in particular with regard to Africa. As we discuss the size and composition of the Council, we also need to continue to discuss how the Council's working methods can be continuously improved in order to ensure efficiency, transparency and accountability.

The last two rounds of negotiations, under the able leadership of Ambassadors Rattray and Lucas, showed a high degree of engagement and an increasing convergence on key issues. We were encouraged by the positive atmosphere in which the last round of negotiations took place. We are therefore optimistic that it is possible to move ahead towards meaningful reform of the Council by building on the progress that has been made during the past two years. That will require the continued will of Member States to engage in the process, to be open to new ideas and to be willing to listen to the views of others. Only then can we find the necessary common ground to move forward. We trust that the recently established Group of Friends on Security Council Reform, which was also mentioned by the representatives of Saint Lucia and Germany a few minutes ago, will have a positive impact on those efforts.

**Mr. Pecsteen de Buystwerve** (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I thank you for convening this meeting. I have the honour of speaking on behalf of Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

The reform of the Security Council is important for the credibility and smooth functioning of the United Nations. Reform of the Council is necessary if we are to make it more representative, effective and transparent. That is an objective that we hold dear and is shared by all. I will not repeat the positions of our three countries on the specifics of the reform, as they are well known and reflected in President Kutesa's letter of 31 July 2015 and in the elements of the convergence paper distributed on 12 July by Mr. Lykketoft, President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

I will confine myself to stressing the importance of increasing the representativeness of the Council by enabling African countries to take their rightful place on the Council and by ensuring the effective participation of small and medium-sized States in the work of an enlarged Council. Given the growing inclusion of regional organizations in the work of the Security Council, we also believe that we should pay more attention to that aspect in our Council reform considerations.

Over recent years, progress has been made. We must keep that momentum going. Allow me to reiterate our special thanks to Ambassador Sylvie Lucas for the impartial, effective and transparent manner in which she presided over the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council during the seventieth

session of the General Assembly. We hope that the substantial elements of convergence that were identified at that session will be useful in future negotiations and that they will be a source of inspiration for the further narrowing of gaps in our positions, with a view to the comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

I extend our congratulations to the Permanent Representatives of Tunisia and Romania, Ambassadors Khaled Khiari and Ion Jinga, on being appointed to chair the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We must all contribute if we are to make headway. We are convinced that if the Member States engage and negotiate in good faith, the Security Council can be reformed. For our part, our three countries will continue to participate actively in the negotiations. The co-Chairs and you, Sir, can count on our full support.

**Ms. Bird** (Australia): At the outset, let me join others in welcoming your appointment of the co-Chairs for the session, Ambassador Jinga and Ambassador Khiari. I express Australia's sincere appreciation to Ambassador Lucas of Luxembourg for her stewardship as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations over the past year and to Ambassador Rattray, her predecessor the year before.

Although the past two sessions did not deliver on the scale and pace that we had hoped for, they nonetheless took important steps towards a long-overdue reform of the Security Council. In particular, the paper on elements of convergence developed over the past year provides a sound starting point for the current session.

Australia's position on Security Council reform is well known. We believe that the Council needs to better reflect contemporary geopolitical realities, and that means more representation for Asia, Africa and Latin America. However, we have also been clear that enlargement must not reduce the ability of the Council to act swiftly and decisively. Accordingly, expansion must take place within limits and must be accompanied by improvements in the Council's working methods.

On working methods, we have long advocated for greater transparency in the Council's work, better coordination between the Council and the General Assembly, more analytical reporting, and better consultation with troop- and police-contributing countries. We are pleased that the elements of convergence identify a range of measures that address those issues. Through those measures, Member States



have the opportunity to take practical steps that can immediately improve the Council's working methods. We urge Member States to move forward with their implementation without delay. Doing so would build confidence that the process can and will deliver on much-needed reform, and, in turn, that momentum will serve us well in addressing the more challenging issues on our agenda, such as the question of the veto.

Our discussion here takes place at a time when the Security Council is more divided than ever. The growing catastrophe in Syria, its unacceptable human cost and the Council's inability to act must imbue us with fresh resolve. We urge all Member States, and especially the five permanent members of the Security Council, to commit to the Accountability, Coherence, Transparency Group's code of conduct and the complementary French-Mexican declaration, which call for restraint on the use of the veto in situations of mass atrocity.

More is at stake than simply tweaking the edges of the rule book. Ultimately, our work here is about creating conditions of change. It is about ensuring that the Security Council fulfils its responsibility and acts when needed. It will be our success or our failure in this endeavour that shapes how the Council responds to the crises of tomorrow.

**Mr. Safronkov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank you, Sir, for convening today's meeting. Security Council reform is one of the most complex issues on the agenda of the United Nations, under whose Charter the Council is the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security.

We congratulate the Permanent Representatives of Romania and Tunisia on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. We trust that their work will be based on the principles of objectivity and impartiality and will consider the full range of positions of Member States. The principle of "do no harm" is of relevance here.

Today's meeting marks the beginning of discussions on Security Council reform at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly. This issue has been discussed for many years now and has presented extreme difficulties. Member States have been able to achieve some progress, but a universal solution that could enjoy the broadest possible support is not yet in sight. The positions on reform of the main players

continue to differ substantially and are sometimes diametrically opposed. That being so, we see no other alternative but to continue at the current session the patient, incremental work of bringing our negotiating positions closer together.

Our own position is well known. Russia, as a permanent member of the Security Council, emphasizes the need to make that organ more representative through the inclusion of developing countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America. However, efforts to this end should not affect the ability of the Security Council to effectively and promptly respond to emerging challenges. Accordingly, we stand for preserving the compact composition of the Security Council. Its optimum size should not exceed the low twenties. Any proposal to curtail the prerogatives of the current permanent members, including the right of the veto, are unacceptable to us. It should be recalled that the institution of the veto is an important factor that encourages Council members to seek balanced solutions. It would be historically and politically incorrect to encroach on that right, and the prerogatives of the current permanent members should therefore not be reviewed.

We fully support the opinion voiced several times from this rostrum that the process of reforming the Security Council should be owned by all Member States without exception, and that its ultimate formula should enjoy the widest possible support of Member States. If consensus on the issue is impossible, it will be politically necessary to obtain the support of a larger number of States than the legally required minimum of a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly.

We strongly believe that Security Council reform cannot be addressed through a purely arithmetical approach by putting various models to the vote in order to obtain the minimum required number of votes. A result reached in this manner would hardly add to the authority and effectiveness of the Security Council, let alone strengthen the unity of the United Nations. It would in fact achieve quite the opposite.

We are prepared to consider any reasonable option for the Security Council's expansion, including the so-called intermediate approach — which is essentially a compromise — provided once again that it is based on the broadest possible consensus within the United Nations. We expect the efforts of the President of the General Assembly and the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental

negotiations to be directed at providing the maximum possible support and facilitation for the negotiation process, with the understanding that ownership of the progress remains with Member States. This meticulous work should be conducted in a calm, transparent and inclusive manner without arbitrary or artificial time frames. We must all clearly understand that this is a task where there is no place for deadlines or attempts to address this complex problem with a simple stroke of a pen.

In conclusion, let us not forget the most important thing: progress in reforming the Security Council cannot be achieved on the basis of some kind of coordinator's texts, negotiating documents or other proposals that have not received the approval of all Member States. Previous sessions of the General Assembly have shown the futility and the danger of attempts to force a solution to this reform issue that is not based on consensus. It is equally unacceptable to apply unilateral pressure on the co-Chairs.

Progress in Security Council reform will depend solely on the political will of Member States and their willingness to achieve a reasonable compromise. We urge all Member States to follow this fundamental approach.

**Mr. Rycroft** (United Kingdom): My thanks go to Ambassadors Jinga and Khiari for taking on the leadership of the intergovernmental negotiations.

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

The United Kingdom therefore welcomes all efforts to move this debate forward, including the establishment of the Group of Friends. When we consider Security Council reform, we must of course be mindful of the need to ensure its effectiveness and make sure that this is never compromised. Too great an increase in size risks a cumbersome and slow decision-making process, undermining the Council's ability to respond appropriately and quickly to issues of international

peace and security. With so many challenges before us, that is a risk we cannot take.

