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Official Records

President: Mr. Thomson (Fiji)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

Agenda item 122 (continued)

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

Mrs. Chartsuwan (Thailand): Over the past few decades, during which we have witnessed significant developments in terms of the challenges faced by countries around the world, from climate change to transnational acts of violence, Member States have relentlessly engaged in coordinated attempts to keep the international Organization fit-for-purpose. Those efforts will not be complete until the Security Council is reformed in a way that reflects the geopolitical realities of the twenty-first century. That endeavour has long been and remains an unfinished task of the United Nations.

Thailand joins other Member States in that effort and has been actively engaging in the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We welcome the progress made during the latest session of those negotiations, in which elements of convergence emerged from the positions and proposals of Member States, especially on the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly, the size of an enlarged Security Council and the working methods of the Council. Those elements of convergence serve to inform us of the

direction that the reform is heading, as well as placing the remaining areas of Security Council reform high on the agenda for the next round of the negotiations.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to Ms. Sylvie Lucas, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, for her hard work and dedication throughout the previous sessions of the intergovernmental negotiations. We also welcome the appointment of Mr. Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, as co-Chairs of the upcoming session. On behalf of Thailand, I wish the two co-Chairs every success in the important task that lies ahead, and pledge my delegation's full support and cooperation throughout the process.

Allow me to reiterate Thailand's position on the following three key aspects.

First, Thailand strongly supports a strengthened partnership between the Security Council and the General Assembly, in accordance with full respect for their respective functions, authority, powers and competencies, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. A coordinated effort between these two principal organs of the United Nations to cooperate not only reinforces the work of each body, but, more importantly, also enhances the legitimacy and transparency of the Security Council. A good example is the role of the General Assembly in enhancing the transparency and inclusiveness of the recent selection process for the post of the Secretary-General. In that regard, Thailand also welcomes the ongoing practice

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of monthly meetings between the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council. We support the institutionalization of that practice and further encourage dialogues between the two Presidents on a regular basis.

Secondly, Thailand firmly believes that the Council membership should be expanded to reflect the plurality and evolving realities of the United Nations membership. Enhancing the legitimacy and accountability of the Council, as well as strengthening its effectiveness, is a core objective of Security Council reform. A key element in achieving those goals lies in an enlarged Council with equitable geographical representation in its membership. In line with the view expressed by a number of Member States, Thailand reaffirms its view that the size of a reformed Council should be in the mid-twenties.

In regard to its working methods, the Security Council should consider, at the earliest opportunity, a comprehensive review of its provisional rules of procedure, which were last revised in 1982. At the same time, the Council is encouraged to increase its engagement with non-Council members, particularly on complex issues with a broad impact, in order to ensure the Council's accessibility and transparency to the wider membership. Meanwhile, the focus and the limited time available to the Council should be wisely allocated to interactive consultations, dialogues and exchanges of views, rather than to lengthy statements.

Thirdly, on areas where there are still divergences among the Member States, Thailand would like to contribute its views for the upcoming session of the intergovernmental negotiations. On categories of membership, we reaffirm our view that an interim category of membership should be introduced, whereby aspiring members could be re-elected immediately for a second term. A review would then be conducted during or following the second term of the possible expansion of permanent members based on an established set of conditions and criteria. That process could help Member States make an informed decision on the issue. We also invite Member States with similar ideas on an interim category to work together to come up with concrete requirements, criteria and parameters.

On the question of the veto, when casting a negative vote, permanent members should always explain to the broader United Nations membership the rationale for such a decision. Moreover, Thailand supports proposals

to limit the use of the veto in cases involving mass atrocities. Again, the purpose is to ensure accountability and to enhance the transparency of the Council, which acts on behalf of all United Nations Members in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The previous session of the intergovernmental negotiations showed some progress that we have made in Security Council reform, and reflected the commitment of Member States to the issue. Thailand reaffirms its readiness to further contribute to future negotiations on the reform of the Security Council and the reform of the United Nations as a whole.

Ms. Agladze (Georgia): At the outset, I would like to extend my congratulations to Mr. Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, for their appointment as the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, and wish them every success. I assure the co-Chairs of my Mission's full support and cooperation. I also thank the former Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, for her dedicated work.

Along with other countries and groups of countries, Georgia submitted its own proposal on the reform of the Security Council, which has been included in the framework document. Our proposal covers all five aspects of the reform. We support the reform of the Security Council in terms of its equitable representation and enlargement, and the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership, which will increase the legitimacy, authority and credibility of the Council. Our particular priority is the allocation of two seats to the Group of Eastern European States, so that we have better regional representation and parity in the Council. While being open to further consultations, at this stage we see the future Security Council as being comprised of up to 25 members.

Furthermore, we stand for the inclusion of smaller States in decision-making in order for the basic international law principle of sovereign equality between nations to be more explicitly reflected at the core of the international security architecture. However, as we have previously noted, we believe that equitable representation should not be an end in itself. A meaningful reform should also imply reform of the use of the veto, the working methods and the

decision-making principles of the Security Council, as well as greater accountability to the General Assembly. We further believe that there must be more openness in the work of the Council, so that its deliberations are made in a more transparent and democratic manner.

We stand ready to cooperate with the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations to advance that process.

Mr. Akbaruddin (India): I wish to begin by thanking the President of the General Assembly for reiterating today his commitment to the critical issue of Security Council reform (see A/71/PV.42). We also welcome his efforts to reach out to Member States so early during the seventy-first session. I would also like to congratulate our colleagues, Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari of Tunisia and Ambassador Ion Jinga of Romania, who have been entrusted with the responsibility to co-chair our discussions. I wish them success in that important task and pledge my delegation's full support for their work.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of St. Lucia on behalf of the L.69 group of developing countries and by the representative of Germany on behalf of the Group of Four (see A/71/PV.42). In addition, I would like to highlight a few other issues in my national capacity.

Many times, the cause of human suffering is our habit of attending to urgent tasks at the cost of important ones. The never-ending carousel of discussions on Security Council reforms leaves many of us perplexed, as actual crucial reform of the Security Council has been delayed, despite both its importance and its urgency. I would be preaching to the converted if I were to talk about the importance of the matter. There is, however, much more to say and ponder concerning the urgency of the issue and the costs of our inaction. One needs only to look at some of the Council's decisions or lack of decisions on crucial issues of global importance. The inability to respond to humanitarian situations, terrorist threats and peacekeeping vulnerabilities during this past year is part of the price that is being paid for our lack of progress on this critical matter.

The global governance structure for addressing issues of international peace and security, which we inherited in 1945, does not cease to surprise us with its persistent inability to effectively engage with the tasks at hand. On some issues pivotal to international security, such as Syria, we see inaction. On other situations,

such as the peacekeeping crisis in South Sudan, we see fragmented action that is not implemented even months after it was agreed upon. While our collective conscience is ravaged every day by terrorists in some region or another, the Security Council took nine months to consider whether to sanction leaders of terrorist organizations that it has itself designated as terrorist entities.

The Security Council is stuck in its own time warp and politics. It can only be described as working randomly on the basis of a mix of adhoc-ism, scrambling and political paralysis. Need one say more about the urgency of the need for the reform of that relic that has long been unresponsive to the needs of our time? The lack of representation in its membership — especially in the permanent category, which was decided 70 years ago — increases its lack of legitimacy and credibility.

Significant work was accomplished in the intergovernmental negotiations during the past two sessions, especially in working towards a text during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under the stewardship of Ambassador Rattray. We are therefore happy that the President of the General Assembly today called on all Member States to engage with greater flexibility in a process leading to substantive results. As they say, get the process in place and all good things will follow. We are hopeful that such a process will be put in place — a process that we can perhaps take the liberty of calling the Thomson process. Hopefully, the Thomson process can help us move from discussions to negotiations under the stewardship of the co-Chairs.

For that to happen, it is normal practice to provide for a text. That will help us to understand the prospects for convergence on all issues, as well as delineating the areas of divergence. That is the practice that has been adopted in all intergovernmental negotiations in the General Assembly. It will clarify our thoughts, focus on all issues and help us to understand in an open, transparent and comprehensive manner the correct picture of the current situation. In that regard, we welcome the newly founded group of friends on Security Council reform as a move to reach beyond long-established groups from various regions. India has joined that group. We hope it will work together with the aim of accelerating the negotiating process for a meaningful reform of the Council, based on agreed objectives. We encourage other Member States to join the Group.