By the same token, we cannot allow the issue of the veto to slow our progress on expansion of the Council. The United Kingdom has not vetoed a resolution for over 25 years, and we would do so only in the most exceptional circumstances. We are a proud signatory of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group's code of conduct, and we are committed to never voting against a credible draft resolution on preventing or ending a mass atrocity. Sadly, we have seen others wield their veto through narrow self-interest to the significant detriment of the Security Council's reputation and indeed its responsibility to those who so desperately need our help.

For these reasons, we believe that a modest expansion in the permanent and non-permanent categories, an increase that balances representation with effectiveness, is the approach that we should collectively pursue. Members will be aware of our support for permanent seats for Brazil, Germany, India and Japan, alongside permanent African representation. British Prime Minister Theresa May is today in India discussing that very issue with Prime Minister Modi. Our support is steadfast, and I look forward to working through all available avenues to reach the more representative and more effective Council that we seek.

**Mr. Liu Jieyi** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China welcomes the appointment of Ambassador Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Ambassador Mohamed Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations process on Security Council reform. China will actively support their work.

During the membership-led process of negotiations at the seventieth session of the General Assembly, Member States carried out in-depth and candid exchanges of views on the five pillars of reform of the Security Council in a generally practical atmosphere and achieved favourable results. China appreciates that development.

Reforming the Security Council is systematic engineering work involving both the immediate interests of Member States and the long-term development of the United Nations. China is and has consistently been a supporter of an appropriate and necessary reform of the Security Council, advocating that priority be given to the increased representation in the Council of developing

countries, particularly African countries, with a view to enabling more of them, especially the small and medium-sized countries that constitute the majority of the United Nations membership, to participate in the work and decision-making of the Council and to play a greater role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Intergovernmental negotiations provide an important platform for Member States to engage in an extensive exchange of views, deepen their understanding of issues and bridge their differences. Such negotiations should conform to decision 62/557 and the consensus of the membership. They should be membership-led and should be based on the proposals and recommendations of Member States. China supports the work of the co-Chairs, which, in accordance with decision 62/557 and based on the principles of objectivity and fairness, is aimed at facilitating the efforts of Member States to gradually bridge their differences on the reform of the Council and to steadily move closer towards each other's positions.

China hopes that Member States will continue to work constructively in the intergovernmental negotiations and, on the basis of extensive and democratic consultations, will arrive at the broadest possible consensus on the five groups of issues as one package. No artificial deadlines should be set on reform, nor should any immature proposals be imposed. China is ready to work together with all sides to ensure that reform of the Security Council will move in a direction that is in both the common interest of Member States and the long-term interests of the United Nations.

**Ms. Sison** (United States of America): The United States looks forward to embarking on another round of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. I would like to welcome our new co-Chairs Ambassador Jinga and Ambassador Khiari. We will depend on the two of them for guidance over the coming months as we work to advance reform. The decision to put the leadership of the intergovernmental negotiations under a co-Chair arrangement reflects the practice used throughout many of the General Assembly committees and working groups, and we look forward to seeing how that dynamic can encourage the broad consensus necessary for reform.

I would also like to extend our deep gratitude to Ambassador Sylvie Lucas for her leadership as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations last year. Her

efforts to encourage members to work towards areas of convergence were proof that the intergovernmental negotiations can work together to achieve progress. In addition to a new General Assembly President and new co-Chairs, this year's intergovernmental negotiations will of course come under the purview of a new Secretary-General. The United States has been clear about our hope that broader United Nations reform will be a major priority over the next few years. And we understand that many Members would like to see Council reform be a part of that.

We know that many Member States believe that intergovernmental negotiations have debated the issue for far too long, with far too little action and that only through text-based negotiations can we achieve substantial progress. We also recognize that there are differences of opinion regarding how we should conduct the negotiations and on what text they should be based. The United States remains open to all manner of negotiations within the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations, so long as they help us arrive at the broad consensus necessary to reach agreement on Council reform.

Reflecting on last year's intergovernmental negotiations, while our joint efforts towards convergence were serious and certainly commendable, it was also clear how carefully we would need to proceed for us all to endorse a common approach. But whatever the eventual path of the negotiations, we must ensure that they enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Security Council and allow us to more effectively address the pressing challenges to international peace and security. Ultimately, we recognize that for reform to be successful, our decisions must enjoy the broadest possible consensus. In order to achieve that, the United States will support reasonable proposals for modest expansion of the Council, in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. Any consideration of which countries merit future permanent membership must take into account their ability and willingness to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security and to their ability to exercise the heavy responsibilities that come with Security Council membership. We remain opposed to any expansion or alteration of the veto.

You, Sir, and the co-Chairs have the support of the United States as we once more work towards a comprehensive solution that can secure the broadest support of the Member States.

**Mr. Sareer** (Maldives): At the outset, I wish to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this debate and carrying forward the dialogue on the important subject of Security Council reform. In that regard my delegation welcomes the appointment of Ambassador Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Ambassador Mohamed Khalid Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. I also take this opportunity to express our profound gratitude to Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, for her dedicated efforts and leadership in steering the intergovernmental negotiations during the past year.

My delegation notes that over the years, including at the previous session of the General Assembly, Member States continued to reaffirm their common desire and aspiration to reform the Security Council in order to make it more inclusive, representative, legitimate and accountable. Yet, a strong divergence of views on how to achieve reform persists, and that has meant that the process has made little meaningful progress to date.

The States Members of the United Nations share the goal of a more representative, accountable, effective and democratic Security Council. The Maldives has been at the forefront of calls for the reform of the Security Council since 1979. Like other Member States, the Maldives is of the view that the comprehensive reform and expansion of the Security Council are essential to making it democratic in composition, effective in decision-making and accountable to the general membership. We believe that Council reform should transcend current global power politics and that its decisions should reflect the collective will of the general membership.

Reform should not only be based on contemporary realities but should also take into account the outcome of the Council's decisions. Making the Security Council more representative and balanced and its work more effective and transparent, especially with regard to its decision-making process, is vital if the United Nations is to be adapted to the global realities of the twenty-first century. Such reform should be implemented in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

During the high-level segment of the current session of the General Assembly, many leaders reiterated their call for the reform of the Security Council. My

delegation believes that that attests to the urgent and growing need for the Assembly to achieve substantial results. During the Assembly's general debate, my delegation underlined the importance of having a fair and equitable opportunity to serve (see A/71/PV.21). The Maldives believes that the expansion of the Council's membership is essential for the Council's continued legitimacy and relevance. We believe that the membership of the Security Council should come from both developing and developed countries, including from small States, and that such membership should be reflective of the United Nations diverse membership.

That is why the Maldives is seeking election to a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the term 2019-2020. This is the first time that my country has presented its candidature for a Security Council seat since it became a Member of the Organization 51 years ago. We believe that every country, regardless of size and might, must have the opportunity to serve, because we believe that it is not size but the will to contribute that makes a difference, and because, moreover, we believe that the opportunity to serve must be based on intent, resolve, fairness and the principle of representation. The Maldives is eager to see a contemporary Security Council that is more representative and influential and that reflects the changes that have taken place in recent years.

Concurrent but separate to the debate on the long-term reform of the Security Council, the current functioning and working methods of the Council are key focus areas for the Maldives, as well. The Maldives strongly supports the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group's code of conduct pertaining to the Security Council, which are key traits that need to be reflected in the Council's work and in its relationship with the General Assembly. According to the Charter, the Security Council acts on behalf of all the Member States, and the Member States are mandated to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. Therefore, the wish of a Member State to be informed and, to the extent possible, involved in the decision-making process is legitimate. Participation is every Member State's right and responsibility. It generates more credibility for the Council and more ownership of its decisions. Moreover, the Council would undoubtedly benefit from receiving a wide range of ideas and the support of the membership. We also ask for the elimination of the disparity between the permanent and non-permanent members, which



remains a fundamental flaw of the Council in that some negotiations and briefings have been limited to the permanent members alone.

The Maldives remains committed wholeheartedly to the reform process and calls for flexibility and the widest possible political acceptance in proceeding with the negotiations. We must be united in taking forward the intergovernmental negotiations and finding a solution that is acceptable to all. It is our earnest hope that consensus is achieved in that vein. The Maldives is a firm believer in the principles enshrined in the Charter. We are a staunch supporter of democracy, the rule of law, equality and justice. We believe in the purposes for which the United Nations was founded, and we believe that the world needs such an organization today more than ever. Yet, for it to fulfil its promise, live up to the expectations of its Members and each and every citizen they represent, and deal with the complex challenges of the world in which we live, the Organization must take drastic measures to remain relevant by reforming itself.