It is time to break the impasse. It is time to reflect the different views in a text, so that everyone can discern the trend lines and the trajectory of the thinking of Member States. In that manner, we can collectively do justice to both the urgency and the importance of the task of Security Council reform before us.

Mr. Sevilla Borja (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): There is no higher priority in the work of the Assembly than that of reforming the Charter of the United Nations, especially with respect to making the necessary changes in the structure and working methods of the Security Council. That is also true of the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council. Regrettably, little progress has been made over the past long 20 years since we began to put forth proposals and negotiate issues relating to the subject. The process is eminently political and must be dealt with at the highest political levels when we make such decisions among States.

At present, we believe that we must not focus just on procedural issues, on negotiations on details of language, nor on participation quotas or the number of permanent or non-permanent members. This matter has to do with something more substantial: a contemporary reading of history and the political will to realistically and courageously confront the complex challenges of today's international agenda.

Now is the right time to equip the Organization to uphold the responsibility that it was charged with by the peoples of the world in 1945, after the global conflagration. We have passed the zenith of the 70 years since the signing of the San Francisco Charter. After long and complex negotiations, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In Addis Ababa, the Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development was approved. In Paris, a plan to fight climate change was agreed on. And with no opposing vote, we just adopted resolution 71/5, condemning the embargo against Cuba, one of the remaining vestiges of the Cold War. Last month in Quito, the New Urban Agenda for the Twenty-first Century was adopted, and just 10 days ago the First Committee adopted a draft resolution on convening a conference to negotiate a binding treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, thus beginning the democratization of disarmament as well. On 1 January 2017, a new Secretary-General, in whom we place high hopes, will begin his term.

After 20 years with no major successes on Security Council reform, there can now be a fresh start, given that, as I just said, there are objective conditions for the Organization to make progress on comprehensive reform of the Council that would make it possible to fulfil two basic principles: its modernization and its democratization. Modernization, because the Dumbarton Oaks Conference in 1944 and the Yalta Conference in February of 1945 — which gave rise to the current Article 27 of the Charter — consecrated the realities of the exercise of power and the dynamics of international politics as they existed at the time. Without the veto, the Organization could probably not have come into being or survived, especially during the tumultuous times of the East-West confrontation.

But today, now that the Cold War is behind us, a new era has begun in the real functioning of the international community, which has its legal organization in the United Nations. A new situation in international relations has been created with the incorporation of States that were not among the original signatories of the Charter. We are living in a time of searches for consensus, of patient negotiations with a view to reaching shared positions in the Security Council, the only body that can approve the legitimate use of force. Today, in this new stage, we believe that it is possible to find creative and imaginative alternatives to overcome the undemocratic institution of the veto, which is, as I have stated, a remnant of the past.

That leads us to the second principle of our vision of change: democratization. Let us recall that the first is modernization. We cannot continue to allow there to be first-class and second-class States. We cannot improve the overall functioning of the Security Council by giving more States the veto. We must instead employ new working methods, incorporating States from those groups that are inadequately represented and striking a balance in the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

We must aspire to a Security Council that is more democratic in its membership and in its actions by increasing the number of members, making the decision-making process transparent within the limits of the powers conferred on that organ by the Charter, working to eliminate the anachronistic right of the veto and revitalizing the role of the General Assembly as the sole body in the United Nations with universal membership.

To conclude, Ecuador reiterates that the main challenge before us is reform of the Security Council that is based on its modernization and its democratization. Furthermore, with a view to progressing towards that ideal, we must involve the highest political level of Governments. Secretary-General-designate António Guterres can play an important role in creating momentum towards achieving that goal, thereby overcoming the past 20 years of frustrated efforts.

Mr. Mažeiks (Latvia): I thank the President for convening this debate. At the 2005 World Summit, world leaders acknowledged that we are living in an interdependent and global world and that many of today's threats recognize no national boundaries and are interlinked. There was strong determination to tackle the threats at a global level by adapting the intergovernmental organs of the United Nations to the needs of the twenty-first century. Unfortunately, calls for an early reform of the Security Council aimed at making it more representative, efficient and transparent, thus enhancing its effectiveness and the legitimacy of its decisions, have not been answered.

Furthermore, far too often, the Security Council, which bears the primary responsibility to ensure international peace and security, has been unable to prevent conflicts or build peace or stop atrocities. Latvia believes that the United Nations capacity to address the current challenges also depends on the political will to move forward with Security Council reform. That is long overdue, and we should all aim at strengthening the legitimacy of that important body.

That legitimacy very much depends on the actions of the Security Council. Blocking the work of the Council, especially in matters related to mass atrocities, is unacceptable. We believe that discussions on limiting the use of the veto in certain circumstances should be continued. If the Council is to react accordingly, its permanent members should refrain from using the veto in situations of atrocity crimes. Latvia supports that important initiative, as well as the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. We also support improvement of the Council's working methods with a view to increasing transparency, inclusiveness and representativeness in its work, thus enhancing its legitimacy and facilitating the implementation of its decisions.

In our view, Council reform should ensure equitable geographic distribution of both permanent and non-permanent seats, thereby reflecting the current political realities. That would include allocating at least one additional non-permanent seat to the Group of Eastern European States. Due consideration should also be given to the adequate representation of small and medium-sized Member States.

Latvia believes that in order to advance Security Council reform, we should go beyond merely reiterating positions. It is important to find a way to ensure text-based negotiations. As in other negotiation processes at the United Nations, the Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform has a mandate to actively steer the discussions with a view to producing concrete results. That would also include a proposal for a negotiation text. The final decision on a possible text would be taken by Member States as a result of the intergovernmental negotiations.

We note that some progress was achieved during the past two sessions of the intergovernmental negotiations, which is encouraging. First, there was the 2015 framework document on Security Council reform, which reflects the positions of more than half of the United Nations membership. During the previous session, another small step forward was made in the form of elements of convergence covering some aspects of the reform. We appreciate the efforts in that regard of the former Chairs of the negotiations, Ambassador Rattray of Jamaica and Ambassador Lucas of Luxembourg, as well as the strong support of the former and the current Presidents of the General Assembly.

My delegation welcomes the decision of the President to appoint Mr. Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Mr. Mohamed Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. Latvia extends its support to both co-Chairs, and is committed to working with them and with other Member States in order to facilitate work on the reform.

We should ensure that the realities and demands of the twenty-first century are reflected in the progress achieved on Security Council reform. It is time to move forward and to achieve a concrete outcome in that process.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): This is the first time that I have taken the floor from this rostrum since the election of the President

of the General Assembly for the seventy-first session. Allow me to express my sincere congratulations and appreciation to the President on the effective manner in which he has been conducting the debates. We also want to thank him for convening this plenary meeting to discuss the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council.

Let me also 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. My delegation expresses its full support and pledges close cooperation with them throughout their exercise.

This is a very timely debate. We hope that Security Council reform will acquire new momentum in the intergovernmental negotiations. We hope that we can conclude that process, which has now been going for decades, ever since we began the debate on equitable representation in the Security Council and the increase in its membership during thirtieth session of the General Assembly in 1979. That was done at the request of Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Guyana, India, Maldives, Nepal, Nigeria and Sri Lanka. It was not until 1992 that the General Assembly adopted resolution 47/62, in accordance with which the Secretary-General published a report containing the observations by Member States (A/48/264).

We are now approaching the end of 2016, so it is appropriate for the international Organization, the United Nations, through its General Assembly, to provide encouragement so that in 2017, when the United Nations turns 72 years old, this long process will lead to the effective reform of the Security Council. It might seem inconceivable that, ever since the United Nations began to promote respect for human rights and sociopolitical and economic reform, and ever since it began promoting democracy, good governance and transparency reforms — many developing countries have been engaged in such reforms, including my own country, Equatorial Guinea — the United Nations itself has, for more than 20 years, been incapable of actually completing such reforms.