**Mr. Sobral Duarte** (Brazil): Brazil associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Germany on behalf of the Group of Four and the representative of Saint Lucia on behalf of the L.69 group, and would like to add the following comments in its national capacity.

In this year's opening session of the general debate, President Michel Temer underscored that it is vital to make the structures of global governance more representative, for many of them have become aged and disconnected from reality (see A/71/PV.8). President Temer also reaffirmed the commitment of Brazil to collaborating to overcome the impasse on the reform of the Security Council. Brazil was not alone in the general debate in highlighting the urgent need for reform. A significant number of countries also expressed concern about the outdated structure of the current composition of the Security Council and spoke of the need to adjust it to contemporary realities. Many pointed to the inefficiency and paralysis of the Council in dealing with the most pressing challenges to peace and security of current times. Many more warned that every time a decision on the reform of the Security Council was postponed, the very credibility and legitimacy of the United Nations system were put at risk.

It is remarkable that the vast majority of these statements comes from developing countries, which are underrepresented in the most important

decision-making organ of the United Nations. Year after year, a considerable number of African countries reiterate that the underrepresentation of their continent among the permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council is a historical injustice. It is past time that the underrepresentation of developing countries on the Security Council be redressed.

We cannot neglect the importance of such concerns. Brazil concurs with your assessment, Sir, that

“[d]uring the seventy-first session, we must work with each other across and between traditional groups to build trust and flexibility so that we can achieve reform that is for the common good” (A/71/PV.8, p. 6).

Brazil is confident that you will effectively discharge your responsibilities in guiding Member States to reach a decision on the reform of the Security Council.

Member States are already working with each other. As you are aware, Sir, members of reform-oriented groups, including from the Committee of Ten, the Caribbean Community, the Group of Four, the L.69 group and representatives of Nordic and Eastern European countries, as well as permanent members France and the United Kingdom came together to discuss how to move the process of Security Council reform forward. The Group of Friends of Security Council Reform is a coalition that shares, first, the sense of urgency for enacting timely reform, as reflected in the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit; secondly, the resolve to engage in real, text-based negotiations; and, thirdly, the idea that a reformed Security Council would encompass expansion in both categories of membership.

The Group of Friends is yet another instance of political will aimed at effecting change in the United Nations system. The election process of Secretary-General designate António Guterres — the most transparent and inclusive in the history of the Organization — has proved that the membership of the United Nations can rise to the challenges of a reform process. This quest for greater democratization of the United Nations system will not be achieved unless reform of the Security Council takes place. Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan's assessment that “no reform of the United Nations will be complete without the reform of the Security Council” (A/61/1, para. 161) rings as true today as when it was first voiced in 2006.

Before concluding, I would like to welcome the appointment of the Permanent Representative of Romania, Ambassador Ion Jinga, and the Permanent Representative of Tunisia, Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari, as the Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. Brazil pledges its full support to them. In the intergovernmental negotiations, Brazil expects that we will build on progress made during the sixty-ninth and seventieth sessions. The framework document and its annex, circulated by former President of the General Assembly Mr. Sam Kutesa, form a solid basis for text-based negotiations. Last year's exercise has showed that convergence is possible. We expect that the new co-Chairs will take forward the negotiating process with the energy required to lead the intergovernmental negotiating group towards a concrete outcome.

**Mr. Oh Joon** (Republic of Korea): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's annual debate on Security Council reform. My delegation wishes to extend a warm welcome to Ambassador Ion Jinga of Romania and Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari of Tunisia as Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Ambassador Sylvie Lucas of Luxembourg for her hard work and contributions in that role in the last year.

At the outset, my delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group.

The numerous protracted conflicts — from Syria to Yemen, Libya and Iraq, as well as in the Sahel and the Great Lakes region — all point to the need for a Security Council that is effective, accountable and transparent. The unprecedented scale of humanitarian crises that we face today adds to the urgency of the Security Council reform. The Republic of Korea believes that reform must take place in a way that will allow the Security Council to better address the challenges of international peace and security, which cannot be accomplished using the outdated concepts of permanency and veto. Increasing non-permanent membership through periodic elections is the only logical way to achieve this aim.

Expanding the number of elected members alone will bring a better balance to the Security Council, thereby improving its work. Expanding permanency would not allow the Council to effectively address global challenges. It is in this vein that the Republic of Korea supports the French-Mexican political statement on the suspension of the veto in cases of mass atrocities

and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group's code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.

At the same time, however, we recognize the aspirations of some Member States to make greater contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security. To accommodate such aspirations, the Republic of Korea, along with other members of the Uniting for Consensus group, has advocated establishing a new category of longer-term re-electable seats, details of which can be negotiated.

The Member States have long debated the issue of Security Council reform. Personally, I have been engaged in the debate in one way or another since the 1990s. By now, it seems to me that the debate will continue beyond the diplomatic careers of myself and many of my colleagues. In a way, this is understandable because it will be the most important reform in the history of the United Nations. I would just like to remind the Assembly of the people on the streets of Aleppo — and many others in the world who are suffering from protracted conflicts — who look to the Security Council for solutions and for action. We owe it to them to deliver what the Charter of the United Nations promises: to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

I assure you, Mr. President, that the Republic of Korea stands ready to work with other Member States to reform the Security Council for the future of our world.

**Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein): My delegation would like to thank Ambassador Lucas of Luxembourg for steering the work of the intergovernmental negotiations during the seventieth session of the General Assembly and for her tireless efforts to move this very difficult discussion forward. We would also like to thank our colleagues from Romania and Tunisia for taking on the very difficult task of co-chairing the intergovernmental negotiations. We look forward to working with them and pledge our full support.

It is well known that, in the context of discussing the enlargement of the Security Council, Liechtenstein favours the creation of a new category of membership of that body. We propose the creation of six seats with terms of a longer duration than the current non-permanent-seat terms — for example, 8 to 10 years — with incumbents eligible for immediate re-election. This model would enable States to serve and practice permanently on

the Security Council if they so wish and, of course, if they are re-elected consecutively by the United Nations membership. The creation of new veto rights, viewed with suspicion by many, including us, would be avoided in this model. The model provides flexibility in terms of size, which we believe can be very useful in enhancing the political acceptance of the proposal. If there is a desire among the membership to decide on a relatively small enlargement in the first phase, the model we have proposed can easily lead to a Council of 21 or 22 members with the creation of six long-term renewable seats and possibly an additional traditional two-year seat allocated to the Group of Eastern European States.

In that case, the option of further enlargement would become a central element of the review process. In any event, a review clause has an essential place in our model, as it is both mandatory and comprehensive. It would be clearly decided that after a determined period of time — perhaps 16 or 20 years — the General Assembly would revisit the question of Security Council reform and that all aspects of reform would be on the table in the light of the experience garnered with an enlarged Council.

In many ways, the question of the veto is at the heart of the deadlock in Security Council reform in general and in the enlargement of the Council in particular. It is counter-intuitive to many — and we are among the many — to create new veto rights. A majority of the membership is formally in favour of the abolition of the veto, especially in a situation where the veto and the threat of the use of the veto is one of the biggest obstacles for the effective performance of the Security Council on a daily basis, as witnessed most recently on 8 October, when the Council was unable to adopt a resolution on the situation in Aleppo, Syria, due to a veto that was cast.

Given the situation in which we find ourselves resulting from the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, which means that any change to the existing veto rights must be agreed to by the five permanent members that possess the right, we believe that it is crucial to work on modifications in the use of the veto. The most significant initiative in that respect is, in our view, the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group on mass-atrocity crimes that has been frequently referred to in the discussion this morning. The code of conduct, subscribed to by 112 States, is a meaningful political commitment to working in the Security Council to

end and prevent atrocity crimes by supporting credible proposals for that purpose and pledging not to vote against such proposals if put forward.

We call on all States that have not yet joined the code of conduct to do so expeditiously. We view support for the code of conduct at this point as a prerequisite for Security Council membership, and it is an essential element for us in deciding who we will support in contested elections. We will also continue working with partners inside and outside of the Council towards the active and effective implementation of the code of conduct in the Council's practice.

**Mr. Lamek** (France) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to welcome the nomination of Ambassador Ion Jinga and Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We are confident that we can count on their experience and outstanding personal qualities to make tangible progress towards an ambitious reform of the Council. France assures them of its full support in the successful fulfilment of their mission.

Discussions on Security Council reform within the General Assembly have been ongoing for nearly two decades, and it is clear that we have not been able to resolve the issue. Nonetheless, under the leadership of Ambassador E. Courtenay Rattray, the work accomplished during the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session allowed us to obtain initial results, with the elaboration of a framework document that could usher in comprehensive negotiations, and which received the support of a significant majority of Member States. In addition, the work accomplished during the seventieth session under the leadership of Ms. Sylvie Lucas allowed for the identification of elements of convergence on two key points of the reform. The recent establishment of a Group of Friends of Security Council Reform also shows the support of a great majority of Member States in favour of a real start of negotiations.

France hopes that all the work that has been accomplished so far will serve as the foundation for the next cycle of intergovernmental negotiations that will commence during this session. We must now build on this basis and begin text-based negotiations as soon as possible. We count on the new Chairs to work in that direction. France is confident of the ability of Member States to come to an agreement on an ambitious reform project as they were able to do last year regarding two

historical agreements, namely, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. This represents a new opportunity to show that the United Nations is capable of deep reform. Such reform is fundamental. Going forward, the Council must reflect the reality of today's world while strengthening its ability to fully shoulder its responsibilities in maintaining international peace and security.

France's position has been constant and is well known in that regard. We wish to see the Council reflect the emergence of new powers that have the will and the ability to assume permanent membership within the Security Council, and which, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, can make a significant contribution to the work of the Council. In that regard, as Member States know, France supports the candidacies of Germany, Brazil, India and Japan for permanent membership within the Security Council, and the increased representation of African countries, in both the permanent and non-permanent categories.

It is in the same spirit of responsibility that France has proposed that the five permanent members of the Council voluntarily and collectively suspend their use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities. That voluntary step does not require a revision of the Charter of the United Nations; it requires a political commitment. As for France, it has made that commitment at the highest level through the President of the Republic, who announced it during the general debate of the seventieth session (see A/70/PV.13). This was an extremely important decision for international security, for peace and for renewed and relegitimized multilateralism.

Today, the joint French-Mexican initiative is supported by almost 100 countries. In the same vein, the code of conduct prepared by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, which France supports, has also garnered broad support. Fuelled by that momentum, we hope that we will be able to convince other Member States to join us. It is in the shared interest of all Member States that the Council be able to fulfil its mandate and fully perform its role, in particular with respect to mass-atrocity situations.

The initiatives on limiting the right of the veto, which point towards strengthening the fairness and accountability of the Security Council, are complementary to a comprehensive reform of the Council for which France will continue to advocate. We

must all collectively shoulder our full responsibility in order to move beyond the status quo in the interest of the Organization. The difficulty of such reform does not diminish the pressing need for it.

**Mr. Moustafa** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council, and for the importance that you attach to the expansion of the membership of the Council, which you reaffirmed in your opening statement today.

I would like to commend the efforts of the successive Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. I also commend the efforts made during the past years to achieve progress despite all the difficulties and challenges. I especially welcome your decision, Mr. President, to appoint Mr. Ion Jinga, the Permanent Representative of Romania, and Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari, the Permanent Representative of Tunisia, as the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. This is a step that reflects your awareness, Sir, of the need to build the widest possible consensus through the negotiations process and to enhance trust and build the membership's confidence. In this regard, we reaffirm our full support of the two Chairs and reiterate our confidence that they will continue to build consensus among groups and Member States. We wish them every success in their assignment.

Egypt is firmly convinced that the United Nations must undergo comprehensive reform, particularly of the Security Council, with a view to supporting the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to enabling the Organization to respond to contemporary and emerging international challenges. We attach great importance to a true reform of the Security Council through a transparent and comprehensive process that is fully owned by the entire membership with a view to reaching a comprehensive and agreed-upon solution that enjoys the widest political acceptance and includes the five main interlinked pillars of negotiations set forth in decision 62/557. We are confident that these clear parameters should be the point of reference for the work of the two new Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations.

We reaffirm that Egypt is firmly committed to the Common African Position as set forth in the Ezulwini



Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, which are the only points of reference to have been reaffirmed in successive African summits, and which include a comprehensive vision on Security Council reform, including the matter of the veto. We are satisfied by the increased support for the Common African Position, which we consider to be clear evidence that the world is aware of the importance of redressing the historic injustice committed against the African continent. The African continent still lacks its well-deserved permanent representation in the Council and equitable representation in the elected-member category that would enable Africa to advance its views on the Council's work in general and on the African items on the Council's agenda in particular, keeping in mind that these items occupy most of the Council's agenda, which in turn affirms the legitimacy of the continent's demands.

*Mrs. Ataeva (Turkmenistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

This year, Egypt has been honoured to be a member of the Security Council, holding one of the three non-permanent seats allocated to Africa. We are currently the only Arab member of the Council and have acquired much experience throughout this year. This experience has confirmed some of our long-held convictions, but we have also learned some lessons, which we would like to share with the Assembly.

First, no real Security Council reform is possible without addressing the structural imbalance represented by the monopoly of the permanent five on the work of Council, due to their exclusive right to the use of the veto. This reaffirms the soundness of the Common African Position, which calls on principle for the elimination of the veto. However, until the veto is eliminated, all new permanent members of the Council should enjoy all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership.

Secondly, any proposal on partial reform of the Security Council, for example, on the expansion of the permanent category without a comprehensive reform of the veto, would not lead to true and fair reform. Actually, it would add to the current structural imbalance that plagues the Council. Indeed, such a reform would serve the interests of just a handful of Member States.

Thirdly, when the permanent members obtained the special privilege of the veto, stemming from the historical situation at the time of the establishment of the United Nations, the effectiveness of other members in the Council depended on their ability to defend the

interests of their geographical groups, which reaffirms that the reform should be based on the principles of democracy, transparency and accountability. It also proves once again the soundness of the African Common Position, as it reaffirms the point of regional representation as the main key issue in the reform process.

In conclusion, in the wake of various attempts to produce documents and papers in the previous sessions, I hope that the current efforts will focus on creating a common will to achieve real progress and develop a vision that would help us reach a wider consensus among States and groups of States in order to reach a principles-based solution that enjoys the widest degree of acceptance and enhances the confidence of all Member States in the intergovernmental negotiations. I would like to reaffirm that Egypt is committed to working with all Member States to adopt a comprehensive reform that would enable the Security Council to effectively fulfil its role of maintaining international peace and security.

**Ms. Lodhi (Pakistan):** Madam President, we are pleased to see you presiding over the General Assembly as we consider the vital question of equitable representation and an increase in membership of the Security Council. Pakistan welcomes the wise decision to appoint two of our able colleagues, the Ambassadors of Tunisia and Romania, to co-facilitate the intergovernmental negotiations this year. I wish to convey to them our profound gratitude for accepting this responsibility. I also assure them, as well as you, Madam, of my delegation's support.

Pakistan fully aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier today by Ambassador Cardi of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) group.

The deadlock on reform of the Security Council has persisted for more than two decades now. Despite setting a clear goal in decision 62/557 to seek a solution that could garner the widest possible political acceptance, the General Assembly remains as far from reaching this goal as ever. But this should not come as a surprise. Without a bridge, people on parallel banks of a river continue to remain separated. Here at the United Nations, such bridges are built by accommodation and flexibility and cemented by compromise. Unfortunately, these essential ingredients have been conspicuous in their absence in our negotiations on Security Council reform.

However, not everyone has been short on flexibility. The UfC group has twice revised its proposal in a genuine spirit of compromise. As evident from the UfC statement delivered earlier today by Ambassador Cardi, our group stands ready to engage constructively in this process. But it takes more than one hand to clap. The hand that refuses to clap represents a handful of countries that have sought to promote their self-arrogated right to privileged and unequal status. This selfish pursuit of national ambition is the real reason for our failure to make the Security Council more democratic, more accountable, more transparent and more effective.

We cannot change the past, but we can determine the future if the right lessons are learned from past efforts made at reform. In the intergovernmental negotiations process, quick fixes and procedural manoeuvres have never yielded positive results. A genuine agreement on substance is required to make progress on issues as consequential as reform of the Security Council a reality. In protracted negotiations it is impossible to find solutions at the extreme ends of political positions. In short, compromises leading to convergence on substance are the only way forward. The past three sessions of the intergovernmental negotiations testify to this important lesson.