I am participating in this debate as the Permanent Representative of Equatorial Guinea, which is a State member of the African Union Committee of Ten Heads

of State (C-10). For that reason, I completely support the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, Mr. Foday Sumah, as coordinator of the C-10. He reaffirmed the claims of the African continent to be fully and widely represented in all decision-making bodies of the United Nations — particularly the Security Council, which is the principal decision-making body related to international peace and security. That full and wide representation that the African continent requires two permanent seats with all the inherent privileges and prerogatives, and five non-permanent seats in the Security Council.

A society or organization that is not dynamic is doomed to disappear. Because the United Nations is a vital organization for the sustainability of the community of nations and of global causes, my delegation repeats that the time has come for the reform and modernization of the Organization in general and the Security Council in particular so as to meet the requirements of the world today and in the future.

The General Assembly debate on Security Council reform has already taken too long. My delegation, as a member of the Committee of Ten and the Group of African States, has been consistently and continuously called for reforms that represent the political, social and economic changes of the world today. Members will agree with me that it is totally inconceivable and unjustifiable that a continent such as Africa — which has more than 1 billion people and 54 States Members of the United Nations and whose problems make up more than 70 per cent of the issues on the agenda of the Security Council — does not yet have a single permanent seat in that organ.

In that regard, it should be noted that the demand for seats for Africa in the Security Council is a requirement, an inalienable right in the modern world, especially in a world organization like the United Nations, which is supposed to guarantee the principles of justice, good governance and rights.

My country reaffirms its position, which is the Common African Position, which rejects any provisional or transitional proposals in the negotiations, given that the main provisions of those proposals run counter to the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea expresses its full confidence in His Excellency Mr. Peter Thomson, President of the General Assembly, and the new co-Chairs, Ambassador Ion Jinga and Ambassador

Mohamed Khaled Khiari, as they guide the process of intergovernmental negotiations for Security Council reform, as well as in all the partners, friends and allies of Africa from all regions and continents, that they will continue to grant us their support, which is steadily increasing, so that our just African claim can translate into a tangible reality.

My country, its President — His Excellency Obiang Nguema Mbasogo — and its Government consider in a general way that all States, regions and interest groups are called on to focus their positions in the framework of the negotiating process for Security Council reform so as to reach an equitable representation, an increase in the number of its members in both categories in order to achieve an objective and impartial reform of the Security Council and of the United Nations system. That is our wish, our desire for the restructuring of the Security Council in particular and the United Nations system in general, in a manner that takes into account the interests of all the States and geographical regions that define the international community in its broadest sense. That means that all States must continue advancing and overcoming the unnecessary obstacles that do not in any way enable genuine reform and a more representative Security Council.

The world currently faces numerous challenges and threats, including armed conflicts, terrorism, climate change, piracy, illegal arms trafficking, human trafficking, organized crime, diseases and so on. Tackling all of those challenges requires a greater involvement of States through broader representation of States Members of the United Nations in its decision-making bodies. That is possible only if we have reform of the Security Council, as demanded today by an increasingly large number of Member States.

Mr. Balé (Congo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, the Congo wishes to associate itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/71/PV.42). I would like to add a few comments in my national capacity.

I wish to join earlier speakers in expressing our congratulations to the President on his leadership of the General Assembly at this seventy-first session. At the same time, I thank him for organizing 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, which is known as Security Council reform.

I also wish to address my sincere congratulations to the Permanent Representatives of Tunisia and Romania, who have been designated co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. It is their sensitive mission to infuse new energy into that process and to engage in a new start. I can assure them of my delegation's support. I seize this occasion to pay well-merited tribute to all their eminent predecessors, who did their best and invested so much energy in the laborious and complex negotiation process over the seven years since its launch in 2009. It is thanks to their tenacity and their contributions that we can hope for a possible epilogue.

The adoption on 27 July of decision 70/559, on the follow-up to the intergovernmental negotiations at the current session contributes to the efforts of our colleagues, as has been mentioned, and to the commitment of Member States to continuing to work for Security Council reform in the spirit of transparency, openness and compromise, despite obvious differences and harmful divisions. My delegation bases its hopes on the framework document of 31 July 2015 and its annex, which define the path forward. In that regard, I call for the speedy establishment of an open-ended working group to consider the strategies to be implemented in order to quickly engage in the substantive debate on that crucial issue.

My delegation appreciates the President's commitment to conducting negotiations on the basis of decision 62/557, which the General Assembly adopted on 15 September 2008. That decision forms the basis for the intergovernmental negotiations and the recommendations on the interdependence of the five thematic groups in Security Council reform. It is therefore appropriate to remember that we should not invest in a quest for a makeshift, fragmented approach, which would be contrary to the spirit and letter of the decision.

The reform that we are calling for is a historic prerequisite for the advent of a more just world, based on universalism, equity and balance among the regions of the world. To that end, we need to explore all paths that guide us towards a genuine, more realistic reform that espouses the values, goals and ideals of the Charter of the United Nations. It is more than timely to open substantive negotiations on the basis of a text that enables us to identify the points in common and engage in a real process of compromise.

I remind members that it has been barely a month since the General Assembly witnessed the confirmation of a unanimous choice from among the 13 candidates for the post of Secretary-General, following a process of unprecedented transparency. That feat in the life of our Organization, which we have all applauded, has refuted the most pessimistic predictions. Here, political will provided genuine motivation for a historic compromise, which appears to herald a new era and marks the beginning of a historic turning point in the existence of the United Nations.

The Congo has not lost hope for a reformed Security Council in the short or medium term. The dynamic provided by the process of the intergovernmental negotiations in recent years gives reason to believe that obstacles can be gradually removed. But, as was evident in the nomination process for the Secretary-General, the approach requires, above and beyond a simple declaration of faith, a real political will for genuine reform so that that important organ is more democratic and more representative, and with greater transparency, effectiveness and accountability to Member States.

Non-reform of the Security Council in the short and medium terms cannot be an option. We cannot entertain such a scenario. Such a perspective would no longer satisfy the demands of justice or present circumstances, much less Sustainable Development Goal 16, on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. The implementation of that Goal depends, inter alia, on broadening and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance and on developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels — to mention only two requirements set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Reform of the United Nations remains a demand for adaptation, modernization, democratization and transparency, which would enable the Organization to establish its historical leadership in global governance. Reform of the Security Council — the cornerstone of the United Nations — cannot be exempt from that imperative.

In that context, it seems only fair and just to satisfy the legitimate demand to redress the historical injustice done to Africa. It is indeed a known fact that issues concerning Africa account for more than 60 per cent of the items on the Security Council's agenda. But that type of calculation cannot overshadow the

legitimate aspiration of 54 States, which account for approximately a quarter of the United Nations Member States, to shoulder their due share of responsibility in the area of international peace and security.

Mr. Kim In-ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Today, the role of the Security Council is crucial in carrying out the mission of the United Nations, which is to ensure international peace and security. In many parts of the world, events posing grave threats to peace and security and the existence of humankind continue to unfold, indicating thereby that the Security Council is not addressing them adequately.

The Korean peninsula is faced with a situation in which acute and worsened tensions are driving it to the brink of war. No one knows whether a nuclear war might break out owing to the increased level of unprecedented political, military and economic isolation and pressure exerted by the so-called super-Power, the United States of America, which seeks to stifle a sovereign State that is striving to maintain its dignity.

Every year, the United States of America conducts a number of large-scale joint military exercises geared towards a preemptive nuclear strike, thereby escalating the military threat against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This year, unsatisfied with the ongoing massive deployment in South Korea of various kinds of nuclear strategic assets, including nuclear bombers and submarines, the United States, using the pretext of military exercises, went one step further by deploying the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system in South Korea.

In the exercise of its right as a United Nations Member State and as provided for in the Charter of the United Nations, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has requested the Security Council on several occasions to hold an emergency meeting on the aggressive and provocative large-scale joint military exercises being conducted by the United States and South Korea, undermining international peace and security. However, the Security Council has remained steadfastly silent towards each request, even when it was faced with the stark reality of the possibility of nuclear war breaking out on the Korean peninsula and engulfing both it and the world as a whole.

That is not the only issue to be raised. According to the Charter, the Security Council is supposed to address all situations in which international peace and security are breached or where such a threat exists.

However, the Council has determined that only the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear test and its peaceful satellite launch count as threats to international peace and security. It therefore adopted resolution 2270 (2016), which calls for the prohibition of the Democratic People's Republic's aforementioned actions and a follow-up that would impose abundant sanctions in response to any self-defensive counter-measures that our country might take, which would be justified, supposedly, under the pretext of some alleged violation of resolution 2270 (2016).

Nowhere in the Charter or international law can we find a single provision stipulating that nuclear tests or satellite launches constitute a threat to international peace and security or any single provision stipulating that only specific countries have the right to conduct nuclear tests and satellite launches. The so-called sanctions resolutions adopted by the Security Council against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea clearly indicate, therefore, that the Council is being manipulated in the interest of the political goals of a single permanent member. We can only consider that to be an abuse of power and a perversion of the Charter.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea officially requested the Secretariat to clarify the legitimacy of resolution 2270 (2016), but the Secretariat has yet to reply. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is the only country in the world that has lived under the imminent threat of United States nuclear weapons for more than 50 years. The Security Council has therefore no legal or moral ground to stand on when it takes issue with our nuclear programme, which is a necessary deterrent to nuclear war and safeguards our country's people and our right to exist. The United States, as a permanent members of the Security Council, continues to misuse the Council as an instrument in its efforts to strictly pursue its political and military purposes and strategic interests, which is a serious issue facing the United Nations today.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea calls for the Security Council's comprehensive reform so as to reflect today's demands. It outlines its principled position as follows.

First, Council reform should be directed towards ensuring impartiality, objectivity and democracy. Although more than 70 years have passed since the establishment of the United Nations, the Security Council, which consists of only 15 States, is unable

to represent the interests of all 193 Member States. Security Council reform should be undertaken with a view to rejecting the high-handedness, arbitrariness and double standards of one specific country, which must be considered to be a blatant violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter, which proclaims the sovereignty and equality of all countries.

Secondly, the composition of the Council should be based on the principle of ensuring the full representation of member States of the Non-Aligned Movement and other developing countries. Since such States form the majority of the membership of the United Nations, it cannot be a matter of debate that they should be represented accordingly in the Security Council. As we have seen during the intergovernmental negotiation process on Security Council reform, the prospects for enlarging the Council's permanent membership are not good, owing to the seriously divided views of Member States. Under those circumstances, a preferable and viable solution for redressing the Council's unbalanced structure would be to begin by enlarging the category of non-permanent members.

Thirdly, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea believes that Japan's efforts to become a permanent member of the Security Council are an affront to the conscience of humankind and the United Nations. A country notorious for its war crimes, Japan invaded numerous Asian countries, committed the wholesale slaughter of peoples, looted and set fires indiscriminately, and, in particular, committed the crime of sex slavery, which is an egregious crime against humanity. Before participating in negotiations on Security Council reform, Japan should reflect upon its crimes and compensate the victims in good faith in order to regain the trust of the international community.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has clarified its principal position on Security Council reform and has expressed the hope that the sincere and protracted efforts of the international community to achieve such reform will bear fruit and produce successful results.

Mr. Ružička (Slovakia): At the outset, I wish to thank the President for convening this meeting. Let me begin by congratulating Ambassador Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Ambassador Mohamed Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. But we should

go farther than congratulating them; by electing, selecting and approving them, we give them full power and our trust and confidence in their ability to guide us through the very complex process of the talks and negotiations on Security Council reforms. I would like to assure them of my country's support and cooperation with regard to the steps and decisions that they will present to all of us.

Security Council reform is an essential part of the comprehensive reform of the United Nations. Everybody agrees on the principle that the Organization and all its bodies should represent the world's contemporary realities. Let me just quote some trivial numbers that can be found in Wikipedia or on Google-retrieved websites. In 1945, there were 51 Member States; in 1965, when the last significant reform of the Security Council took place, there were 117 Member States; and in 1992 we started negotiating again. I wish to remind everyone that in 1965, when my generation of diplomats was born, there was very little progress towards reform. In 1992, a new generation of diplomats — many of them are sitting here — arrived on the global scene. In 2000, the younger generation — we are talking about the millennials — was really unsure that we were ready and able to establish a system of international relations that would reflect the realities of the current world.

If there is the will, there is a way. We do not have to look very far for an example. Only recently, we were able to make significant progress in the process of selecting the head of this Organization. Three years ago, nobody was optimistic or expecting that outcome. But it took time, it took negotiating skills, and it took the will and readiness of all Member States — large and small, northern and southern countries — to agree on the principle. And recently we succeeded in electing a new Secretary-General who has the full trust of the Member States. The election was based on a real competition with greater transparency and with the full participation of all Member States. We have to continue in our endeavours.

We welcome the intensified reform efforts during the two previous General Assembly sessions. In that regard, I would like to thank both Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, and Ambassador Courtenay Rattray, Permanent Representative of Jamaica. They gave the process their best efforts. Of course, there were different approaches

and points of view in what they did, but they did try. If we do not try, we should not be here.

The position of my country is quite well documented. Let me just briefly recapitulate its main elements. We would like the Security Council to be much more representative and transparent, but also effective and efficient. That in itself is a huge task and challenge. There are various models for how to tackle it, starting with those presented by the former Secretaries-General, by the former negotiators, and by many countries and groups that have already taken the floor. We think that the nucleus of a future compromise is contained in those ideas. What we have to do is to try to put all those views together and look at them from the viewpoint of the interests of humankind and the United Nations.

My country supports the expansion of both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent, and we are also very keen to discuss the possibility of a third type of membership, provided that it meets two goals, namely, representation and efficiency.

Membership in the Security Council, especially permanent membership, is not only a privilege, but also, and more importantly, a responsibility. The majority of our Member States have already been Security Council members. We took our membership as a responsibility. It was not our goal to get into the Security Council; the goal was to contribute to solving the most serious issues of the day.

We support the enlargement of the Council and call for better representation therein of the Group of African States and for an additional non-permanent seat for the Group of Eastern European States.

Taking all the pluses and minuses into account, we should be more attentive to the voices of the small and medium-sized Member States, because in the overall competition they are sometimes at a disadvantage in competing for a seat. So we have to find the appropriate mechanisms. The majority of new Member States since 1990 are small Member States. One might ask, what is their contribution? My answer is simple. We have representatives of every single Member State in the highest positions in the United Nations system, and we very much value and appreciate their contributions to the work of the system.

The right of veto granted to the permanent members of the Council is a prerogative enshrined in the Charter

of the United Nations. Nevertheless, Slovakia has endorsed the major initiatives to promote a culture of zero tolerance at the United Nations in mass atrocity situations, and that effort should continue. Furthermore, we welcome the positive movement towards improving the Council's relationships with other United Nations bodies, such as the General Assembly, the Secretariat, the Peacebuilding Commission and regional organizations. Those efforts should also be pursued.

The last point of our position is that over the past two to three years, several non-permanent Council members have demonstrated that there is room for improvement in the working methods of the Council, inter alia, by making them more transparent and more informative and by finding ways of keeping non-members informed of the Council's proceedings.

My delegation looks forward to engaging in open, transparent, inclusive and results-oriented negotiations with a view to moving the process forward during the Assembly's current session. We are ready to move that process forward. As the Chinese philosopher says, "Every long journey starts with small steps", and we should have the courage to take them.

Mr. Vitrenko (Ukraine): I thank the President for convening today's debate.

Ukraine believes that efforts to make the Security Council more representative and balanced and its work more effective and transparent, especially with regard to decision-making, are vital in getting the United Nations to adapt to the global realities of the twenty-first century. Ukraine considers both directions of reform — the enlargement of the Security Council and the improvement of its working methods — to be a high priority. Achieving progress in those spheres will meet the interests of Ukraine.

As a current elected member of the Council, Ukraine participates actively in the deliberations of its members aimed at making that organ more efficient and transparent. For instance, one could see very positive developments during the selection process for the Secretary-General this year. Yet that process needs further improvement in order to become truly transparent and inclusive. Furthermore, in July, at the initiative of the elected members of the Council, an important note by the President of the Council (S/2016/619) was adopted with a view to facilitating the accession of newly elected members to the Council and to selecting members in a more transparent and

inclusive manner to chair the Council's subsidiary bodies. Even though the implementation of that note has been uneven thus far, we are sure that its provisions will have a far-reaching, positive impact on the work of the Council. During our Council term, we will cooperate with all of its members so as to further streamline its work, including by updating the well-known note by the President in document S/2010/507.