The intergovernmental negotiations are the only forum that can achieve progress towards our shared goal of a reformed Security Council. The negotiations' nature must be respected if we wish for them to serve their purpose. It is a membership-driven process based on the proposals and positions of Member States and negotiating groups. The process needs to be open, transparent, predictable and inclusive. It must maintain an ambience of mutual respect, enabling Member States to engage constructively.

Let me now outline my delegation's position on Security Council reform. We support expansion of the Security Council in the category of elected non-permanent seats on the basis of equitable geographic distribution and a system of fair rotation. More elected members will enhance regional representation and ownership, adding legitimacy to the Council. We want a more democratic, accountable, transparent and effective Security Council that reflects the interests and aspirations of all States Members of the United Nations. In pursuit of these universally agreed principles, Pakistan firmly opposes the creation of new permanent seats. However, we have respect and

reverence for the Common African Position, which voices the demand of an entire continent. As such, it is inherently different from the demand for permanent seats in pursuit of narrow national ambitions.

New permanent seats are the antithesis of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Addition of more such seats to the Council will serve only to satisfy the hunger for power and privilege of a few without addressing the actual question of equitable representation on the Security Council. In the absence of periodic elections and rotation, new permanent members would not be accountable to the wider membership. The Council's working methods would become more opaque rather than more transparent. And if today the Council remains paralysed and ineffective due to clashing political interests among the permanent five, we can well imagine how indecisive and gridlocked it would become with twice the number of permanent members.

There is no good rationale or logic for more permanent seats. Besides, even if one were to contemplate additional permanent seats on the basis of regional representation, can we ever achieve equitable distribution in the category of permanent seats? Despite the logic of these arguments, the much-needed expansion of the Council has been held hostage for decades to an illogical demand.

Nevertheless, we are again ready to engage on those issues in this year's intergovernmental negotiations. At the most recent session of the negotiations, the membership discussed a paper by the Chair on the two key issues of reform: working methods and the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly. In our view, the paper reflected a general convergence on some important principles. It is imperative that these principles continue to be reinforced — and not contradicted — when proposals and ideas are shared on other key issues of reform.

Before I conclude, let me once again stress the importance of embracing flexibility and rejecting rigid approaches. The first expansion of the Security Council was completed in a span of almost three years. All States Members of the United Nations benefited equally at that time, as the number of the Council's non-permanent seats were increased from 6 to 10. But the current stalemate of over 24 years has not benefited any Member State that aspires to serve in the Council. It seems that no Member State can have its equal and

fair share because some among us just want it all. That is not just unfortunate; it represents a selfish disregard of others.

**Mr. Matjila** (South Africa): I thank you, Madam President, for giving my delegation the opportunity to express our views on the important agenda item before the General Assembly.

South Africa aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representatives of Sierra Leone and Saint Lucia, who spoke on behalf of the African Union member States and the L.69 group of countries, respectively. I wish to make the following additional remarks in my national capacity.

In participating in today's debate, South Africa remains mindful of the urgent need for Security Council reform. We encourage all Member States and groups to work hard to move the process forward on the basis of the gains made in previous sessions. We commend the President for convening this debate early in the seventy-first session. I would also congratulate Ambassador Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, on their appointments as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, and assure them of South Africa's commitment to working with them to advance the comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

The Charter of the United Nations confers on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Through its Charter mandate, the Council is given important and far-reaching powers to act on behalf of the broader membership of the United Nations. It is therefore crucial that the Security Council be reformed to reflect the realities of the twenty-first century in order to make the Council more democratic, legitimate, representative, responsive and transparent in its working methods and decision-making processes.

In 1945, the United Nations had 51 Member States; today it has 193. At that time, in 1945, there were only four African States: Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia and the Union of South Africa. Africa today now has 54 Member States. The historical injustice against the African continent as reflected in the structure of the Security Council should finally be corrected. We believe that the Organization would benefit greatly from our continent's full participation in the Security Council. Therefore, my delegation calls on the President and the

Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations to spare no effort in this session to give priority to and expedite the reform process.

South Africa is of the view that the main obstacle to achieving any movement in our ceaseless discussions is that the process itself is flawed. In spite of its name, the intergovernmental negotiations are not negotiations. Rather, they are debates comprising endless repetition of decades-old positions from groups and States. That is why South Africa and so many other Member States have called for the commencement of text-based negotiations. We support expansion of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories, and we express the need for reform now.

Like many other States, South Africa was hopeful that the seventieth session would build on the significant achievements of the sixty-ninth. We were bitterly disappointed that the process stalled once again. Fortunately, we are at the beginning of a new session and therefore wish once again to make our position on the process clear. South Africa reiterates its call for efforts to build on the progress achieved in previous sessions, especially the sixty-ninth session and on the basis of decisions 62/557 and 69/560, as well as the framework document and its annex circulated by the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, on 31 July 2015. To achieve such progress, we propose that the intergovernmental negotiations of the seventy-first session be primarily focused on developing a road map with a clear implementable framework.

To achieve that, we further propose that the intergovernmental negotiations adopt a different format this year, replacing the debate format that has become our routine with vigorous engagement on the framework document and how to move it forward. As we also believe that the process will benefit from bloc meetings, we propose that the Chairs schedule a few concurrent days per element to allow for interactive exchange and negotiations among Member States.

We have seen over the past years that one-day meetings with long lapses of time between them only result in general statements repeated ad nauseam, thus threatening to turn the process into an endless working group that never achieves reform. We also wish to call for the use of the full calendar of the session. We should therefore start as soon as possible and continue for as long as possible and not let several months go by without scheduling any related activities, as happened

in previous sessions. South Africa does not believe that the adoption of such a practical process will undermine the principles of all-inclusiveness and transparency to which we are fully committed.

In conclusion, my delegation is well aware that the road ahead is going to be challenging, but the Assembly can rest assured that South Africa, working with other like-minded Member States, intends to walk it to its successful conclusion. We would like to reassure Member States of our commitment to working with the President and the Chairs to move the process of the reform of the Security Council forward during the seventy-first session.

**Mr. Bessho** (Japan): I would like to join the many others who have expressed sincere appreciation for the President's convening today's important meeting and welcome the appointment of Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari of Tunisia and Ambassador Ion Jinga of Romania as the new Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. As the President of the General Assembly rightly pointed out when taking the solemn oath of office in this Hall on 13 September, "the question is not whether reform is necessary, but how and in what form it will be achieved" (*A/70/PV.118, p. 5*). We fully support this idea.

I also fully align myself with the statement made by Ambassador Harald Braun, Permanent Representative of Germany, on behalf of the Group of Four.

I cannot stress enough how important it is to commence text-based negotiations without further delay, taking into account that an overwhelming majority supports enlargement in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. I am glad to hear similar views from many other Member States. I also greatly welcome the establishment of the Group of Friends of Security Council Reform. The voices of this group, formed around shared opinions, should be taken into consideration.

Today I would like to respectfully ask the President of the General Assembly to give the co-Chairs a clear mandate to share a road map for text-based negotiations. With a road map aimed at a specific outcome, Member States can work meaningfully towards a significant outcome throughout this session of the General Assembly. We all know very well the positions and proposals of Member States, as they are all reflected in the framework document and its annex, which rolled over to the current session. During the last session,

we also heard, once again, detailed statements from Member States on each of the five key issues. What we have to do now is to start preparing a concise and operational negotiation text, preferably in the form of a draft resolution, and to immediately launch negotiations within a specific time frame.

I hope that we will be able to enter into serious text-based negotiations and not into another exhausting round of speeches. Let us not get ourselves bogged down in procedural discussions any longer. We are too familiar with that approach and have perfected the art of delay. Instead, let us engage with one another on substance in the coming text-based negotiations. It is time for concrete action to back our many words of reform.

Before closing, let me quote Mr. Kofi Annan, whose words were taken up by Secretary-General-designate António Guterres at the informal dialogue on 12 April: "No reform of the United Nations will be complete without the reform of the Security Council" (*A/61/I, para. 161*).

**Mr. Winid** (Poland): Let me thank the President for convening today's important annual debate.

At the outset, Poland would like to warmly welcome the nomination of our good friends, the Permanent Representatives of Romania and Tunisia, as the new Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. This is the first time that the intergovernmental negotiations will be led by two co-Chairs. We therefore hope that not only our co-Chairs, but also all Member States, will redouble their efforts to bring about a positive outcome to our negotiations.