While Ukraine is open to discussing all new approaches to Security Council reform, we particularly welcome initiatives aimed at streamlining the negotiation process and making it more pragmatic and results-oriented. In that regard, we are grateful to Ambassador Sylvie Lucas for preparing the outcome document of our deliberations in the intergovernmental negotiations during the previous General Assembly session, showing a number of points of convergence in the positions of Member States. We hope that the element of transparency that she brought to the debate will be preserved.

My delegation welcomes the appointment of the Ambassadors of Romania and Tunisia as the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. They can certainly count on my delegation's full support. We are ready to participate actively in the negotiations during the current General Assembly session. Ukraine supports all steps, whether procedural or substantive, that can lead to progress in that area, which is long overdue. We are convinced that the proposals and positions reflected in the framework document circulated on 31 July 2015 continue to constitute a solid basis for further negotiations. As for the Group of Eastern European States, I would like to underline that any increase in the non-permanent membership of the Security Council should ensure enhanced representation of the Eastern European States.

My country's position also remains firm on another quite complex but crucial element of Security Council reform, namely, the question of the veto. The Russian Federation's gross violations of the Charter of the United Nations and the fundamental principles of international law, which threaten European if not global security, as well as the inability of the Security Council to react promptly to those actions, show the need to phase out the use of the veto. In the meantime, all permanent members of the Council should voluntarily and collectively pledge not to use that instrument in cases of mass atrocities, genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and acts of aggression. In that

connection, Ukraine joined the relevant Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group initiative, as well as the one presented by France and Mexico, and calls upon all United Nations Member States to follow suit. In that regard, I fully concur with what the Permanent Representative of Slovakia just mentioned.

My country stresses that for all of the aforementioned reasons, we believe that the need for Security Council reform is greater than ever.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am grateful for the convening of this meeting and take this opportunity to recognize the exceptional work of Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations at the previous session. I also wish to congratulate Romanian Ambassador Jinga and Tunisian Ambassador Khiari on their designation as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations at the current session. I can assure them of our full support in working constructively on the issue at hand.

While Argentina aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/71/PV.42), I wish to underscore a few elements.

Once again, we face our work, conscious of the need to maintain a spirit of flexibility, harmony, and a strong commitment to multilateralism, as that is the only way to ensure successful results. Argentina trusts that all delegations will act accordingly, because only with a multilateral approach based on specific actions and leadership abilities that can see the interest of all nations can we achieve a more democratic, efficient and genuinely inclusive Security Council that can adequately fulfil the responsibilities conferred on it by the Charter of the United Nations.

It is clear that, as a democratic institution, the United Nations continuously faces the need to strengthen the legitimacy and representativeness of its organs. That task is the responsibility of Member States and, as such, cannot and should not be delegated. That is why that only in the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations — carried out in good faith by Member States in a spirit of mutual respect, openness, inclusiveness and transparency, as established by the Assembly in resolutions 48/26 and 53/30 and decision 62/557 — will it be feasible to find a solution that can meet with the broadest possible political acceptance.

Based on the experience gained over the course of the protracted negotiation process, Argentina continues to make every effort to find innovative, consistent solutions that ensure a more democratic composition in the Council, improved rotation of non-permanent members and reformulated working methods, so that the Council can truly become more transparent, interactive and inclusive. The Charter stipulates that in order to ensure the swift and effective action of the United Nations, its Members confer upon the Security Council the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, and recognize that the Council acts on their behalf when it discharges the functions entailed in carrying out that responsibility.

The victors of the Second World War assumed that responsibility on a permanent basis. Nevertheless, any State that recognizes peace as vital to its development also wishes to actively take on that responsibility. That is why Argentina favours an increase only in the non-permanent membership, because perpetuity is intrinsically at odds with the notion of representativeness in a democratic context, where the will of those who are represented periodically legitimizes that representation. It is well known that elections are a fundamental element in every self-respecting legitimate and representative democratic system.

The improvement of the Council's working methods continues to be an issue of the greatest importance for Argentina, and we have noted that view at every opportunity. For example, when we presided over the Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, we proposed that the Council work openly and transparently, keeping the entire Organization abreast of its activities.

In conclusion, Argentina reiterates and reaffirms its willingness to keep an open mind and consider any proposal in line with the agreed principles of the Assembly that helps harmonize positions in order to bring about the necessary democratic reform of the Security Council.

Mr. Ruiz Blanco (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by congratulating two very qualified colleagues, Ambassador Ion Jinga of Romania and Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari of Tunisia, for their designation as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, and for their decision to accept a task that is vital and surely requires courage. I would also like to thank Ambassador Sylvie

Lucas for her constructive guidance of the debates and for the progress achieved during the previous session.

It is evident that we can advance in the debate on the reform of the Security Council, particularly after what was achieved in the process of revitalizing the General Assembly: the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General through a process that was more inclusive and transparent than seemed possible two years ago. This is the opportune moment, as Ambassador Sebastiano Cardi stated on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/71/PV.42), for showing flexibility and a spirit of compromise to give the needed impulse to reform.

There are three important elements that we should keep in mind.

First, we all agree that it is necessary to expand the number of non-permanent seats in the Council. Accordingly, I would like to emphasize that in recent negotiation processes that were equally complex — such as the reform of Economic and Social Council and the process revitalizing the General Assembly — it has been demonstrated that the involvement of the entire membership and a special emphasis on the elements of inclusivity, representativeness, accountability, transparency and effectiveness helped to create the recipe for success that can be transferred to this scenario.

Secondly, we believe that it is timely to reiterate the necessary commitment of all of us who take part in the intergovernmental negotiations to honouring the rules that should guide the process, in accordance with decision 62/557.

Thirdly, this process is carried out by the States Members of our Organization, and the proposals that are discussed must come from them. We must avoid shortcuts if we want to make effective progress towards concrete reform. The topics discussed, analysed and decided on by the Security Council all put the responsibility on Member States not to delay the necessary actions nor the implementation of the urgent changes needed to maintain international peace and security.

To make concrete progress in our discussions, I would like to add my voice to those, such as the Uniting for Consensus group, who believe that the process of negotiations can make use of the lessons learned in those consultations that focused on aspects on which

positions were more similar, such as the expansion in the number of non-permanent seats, establishing a new category of long-term members, or the possibility of re-election. The main point is to produce a Security Council that is representative and democratic.

The President can always count on Colombia's commitment in this purpose.

Mr. Bonser (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Canada aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/71/PV.42). We wish, however, to make a few points on this matter in our national capacity.

Canada is firmly in favour of a reform of the Security Council and agrees that it is long overdue. We are ready to work with all Member States to reach a consensus that will transform the Council into a more democratic, representative, effective, transparent and accountable body. To that end we have three points to make.

(*spoke in English*)

First, Canada strongly believes that the effectiveness of the Council should be the overriding objective in the reform process. In that respect, we need to address honestly the issue of the veto and how it is applied. We have all witnessed recent uses of the veto in ways that damage the reputation of the Security Council and infringe upon its effectiveness. Clearly there is broad support for a Security Council that can play its role as envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations and that does not abuse the veto power. In that respect, Canada supports the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group's code of conduct and the French-Mexican political declaration on veto restraint. Both offer important opportunities for achieving a reformed and strengthened Security Council that is able to address global crises, especially in obvious cases of mass violations of human rights, deliberate attacks on civilians, war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

Secondly, on the issue of representativeness, Canada strongly believes in expanding the number of non-permanent seats on the Security Council. In doing so, we need to be mindful of the historical under-representation of Africa and small island and developing States. Increasing the number of non-permanent seats

would ensure a broader representation of the world's regions and add to the Council's legitimacy.

Thirdly, on the issues of democracy, transparency and accountability, Canada firmly believes that the holding of regular elections is the essential mechanism for ensuring Council accountability before the General Assembly. It is also based on the conviction that there are ways of making the Council more representative without conferring special rights on a few member States.

(spoke in French)

After many years of dialogue, there is a window of opportunity to achieve consensus on Security Council reform. Canada will remain a constructive partner in advancing that goal.