I also take this opportunity to thank the two previous Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador E. Courtenay Rattray of Jamaica and Ambassador Sylvie Lucas of Luxembourg, for their significant work and determination to bridge the divisions that remain among Member States.

As we will soon resume the intergovernmental negotiations, let me reflect on how we shall approach the task ahead of us. First of all, we shall continue our dialogue in good faith but we also shall have faith in ourselves. Only a year ago we managed to finalize three fundamental processes — on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, on financing for development and



on climate change — which will guide our work for the coming decades. I truly believe that we should be able to add to those accomplishments a major political agreement on the future shape of the Security Council.

With the growing complexity of today's security landscape and the multiplying challenges and threats, if we are to find good and lasting solutions, we need to sit together, talk and carefully listen — especially listen — to each other. Since the security issues that we need to address are often interconnected — they are not merely intra-State; rather, they reach across States' borders, regions and continents — it does matter who sits on the Security Council and receives our mandate to act on behalf of the entire United Nations membership. It does matter whether the voices of African States, Arab States, small developing States or Eastern European States — my regional group — are heard and are reflected in the Council's decisions to a greater extent than they are today.

Secondly, we shall build on our work on the reform of the Security Council that was carried out in the past, especially in the previous two rounds of the intergovernmental negotiations. We learned a lot about our positions, defined areas of convergence and identified the main points of division. Let us now engage in a truly meaningful process of give and take.

Last but not least, the result of the negotiations must be backed by all Member States. In our opinion, only a consensus can guarantee that we will be able to fully implement an agreement once negotiations are concluded.

Poland remains committed to the idea of having a more transparent, more equitable and effective Security Council. We will do our best to fully and constructively engage in Member States' dialogue during the next round of the intergovernmental negotiations. My country will give unwavering support to all efforts leading to the much-needed agreement on Security Council reform.

**Mr. Rivero Rosario** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the convening of this debate, and in that connection we recognize the efforts of the Permanent Representatives of Luxembourg and Jamaica and their predecessors in leading the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We welcome the appointment of the Permanent Representatives of Romania and Tunisia as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on this most pressing

issue. We pledge our full cooperation so that these negotiations may be successful.

Cuba supports the genuine and profound reform of the Security Council into an effective, transparent, representative and democratic body. We support renewed and sustained efforts to fast-track negotiations on Security Council reform, which is an issue that has been on the General Assembly agenda for more than 20 years. We must continue to advocate for the adaptation of the Security Council in line with developments in international relations and within the United Nations itself over the past seven decades.

In accordance with Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Council is responsible for acting on behalf of Member States. However, the reality is that the 193 States Members of the United Nations do not feel represented by the decisions of the Council, making it difficult to maintain the status quo established in 1945. Cuba reiterates that the work of the Council is the collective responsibility of all Member States, and that they should be guaranteed real participation in the work and decision-making processes that this body undertakes. For this reason, we must fully carry out the mandate bestowed by the General Assembly through various decisions, including the most recent, of 21 July, on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council.

The rounds of discussions that have taken place thus far and the various positions that have been expressed confirm, in our opinion, that the vast majority of Member States supports, at the very least, the expansion of Security Council membership in its two categories of permanent and non-permanent members. Moreover, we must eliminate the veto, reform the working methods, potentially leading to the gradual approval of the Council's rules of procedure so that they are no longer provisional, and abide by the respective mandates of the General Assembly and the Security Council in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

Cuba is prepared to undertake the negotiations required for this process without further delay. We agree with the majority of delegations that all proposals made during the intergovernmental negotiations must be taken into account. This process must be inclusive and transparent. Although Cuba's position is well

known, I would like to reiterate the following for the benefit of the new round of discussions.

We are in favour of a substantial increase in the membership of the Security Council to around 25 or 26 States. Such expansion must take place within both categories of members and must include developing countries. The fundamental objective should be to overcome the unjustifiable lack of representation of developing countries in the Security Council. The new members — both permanent and non-permanent — of a wider Council must have the exact same duties and prerogatives as the current members of the body, including the veto if it cannot be eliminated. Cuba would not be opposed to the possibility of immediately re-electing non-permanent members. Cuba is not in favour of creating new member categories, as this would further deepen existing differences and foster division within this body. As for the veto, Cuba's position is well known with regard to this anti-democratic and anachronistic privilege. It is our firm conviction that the veto should be eliminated.

The reform of the Council must include, as a priority, reform of its working methods. We advocate for a transparent Security Council in which closed consultations are the exception and not the rule. We are in favour of a Council that keeps to the issues that are within its domain and does not encroach on the preserves of other principal bodies of the United Nations.

I reiterate that Cuba does not hope to achieve an immediate agreement: we understand perfectly the complexities and sensitivities of this process which will require time, effort and, above all, a spirit of flexibility during negotiations. Nevertheless, we cannot accept as valid the structure and procedures of a Security Council that was established in 1945 for a world order that no longer exists, especially in the face of threats and challenges that would have been unimaginable back when the Organization was created. That would be a total disregard of the dramatic developments in international relations and within the United Nations itself throughout the past 70 years. Cuba is ready to successfully overcome this challenge.

**Mr. Tenya Hasegawa** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes this meeting of the General Assembly to continue discussing one of the fundamental issues linked to reforming the Organization — the question of equitable representation on and increase

in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council.

As well as commending the work carried out by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, during the past cycle of intergovernmental negotiations, we welcome the appointment of the Permanent Representative of Romania, Ion Jinga, and the Permanent Representative of Tunisia, Mohamed Khaled Khiari, as co-Chairs of the same process during this current session. They can count on the full support of my delegation.

The overwhelming majority of those present agree on the necessity and importance of adapting the structure of our Organization following the tremendous changes that the international system has experienced in past decades, such as the end of the cold war and the significant increase in the number of States, to cite just two examples. In this regard, the intensification of our efforts is especially important in order to make the desired reform of such a fundamental body of the United Nations as the Security Council a reality. It must be made more democratic, representative and transparent: a delicate responsibility that falls without exception on each and every one of us. Carrying out this task becomes even more imperative in the current climate, where delicate situations such as in the one in the Middle East, and particularly the grave conflict in Syria, require effective responses from the Security Council.

Peru reiterates once again its conviction that in order to bring the Security Council into step with current realities, it is indispensable to incorporate new members — permanent as well as non-permanent — in order to promote fairer and more equitable regional representation. My delegation wishes to underscore that the enlargement should be carried out with moderation in order to remedy the imbalance in the composition of the Council, while at the same time safeguarding its effectiveness. In that regard, we believe it essential to stress the need for increasing the seats reserved for our regions, which should no longer be shunted aside.

Because of the different approaches to the integration of new permanent members, my country proposes that, as an interim measure until consensus is reached, there should be an intermediate category in which non-permanent members of the Security Council

could serve terms of over two years and be indefinitely re-elected to serve consecutive terms.

I would also like to stress the issue of the veto. Peru has consistently supported initiatives to limit its use and to ban its use in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity and flagrant violations of human rights or international humanitarian law. In that regard, we support the French and Mexican initiative on that issue as well as the code of conduct drawn up by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group, to which my country belongs.

Experience teaches us that we will not make real progress in the negotiations until we make a greater effort to be flexible, in the interest of the common good. When we adopt this compromise approach, we will have to make concessions and soften our positions. Then, finally, we shall end up with a more harmonious, legitimate and balanced system that will benefit everyone. After so many years spent immersed in deliberation and discussion on this subject, we think that the time has come to act.

**Mr. Begeç** (Turkey): We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) group. The following are additional remarks in my national capacity.

We appreciate the engagement of the President of the General Assembly in the process and warmly welcome Ambassadors Jinga and Khiari in their new capacities as co-Chairs. We look forward to cooperating closely with them. We also express our gratitude to the former Chair, Ambassador Lucas, for her efforts to find elements of convergence, which is the correct approach in attempting to reach consensus on this important matter.

The need for Security Council reform is unmistakable. While we diplomats have been discussing this matter for the past couple of decades, the Council's inaction has been costing human lives. That is the disturbing reality that we sometimes overlook when concentrating on technical details.

Permanent membership and the veto mechanism are the obvious targets for reform. It is therefore difficult to understand why Member States, rather than rectifying the situation, are seeking to consolidate permanent membership and the veto mechanism. Increasing the number of permanent members and the ratio of those

with veto power to those without it will simply make matters worse. Additionally, we do not know how introducing new permanent members or veto powers would enhance the accountability of the Council. Likewise, we do not know what mechanism would be used for assessing the performances of those countries after they become Council members.

We are advocating for a meaningful and principled reform that would bring about a more democratic, representative, effective, transparent and, above all, accountable Council. We believe that this only be achieved can by increasing the number of elected members of the Council. For those aspiring to a longer term in service of the maintenance of international peace and security, we, the UfC Group, propose longer-term seats with the possibility of re-election. We are pleased to see that there is increasing support for the intermediate approach as a compromise solution.

Ideally, the veto should be abolished. There is no justifiable explanation as to why certain Council members should have that right and others not. In that respect, we support the initiatives to limit the use of a negative vote in cases of mass atrocities. A more equitable representation of the regional groups and a fair system of rotation, including enhanced opportunities for underrepresented groups, is a must in a reformed Council. The working methods and the relationship with the General Assembly are no less important matters, as they determine the daily dynamics of the system.

Security Council reform is a matter of global importance, which should naturally go beyond the national aspirations and interests of any individual State. Needless to say, an issue that has a direct impact on the lives of current and future generations requires compromise and a consensual process.

**Mr. Kamau** (Kenya): My delegation attaches great importance to agenda item 122, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council".

Let me begin by commending the President for his dedication and commitment to advancing the negotiations on the reform of the Security Council. I congratulate Ambassador Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental

negotiations on Security Council reform. I assure the co-Chairs of my delegation's support and cooperation.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Union member States.

Kenya reaffirms its full support and commitment to the common African position and Africa's legitimate claim, as embodied in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. My delegation also supports the statement of the Group of African States and recognizes that it has comprehensively addressed the substantive issues on Security Council reform that are of the greatest concern to Africa and the wider United Nations membership, in general. In the interests of brevity and to avoid repetition, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to make some remarks.

First of all, I believe I speak for many African States and all Member States that believe that the whole United Nations system must be reformed to adapt to the changing global realities and to enhance its effectiveness in solving present, emerging and future threats. Making the United Nations fit for purpose and capable of facing the challenges of the twenty-first century is now a matter of urgent importance.

Secondly, as the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council exemplifies a structure that is not compatible with the current geopolitical realities of the world. It is outdated, outmoded and not fit for the purpose of promoting and sustaining peace and security in our world. The status quo is dangerous — it undermines peace and it causes and prolongs death and suffering.

Thirdly, the Council's small size, exclusive nature and dysfunctional character is based on mid-twentieth-century geopolitics and prejudices. Its relationship with the General Assembly, its working methods and its undemocratic nature are out of step with today's challenges and demands.

Fourthly, Kenya believes that it is important for the United Nations to meet contemporary standards of modern civilization and human rights, including legitimacy based upon accountability and democratic decision-making procedures and representation. The fundamental challenge to the Security Council is that some regions of the world do not have adequate or effective representation on the Council, and a considerable portion of the United Nations global

constituency is therefore unrepresented and unheard in the administration of global affairs. This is the recipe that is responsible for the gridlock and dysfunction in the Security Council.

My delegation is convinced that it is imperative that the Council be reformed to enable it to meet contemporary standards and the demands of the twenty-first century. It is unacceptable that Africa, on which a large part of the security agenda of the United Nations is concentrated, and which is also the focus of considerable work by United Nations peacebuilding and peacekeeping personnel, has no determinative voice in the Council.

It is therefore incumbent upon us, the United Nations membership, to collectively ensure that the Security Council reform process moves forward on the five key issues specified in decision 62/557, a decision that is supported by the African Union and the Government of Kenya. We believe that the progress reflected in decision 69/560 provides a valuable basis for our collective efforts to work towards the comprehensive reform of the Security Council by means of text-based negotiations.

Finally, my delegation looks forward to engaging in open and transparent negotiations, where the entire membership has an equal voice. We must build on that as part of our efforts to make the United Nations a more efficient and effective instrument in the service of all the peoples of the world. No meaningful reform of the collective United Nations system will be achieved without the reform of the Security Council.

**Mr. Inguanez (Malta):** I wish to join the Permanent Representative of Italy, Mr. Sebastiano Cardi, who spoke on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group, and many other speakers in extending my appreciation and gratitude to the President for convening this annual debate on Security Council reform. I am sure that under the new General Assembly leadership, this important item on the Assembly's agenda will be given due consideration and receive fresh impetus. We have already seen evidence of the determination and enthusiasm to move forward on the issue in the appointment of the two co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari, the Permanent Representative of Tunisia, and Ambassador Ion Jinga, the Permanent Representative of Romania, to whom we extend our congratulations and full support in their sensitive task.



The Security Council remains an important source of legitimacy for international action. Yet, despite the political changes, the development of the international and regional systems, the dramatic events on the international security scene and the consolidation of global challenges, the composition of the Security Council has remained unaltered since 1965. We all agree that the Security Council of today is not a faithful reflection of the new world order of the twenty-first century. There are some, if not many, who question how long the Council's legitimacy will last if its composition is not changed to reflect today's realities. That brings to the fore the question of urgency — of finding a way through the complex and multifaceted issue of reform.

Malta has always believed that the founding argument of the Uniting for Consensus Group, of which we are a part, is based on the conviction that the different positions of countries are hard to reconcile and that, therefore, a consensual approach is needed in order for an early reform to take place. It is Malta's conviction that a pragmatic approach is required and that the whole family of nations stands to gain from compromise and the sharing of the advantages of a solution that is acceptable to the widest possible range of the United Nations membership. Malta also believes that a consensual approach is inherently an adaptable and flexible approach.

Practically all States today agree that there is a need for reform. What is elusive is, of course, how to reform. In our view, a meaningful reform proposal is one that tries to strengthen the democratic, functional, representational and effective features of the Organization, while being realistic about the restraints and limitations that this intergovernmental process has encountered over the past two decades. It is in that sense that we argue for change where change is possible.

In line with this thinking, Malta holds that the key to unblocking the present stalemate is in expanding where expansion is possible. We think that the most possible reform formula is one that focuses on an expansion of the non-permanent seats of the Council — first, by increasing the current number of non-permanent seats, and secondly, by establishing a new category of longer-term non-permanent seats with the possibility of an immediate re-election. In that way those States willing to make a larger contribution to the work of the Council would have the right to contest elections for a longer-term seat while creating more space for other States to participate in their respective regional groups.

Today's debate faces far fewer questions about whether or not reform is necessary. It rather focuses on what kind of reform is possible. As we have moved from a position of questioning to accepting the need for reform, Malta believes that the time has now come to take the next step — moving from accepting that reform is inevitable to defining what type of reform can realistically be achieved. In doing so, a greater understanding of what is at stake and a greater willingness to listen to all views are needed. I daresay that what is needed most is greater courage — the courage to face the reality that the status quo is increasingly becoming a non-option. With that in mind, Malta stands ready to continue to cooperate with the President, with the new co-Chairs and with the whole United Nations membership in the search for a reform model that has the support of the widest possible consensus.

**Mr. Gafoor** (Singapore): I join previous speakers in congratulating Ambassador Ion Jinga of Romania and Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari of Tunisia on their appointment to lead the work of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. I assure them of the support of my delegation.

We begin today the thirteenth round of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. The stark reality is that we have been talking about Security Council reform for more than a decade without making any progress. So, we need to ask some hard questions: are we serious about the intergovernmental negotiations process or about Security Council reform? Has the negotiating process become a ritual with no outcome — a ritual that over time has become an end in itself? If this is just a ritual with no outcome, what is the real utility of the process? And after a decade, have the intergovernmental negotiations become an integral part of the landscape of the status quo, or are they a vehicle to change the status quo?

I leave those questions for reflection by all members. There is a more fundamental question that needs to be answered, if not publicly then at least privately. Are the permanent members really interested in Security Council reform of any kind? No one here is naive enough to believe that the five permanent members (P-5), as privileged members of the status quo, will become enthusiastic champions of Security Council reform. However, what exactly are the elements of reform that the P-5 are prepared to accept? Do the P-5 want the intergovernmental negotiation process to deliver any

outcome? And if so, what kind of outcome? And what kind of timeline do they have in mind? We will need greater clarity on the positions of the P-5 in order to make progress in the intergovernmental negotiations.