Mr. Elmajerbi (Libya) *(spoke in Arabic)*: At the outset, I would like to salute the indefatigable efforts of the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg in chairing the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during the previous session. We also welcome the decision of the President of the General Assembly to appoint the Permanent Representatives of Tunisia and Romania to co-chair the negotiations during the seventy-first session. We hope that they will be able to achieve a consensus that will preserve the interests of all Member States.

My country aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Sierra Leone and Kuwait on behalf of the Group of African States and the Group of Arab States, respectively (see A/71/PV.42).

This debate on Security Council reform has highlighted the links between the various elements of reform. We must therefore treat reform as an indivisible project. We need to find a comprehensive solution for the problem of Security Council reform that will take into consideration all of the points of view that have emerged in the discussions. The intergovernmental negotiations provide the only framework in which an agreement on Security Council expansion and reform can be achieved in accordance with decision 62/557, which laid the foundation for negotiations on the matter.

Security Council reform should not be limited to increasing the number of permanent and non-permanent seats. We must also reform the working methods of the Council and its relationship with the other bodies of the United Nations. It is necessary to reform the Council's working methods in order to make all of its activities more transparent. It is also important to limit the

number of closed meetings and restrict the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

We must increase the participation of non-member States in the work of the Security Council, particularly countries that are directly or indirectly affected by the issues debated by the Council. The provisional rules of procedure must be replaced with permanent rules in order to increase the Council's effectiveness. The relationship between the Council and other United Nations bodies must also be revised in order to delineate roles more clearly so that the Council does not infringe on the functions of other bodies, specifically the General Assembly. There must also be closer cooperation and coordination between the Council and other bodies, and the mandates of those bodies must be respected, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. In that regard, we are in favour of more consultation meetings among the various bodies. It is also necessary that the Council issue more reports on issues that threaten international peace and security, and those reports should be exhaustive, transparent, neutral and supported by factual evidence and analysis, given that the General Assembly is the most representative body of the United Nations.

My country believes it is necessary to rectify the historical injustice done to the African continent by giving it a permanent seat in the Security Council. That is a right that must be recognized as non-negotiable, especially considering the fact that two thirds of the items referred to the Security Council concern the African continent. Africa must have two permanent seats on the Security Council with all the privileges accorded to current permanent members, including the right to veto. Furthermore, in accordance with the Common African Position enshrined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, any increase in the membership of the Security Council should include a permanent seat for Arab countries, in accordance with the decision of the Arab League Summit in Sirte in 2010.

During the negotiations that have taken place so far, some consensus has been achieved in terms of the need to redouble efforts to strengthen and revitalize the role of the Security Council so that it may address and overcome the challenges posed by the current global situation. We must build a broader Security Council based on the principles of transparency and neutrality. Libya is firmly committed to positively participating

in all efforts aimed at attaining that goal, namely, Security Council reform, so that we may build an international Organization that is more democratic and more transparent.

Mr. Ndong Ella (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Gabon aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/71/PV.42). My delegation would like to add a few remarks in its national capacity.

Gabon thanks the President for organizing today's meeting on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. Security Council reform is a priority, now more than ever. The outcome of the negotiations process on that reform will be decisive for the modernization of global governance and making it more democratic.

Allow me to congratulate the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, and Ambassador Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania. I also commend the work accomplished by Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, former Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, who was an outstanding Chair throughout the previous session.

The issue of Security Council reform continues to give rise to great differences after several years of discussion. The negotiations, which appear to be never-ending, have nonetheless allowed us to agree on two essential points. The first is that global governance needs to be improved if it is to deal effectively with the new forms of very complex threats that the world faces today. The second is that, to be credible, global governance must take into account the current global balance.

The reform of our Organization in general, and of the Security Council in particular, has become more than a necessity. The Council must meet the requirements of the present day.

My delegation welcomes the progress achieved, particularly in the convergence of opinions on the matter of the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, on the one hand, and the Council's size and working methods, on the other. There are two elements of convergence in the five principal negotiation points. We remain convinced that that positive dynamic can also make it possible to reach consensus on the other points under consideration,

namely, regional representation, membership categories and the veto.

As His Excellency Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, Head of State and President of the Republic of Gabon, has said here, the Security Council must be reformed so that multilateralism takes precedence over the power of States. To nourish values such as democracy, the world we live in today cannot continue to be organized on the concept of a balance of power. An international system based on power, whether balanced or concerted, has the disadvantage of favouring a hierarchy, of marginalizing small States and promoting non-reciprocity. On the contrary, multilateralism — of which the United Nations is the guarantor — favours collective security over the balance of power, inclusion over selection.

The voice of Africa must be heard, and its position must be taken into account. My delegation thank all those who have supported that African goal in some way. The African continent represents the largest geographical group in the General Assembly, and African issues alone constitute more than 60 per cent of the situations considered by the Security Council. Going forward, Africa must have a place among the permanent members of the Security Council, with all of the privileges attached to that status, including the right of the veto, if that is maintained.

The Ezulwini Consensus seeks to accomplish one thing: to repair the injustice that Africa has suffered for too many years. It is unfortunate that the Common African Position has not yet evoked a dynamic solidarity, which, I believe, would have facilitated and accelerated the process of Security Council reform.

Gabon, like other African countries, will continue to promote Africa's will to participate fully in global governance and to be recognized for its strengths and capacities, no longer for its weaknesses. I strongly hope that the upcoming rounds of negotiations will enable us to build bridges between our various points of view so that we can successfully conclude the lengthy process for the benefit of our Organization.

Mr. Sukhee (Mongolia): I would like to begin by thanking the President of the General Assembly for his leadership and for steering the discussion of the important agenda items that we have before us, including the reform of the Security Council.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by Ambassador Menissa Rambally of Saint Lucia on behalf of the L.69 group (see A/71/PV.42).

I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Ion Jinga of Romania and Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari of Tunisia on their appointment as the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. I wish to assure the co-Chairs of my delegation's full support and cooperation in that process.

My delegation shares the view that today a new impetus should be given to the consideration of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. We need to intensify our efforts to achieve concrete progress on that matter. Mongolia reiterates its support for the decision to continue the process of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly.

I would like to reaffirm our principled position on Security Council reform. Mongolia has consistently stood for a just and equitable expansion in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories of membership, as well as for an improvement in the Council's working methods. Our stance in favour of enlarging both current categories is guided by and based on the Charter of the United Nations, modern-day geopolitical realities and the principles of justice and equality, with a view to ensuring a greater and enhanced representation of developing countries, particularly of non- and underrepresented regional groups.

Mongolia recognizes the importance of text-based negotiations in order for the intergovernmental negotiations to move forward. It is high time to finally make progress and advance the reform agenda in the upcoming negotiations.

I would like to reiterate my delegation's firm belief that, with a genuine will on the part of Member States, we will be able to make tangible progress towards an early reform of the Security Council.

Ms. Argüello González (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the President for convening this important meeting on the issue of equitable representation in the Security Council and the increase in its membership. We congratulate Ambassadors Ion Jinga of Romania and Mohamed Khaled Khiari of Tunisia on their appointments as co-Chairs of the

intergovernmental negotiations on that topic. We are certain that their stewardship will sustain the dynamism and momentum of the negotiating group.

Nicaragua aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Saint Lucia, Ambassador Menissa Rambally, on behalf of the L.69 group (see A/71/PV.42).

We hope that this discussion will go deep into the core issue, the real nucleus of the debate, which is to achieve extensive reform of the Security Council. There are currently 193 Member States, and the Organization of which we are Members, especially the Security Council, must evolve in a very different world. The Security Council urgently requires comprehensive reform in order to act in accordance with the realities of the twenty-first century. It must be expanded in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent.

After many years of involvement in those negotiations, we have a text that has been agreed upon by consensus, and we should proceed immediately. We are ready and prepared to negotiate; now is the time for concrete results. Furthermore, we welcome the creation of the group of friends on Security Council reform, of which Nicaragua is a member, and which has as its guiding principles the prompt adoption of reforms, text-based negotiations and an expansion of both categories of membership.

Nicaragua is committed to all initiatives that are able to lead us to recreate, reinvent and reconstruct the United Nations, fulfilling the growing demand for a democratic Organization that serves the supreme interests of sovereign security, justice and world peace. Nicaragua will continue to support all efforts to reform the Security Council. We reiterate the commitment of the Nicaraguan people to seek an open, thorough and reflective process for the necessary transformation and for the reinvention and democratization of the United Nations.