We cannot continue our work in a business-as-usual manner. The world has changed considerably since the United Nations was established in 1945. The United Nations is now facing more intractable challenges than ever to peace and security. Yet, the Security Council, which is tasked with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, remains deeply paralysed. It is unable to deal with real conflict situations in Syria and Yemen, at the cost of so many innocent lives.

Just a month ago, the world witnessed an unusual spectacle of vetoes and counter-vetoes in the Security Council over the question of Syria. If there was any proof needed for urgent reforms to the Security Council, that meeting a month ago provided a strong case. If the Security Council, in particular the permanent members, are unable to exercise leadership to resolve pressing issues of the day, the case for reform becomes stronger, not weaker. And if the P-5 were to use the Security Council as the platform to advance their own interests or push their pet agendas, then Member States would become cynical about the role of the Council. Ultimately, the need for Security Council reform is linked to the need to preserve the credibility of the United Nations, the credibility of the Security Council and, above all, the credibility of the permanent members of the Council. It is therefore vitally important that the intergovernmental negotiations deliver an outcome that will strengthen the effectiveness, accountability, inclusiveness and transparency of the Security Council.

My delegation is ready to engage constructively and committed to making genuine progress in the intergovernmental negotiations. I wish to provide a brief recap of Singapore's position on the question of Security Council reform. We support expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership to make the Council more representative and inclusive. But we also believe that any reform of the Security Council must go beyond just increasing the number of seats. Reform should make the Council more accountable, transparent and inclusive for everyone, not just for aspirants to permanent membership. That is an important issue for many small States, as we do not have many opportunities to serve in the Security Council.

We therefore attach great importance to improving the working methods of the Council. We have made a number of practical proposals to enhance the transparency and accountability of the Security Council. Of note, we have joined many countries to support limiting the use of the veto by the P-5. We do not support extending the veto to new permanent members, as we do not think additional vetoes will enhance the effectiveness of the Council to respond to threats to peace and security. We hope that the thirteenth intergovernmental negotiations process will take these proposals up when it resumes its work later this year.

As we start a new round of negotiations, I would like to make some general points.

First, we need to inject greater urgency into our work. The intergovernmental negotiations in particular must discuss the elephant in the room and address the use of the veto. If we fail to do so, we will relegate the work of the negotiations to irrelevance. Singapore supports the French-Mexican initiative calling on the P-5 to voluntarily and collectively pledge not to use the veto in cases of recognized mass atrocities. We also support the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) Group's initiative on a code of conduct on Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. We welcome the fact that two P-5 members support the initiative of the ACT group to restrict the use of the veto in certain circumstances. We think that their leadership on this specific issue is commendable. Clearly, there is a growing momentum and growing urgency in favour of limiting the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities. The intergovernmental negotiations must recognize that trend and focus its attention on the important issue in order to make concrete progress. We also welcome the recent establishment of the Group of Friends on Security Council Reform, which includes, we note, the participation of two P-5 members.

Secondly, much work has already been done in the intergovernmental negotiations process. We should not start from scratch but rather build on our past successes and good work done. We have a useful framework document, which was circulated by the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, in July 2015. We need to build on that framework document and find common ground on each of the five key issues. Some progress was achieved this year under Chair Sylvie Lucas of Luxembourg, who prepared elements

of convergence on two of the five key issues. We need to continue to identify similar elements of convergence on the other three key issues. As I mentioned earlier, there seems to be growing support for limiting the use of the veto, and we hope that the intergovernmental negotiations can make progress on this important issue.

Thirdly, we need to prioritize our work and try to identify quick areas for implementation. Even as we try to identify areas of convergence in the other three outstanding areas, we should look again at the elements of the convergence paper and work to identify practical steps that we can take now, without any amendments to the Charter of the United Nations, to improve the practices of the current Council. The intergovernmental negotiations process can and must make progress in areas where there is strong support from the United Nations membership.

The appointment of two co-Chairs is a good start. It shows our willingness to think outside of the box and try fresh approaches. Hopefully, with two co-Chairs we can double our effort in the quest for progress. The President has set the tone for the intergovernmental negotiations process in the seventy-first session. My delegation will work with the President and the two co-Chairs to achieve a good outcome.

**Mr. Djani** (Indonesia): I promise I will be as brief as possible. Let me first thank the President for convening such an important debate. I would like to congratulate Ambassador Ion Jinga of Romania and Ambassador Khaled Khiari of Tunisia on their appointment to co-chair the intergovernmental negotiations at the seventy-first session. My delegation assures them of its constructive engagement and support. We also express our gratitude to Ambassador Lucas of Luxembourg for chairing the intergovernmental negotiations at the previous session.

As the recent open debate in the Security Council on special political missions (see S/PV.7802) highlighted once again, the United Nations is faced by significant challenges owing to a deteriorating global environment resulting from the increase in the number of civil wars since 2008 and various unresolved conflicts. The ability and credibility of the Security Council, which is unable to effectively perform its Charter role, are being questioned on a broad scale. Palestine and Syria are two situations where a persistent lack of principled action by the Council and division among its members have

worsened conditions for people and made the conflicts more intractable.

Indonesia calls for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council, which will make it effective, accountable, democratic and representative of contemporary world realities and plurality. Organizations are successful only when they remain true to their fundamental objectives and mandates, and only when they are able to meet the demands placed on them. It is therefore logical to ponder the efficacy of the Security Council structure if that affects the manner in which the Council is governed and if there are problems that prevent the Charter mandate and the United Nations ideals from being fulfilled. One obvious hurdle is the arbitrary use of the veto, which, in the face of mass atrocities, has rendered the Council powerless on too many occasions. The use of the veto goes against the wishes of the majority, while negating democracy.

While Indonesia is in principle for the abolishment of the right of the veto in the Council, given the present entrenched realities, it welcomes steps that will strictly regulate its use. We support having a workable mechanism to ensure that the veto will not be used for perverting the cause of humanity and justice. That is why Indonesia supports the initiative on refraining from the use of the veto in situations of mass crimes, as well as the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. The Council must stand unconditionally for upholding international justice, human rights law and humanitarian law.

Elitist privileges and the arbitrary promotion of the interests of a few can undermine the principle of collective decision-making needed to resolve conflicts justly and in a coherent and sustained manner. The Council membership should therefore be governed by democratic principles and effective practices. Indonesia envisages that in the long run there will be no segregation in the Council membership and the division between permanent and non-permanent categories will eventually cease to exist.

We also believe that developing countries, especially emerging nations, which are demonstrating their prowess in democracy, economic matters, development and peace and security — particularly those that have contributed troops to peacekeeping operations — should be given more responsibility in the Council as active agents for helping to resolve ongoing conflicts and

emerging threats. Their experiences would bring new perspectives to the Council's decision-making while enriching the quality of its working methods and actions. It would also make for broader participation in Council actions, which is critical.

Indonesia, with its strong track record of advancing international peace and security and its commitment to being an effective peacemaker in the present turbulent global environment, with its unique profile as the third-largest democracy and the world's eighth-biggest economy based on purchasing power parity in 2016, and with its multi-faith and tolerant people, has much to offer. It has accordingly presented its candidature as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the term 2019-2020 and looks forward to becoming an even more effective enabler of international peace and harmony. As a country that has proved its global responsibility with regard to others, having been involved in peacekeeping operations since 1957, Indonesia is ready and willing to assume additional responsibility.

We recognize that the strong and divergent views of a number of States on the present categories of membership is a key factor hindering progress on reform. We therefore have expressed support for an intermediate approach on this issue, as we believe that

an intermediate approach has the potential to garner the broadest possible political acceptance and move things forward. In that regard, my delegation will be willing to consider all proposals on an intermediate approach with an open mind.

It is vital that we imbue the dialogue process with political wisdom and mutual respect to try to forge greater commonality. The broad support favouring a Council code on the use of the veto and better Council working methods exemplifies countries with different positions coming together. Progress, however slight in appearance, must be harnessed to build greater understanding on the five key issues. We reaffirm the importance of decision 62/557 in highlighting five key reform issues, which we should address comprehensively, and we believe that no opportunity for making progress, however meagre, should be squandered. We should immediately start the reform process.

Indonesia will continue to play its role actively and will work with all delegations to help advance practical approaches for Council reform that is meaningful and enjoys the broadest possible political acceptance. Much is at stake and reform is needed if our Organization is to remain relevant.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*