Ms. Bogyay (Hungary): More than ever, we all need a strong and representative Security Council that can continue to play a decisive role in preserving peace and security around the globe. Designing such a Security Council is not only in the best interests of the international community, but also our shared responsibility.

Last July, the General Assembly decided to continue the negotiations on Security Council reform at its seventy-first session. In that respect, Hungary warmly welcomes the decision of the President of the General Assembly to appoint two Ambassadors, who are good colleagues of ours — the Ambassador of Romania and the Ambassador of Tunisia — as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations. I wish them success, luck and perseverance in that very important endeavour. We would like to offer our support to their work. We welcome the active engagement of the President of the General Assembly in moving the process forward more quickly by convening this debate.

As is common in our line of work, this is an area where we do not have to reinvent the wheel. We need only build upon the achievements of previous intergovernmental negotiations, especially those that took place this past year. I should note, in that connection, that the intergovernmental negotiations have been going on for quite a few years. In our view, various elements of convergence have emerged on all topics, while we recognize the fact that two out of the five issues on the list — the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, and the size of an enlarged Council and its working methods — have gained the most traction. They now have to be transformed into concrete proposals, but work should be continued in all areas.

We believe special attention should be given to the following three issues: the categories of membership, regional representation and the question of the use of the veto in cases with regard to which the convergence of views is less clear and has not been set out in a consolidated, written format. We should continue to bear in mind the comprehensive, and often interconnected nature, of the reform, which encompasses all five of the key issues set out in decision 62/557 of 15 September 2008.

Hungary continues to support the enlargement of the Security Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. As a guiding principle, enlargement must continue to be based on regional groups and must be guided by their equitable representation. In that spirit, Hungary reiterates its call for a second non-permanent seat for the Group of Eastern European States, which is a request that is part of any enlargement model. There are different and legitimate national views when it comes to Security Council reform. The only way to cater to those interests, while agreeing on

the much-needed reform itself, is through meaningful consultations. We should be moving forward with substantial text-based negotiations. Hungary is looking forward to receiving proposals from the co-Chairs on a relevant work programme and a schedule for the negotiating sessions.

I also believe that simply enlarging the Council without further reforms in its working methods can only recreate the present problems. Together with 111 countries, Hungary supports the code of conduct that constitutes a voluntary pledge not to vote against Security Council resolutions aimed at preventing or ending atrocity crimes. The issue of the veto lies very much at the heart of our negotiations.

Hungary is ready to continue working actively to reform the Security Council.

Mr. Beleffi (San Marino): I would first like to thank the President for convening our annual debate on Security Council reform.

San Marino associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/71/PV.42). I would also like to make some remarks in my national capacity.

San Marino has always believed that reform of the Security Council must be based on the principles of democracy, transparency and accountability, which should be integral to any United Nations reform effort, not just to that of the Security Council. A wide majority of Member States welcomed the reform of the selection process for the position of Secretary-General introduced during the previous session of the Assembly, making that process more democratic, transparent and inclusive. Now we need a wide majority of Member States to agree on reforms that can make the Council more democratic, transparent, accountable, representative and effective. In our view, if we want to stick to those principles, regular elections are the only way to ensure an accountable and democratic Council. An increase only in non-permanent seats, to which Member States must be elected, can ensure that the principles of democracy and accountability will be observed.

With regard to the process of reforming the Security Council, San Marino welcomes the decision to appoint two co-Chairs for the intergovernmental negotiations, and I congratulate the Ambassadors of Romania and Tunisia on their assumption of that important

responsibility. The delegation of San Marino assures them of its full collaboration during the negotiations.

Even if wide differences remain on critical issues, we Member States are all agreed on Assembly decision 62/557. That indicates that credible Security Council reform requires a comprehensive approach and that the negotiations must be driven by Member States. We are familiar with each other's points of view on the various topics relating to reform. It is now our collective responsibility to move the process forward. We believe that only a compromise solution will enable us to achieve comprehensive Security Council reform.

Ms. Morton (New Zealand): Since the United Nations was established in 1945, the world has undergone huge changes. The Organization has grown from 51 Member States to 193 today. Against that backdrop and in the face of unprecedented global challenges, Security Council reform has become more critical than ever. The United Nations needs a Security Council that is capable of acting to prevent and resolve the kinds of crises facing the world in 2016 and beyond.

We thank the President for appointing the Permanent Representatives of Romania and Tunisia as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations process, and we wish them all the best in the challenging task ahead. New Zealand also thanks the previous Chair, Ambassador Lucas of Luxembourg. We hope that the new co-Chairs will build on her excellent work. In that regard, the elements of convergence represent a useful point from which to move forward.

As a current elected member of the Security Council, New Zealand is acutely aware of the challenges that too often result in poor performance by the Council. Many of those challenges flow directly from the Council's 1945 framework, particularly regarding the status and role of its permanent members.

More than 25 years of negotiations on structural reform of the Council demonstrate that reform based on the concept of new permanent members will be very difficult to achieve. That is why New Zealand is a supporter of an intermediate solution for Security Council expansion. Recognizing the realities of the situation, New Zealand has put significant energy into pushing for internal reforms of the Council as it is now, and especially into securing meaningful improvements to its day-to-day working methods so as to make them more effective, results-driven, transparent and inclusive.

New Zealand has pushed to enhance the quality of informal discussions in the Council, with the aim of improving its capacity to respond collectively to conflict and emerging crises. We have driven reform of the process for appointing the chairs of the Council's subsidiary bodies, taking that important role out of the exclusive control of the five permanent members. New Zealand has also worked with the Secretariat and other Council members to establish monthly situational awareness briefings designed to ensure that Council members have access to quality information on evolving and potential crises.

In the context of peacekeeping, New Zealand has hosted informal triangular meetings on specific peacekeeping operations aimed at ensuring more effective, thorough and respectful consultations among the Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries. We have also strongly advocated for better working methods to reflect the needs of conflict prevention and of the Council's mandate under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. The prevention of conflict requires much better shared information from the field and better practical engagement on the part of Council members. To help achieve that, New Zealand has supported increasing country visits by the Council. We are pleased to note that this week the Council will visit the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola, its fifth visiting mission for 2016.

I have mentioned small but impactful reforms that have the potential to improve the quality of the Council's discussions and performance over the long term. We urge Council members to continue such reforms in the years to come and to progressively add to them. Such reforms can be accomplished; they are not impossible. We note the value of achieving procedural reform through the agreement of all Council members, if possible. But we should also remember that most issues related to working methods are ultimately procedural in nature and are therefore governed by Article 27, paragraph 2, of the Charter.

Mr. Gómez Camacho (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico associates itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group (see A/71/PV.42).

My country welcomes today's meeting and the President's appointment of Ambassadors Jinga and Khiari as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiation process for Security Council reform. Their appointment

will give the process fresh and positive momentum and should help to ensure that the negotiations are guided by the principles of transparency, impartiality, objectivity and inclusiveness, as was the case in the previous session under Ambassador Lucas.

This has been a year of paradigm change in our Organization. With renewed vitality, the General Assembly is already playing a central role in the United Nations. We have shown that the United Nations can be different. It is not a sclerotic 70-year-old organism but an organization capable of being modern and current and, above all, one that can respond to the expectations of the international community in the twenty-first century.

It is increasingly evident that 15 States in the Security Council are not enough to represent us all. It is becoming increasingly clear every day that the Security Council must revise and modernize its working methods, that it must not fall into a state of paralysis, and that its inaction may lead the whole Organization into irrelevance.

Reform of the Security Council is possible, and the proposal by the Uniting for Consensus group is a realistic and viable proposal around which a new understanding should be formed.

Mexico affirms that we have a proposal is inclusive and is based on democracy, because it is founded on inclusion and attends in the most obvious way to the aspirations of all. The compromise formula, which Mexico and the Uniting for Consensus group are promoting is based on the creation of non-permanent seats with long-term mandates and the possibility of immediate re-election. That would allow for a fair and equitable representation in the Council, as well as an increase in the number of non-permanent seats with two-year terms. That model provides sufficient room for action to negotiate and ensure appropriate regional representation for all underrepresented groups, including small States, while preserving the principles of transparency and accountability to the General Assembly.

Our proposal, which includes immediate re-election, contributes with greater transparency and efficiency to equitable geographical representation and to the assumption of greater responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security, attending to the legitimate interest of those States seeking long-term seats.

The Uniting for Consensus formula seeks the democratization of the Security Council, which must be a key objective and a value shared by all of us. It rejects the creation of additional privileges for only some countries. If we continue to give permanent privileges to just a few members in order to meet national ambitions to the detriment of the collective interest, we will not achieve our goal. Those privileges do not belong in a modern and democratic organization. They have nothing to do with the twenty-first century.

The strengthened participation of the General Assembly in the historic process that resulted in the election of António Guterres as Secretary-General confirmed that it is time to build convergences among the various positions of Member States and in that way move forward towards an integral reform of the Security Council.

The delegation of Mexico will be constructive and active in that process, which should be developed on the basis of all the proposals by Member States, as stipulated in decision 62/557, and not only on the basis of certain documents submitted by previous facilitators who worked earlier in that process.

Mr. Bin Momen (Bangladesh): We thank the President for convening this debate as a curtain-raiser to the work of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during the General Assembly at its seventy-first session.

Bangladesh reaffirms the central role of the Assembly in debating the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters relating to the Council. We underscore the need to sustain the momentum of earlier discussions to identify elements of convergence among Member States on the five interrelated and mutually reinforcing issues that form part of this agenda item.

Bangladesh welcomes the appointment of the Permanent Representatives of Romania and Tunisia, Ambassador Jinga and Ambassador Khiari respectively, as co-Chairs of the negotiations for the current session. We look forward to an early outline of the co-Chairs' workplan with suggestions on the structure, format and purpose of our discussions going forward. We wish to see our deliberations advance in the direction of starting up text-based negotiations with a view to achieving tangible and meaningful outcomes.

In the past couple of years, we have witnessed active interest among a large number of delegations in taking the discussions forward in a decisive direction. We have also seen openness among others to engage in frank, interactive dialogue so as to explore answers to certain outstanding issues. It is critical to underpin the comprehensive nature of the Council's reform agenda, and the primacy of a set of objective, rational and non-arbitrary criteria for informing and guiding the outcome of the ongoing negotiations. It should be in the shared interest of all Member States to maintain the forward-leaning thrust of those discussions in a collegial atmosphere.

At this stage, we suggest that due consideration should be given to views expressed by Member States at various negotiation meetings, in addition to the elements contained in the framework document on Security Council reform and its annex, as well as the elements paper from the previous two negotiating sessions. We have noted some creative suggestions emanating from the evolving discussions that may effectively contribute to the current exercise of identifying elements of convergence.

The former Chair of the negotiations helped us to arrive at a common set of priorities shared by the entire membership on two of the issues under consideration. We believe that there is ample scope for further constructive efforts towards identifying common elements on the other three critical issues and for forging consensus in areas where divergences prevail. In that regard, my delegation stands ready to extend its full cooperation to the newly appointed co-Chairs.

To briefly recapitulate our position, we reiterate our support for the enlargement of the Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. We subscribe to the view that the size of the enlarged Council should be in the mid-twenties range, with adequate representation for the various regional blocs, especially those that are underrepresented in the current composition.

Mr. Dorji (Bhutan): I thank the President for convening this important debate.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by Ambassador Menissa Rambally, Permanent Representative of Saint Lucia, on behalf of the L.69 group of developing countries (see A/71/PV.42).

We meet again to deliberate on a subject of great importance to this institution and to all of us. We are confident that our deliberations under the leadership of the President of the Assembly will be meaningful and productive.

Bhutan welcomes the appointment of Ambassador Ion Jinga, Permanent Representative of Romania, and Ambassador Mohamed Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. I assure them of Bhutan's full support and cooperation. I also commend the previous Chair of the negotiations, Ambassador Sylvie Lucas of Luxembourg, for her leadership and contributions during the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

We meet at a time defined by important, ground-breaking agreements, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Those positive developments bear testimony to our collective resolve to advance peace, security, human rights and sustainable development. Against that backdrop, we must now work in earnest, with similar resolve, to bring to fruition the call by our leaders in 2005 for early reform of the Security Council.

Since the founding of the United Nations, the world has undergone profound changes. The membership of the Organization has increased fourfold, and the challenges we face have become more complex. Institutions cannot remain static; they must evolve and adapt to stay relevant, effective and fit for purpose. As the principal organ of the United Nations responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council must be made more representative, efficient and transparent. Bhutan supports the need to reform the Security Council in keeping with contemporary realities. The expansion of the Security Council in both categories of membership and the improvement of its working methods is necessary to further strengthen and enhance the legitimacy and functioning of the Council and to ensure that it is well poised to address the complex challenges of our times.

In this regard, Bhutan welcomes the formation of the group of friends of Security Council reform — a diverse group of countries committed to accelerating the negotiating process for meaningful reform of the Security Council based on the principles of

commitment to early reform, text-based negotiations and the expansion of the Council in both categories of membership.

We have engaged extensively on the question of Security Council reform for many years. However, the lack of a negotiation text has inhibited meaningful progress. It is now essential to move beyond the restatement of well-known positions and make the intergovernmental negotiations process results-oriented by commencing text-based negotiations. Only then will we be able to build on areas of convergence and seek out common ground in areas that we disagree on. We look to the leadership of the President and that of the co-Chairs to take the process forward in a manner that will yield concrete results. Towards this end, my delegation looks forward to engaging constructively with all delegations.

Ms. Chuard (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland would like to thank the 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. We would also like to thank Ambassador Jinga and Ambassador Khiarie for having agreed to co-chair the intergovernmental negotiations on this matter. We wish them every success in their work and reassure them of Switzerland's support in the discussions on this important issue.

Switzerland welcomes the positive developments that have taken place during the most recent round of negotiations and thanks the former Permanent Representative of Luxembourg for her efforts. Lastly, we encourage all States to participate constructively in the upcoming negotiations with a view to making progress on this crucial issue and to take into consideration the documents indicating the elements of convergence developed during the seventieth session of the General Assembly.

Ms. Flores Herrera (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): First and foremost, allow me to welcome the President's initiative in calling for the resumption of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform with a view to breathing new life into this very important process and to commend him for convening this debate on issues related to the question of equal representation on the Security Council and increasing its membership and related matters.

We would like to express anew our appreciation to the representatives of Jamaica and Luxembourg for their work during the two past sessions. We would also like to wish every success to the Ambassadors of Romania and Tunisia as they take on this important challenge. Panama is always ready to participate constructively in all the initiatives being undertaken with the overriding goal of achieving a democratic and representative Security Council.

The size of an expanded Council has been addressed at various times in the course of these negotiations. Clearly, this is a point of agreement among a significant number of States that believe that such increase arises naturally and logically from the growth of the Organization and thus from the regional and representative nature that should be reflected in all its bodies. Panama has stated and now reiterates its view that this is a matter of simple arithmetic. In 1963, the Security Council consisted of 11 of the 51 Member States, which was 22 per cent of the Organization's membership. Today, however, only 2.59 per cent of the total membership is represented. That is a far cry from the necessary point of equity that a global body requires.

The Security Council membership is not indifferent to the majority's desire to transition towards a Council with a better geographical balance and greater participation by States in the decision-making process. The Council cannot remain subject to the decisions, and even less to the differences, of five States, because that limits the comprehensive treatment of the items on its agenda, as has been made disturbingly clear very recently.

In the various proposals that have been set forth over the course of the sessions, the number of members of a reformed Council varies between 21 and 27. That is very important as a basis for discussion as we continue to seek consensus. Nevertheless, my delegation places even greater importance on the political will, attitude and acceptance of change manifested by States, especially the permanent five, as they address this issue and participate in and continue this process.

The positions can be and, indeed, are different, but we must get rid of polarized positions with conditions attached so as to move towards the centre, in a common understanding of the need for reform. To that end, Panama supports the continuation of negotiations on the basis of a text, which we already have in the framework document.

Panama reaffirms its position on the need to evolve toward a Security Council of the twenty-first century, in harmony with a varied and complex global context that increasingly demands an efficient and effective Council, and given the new challenges that cannot be tackled with old strategies.

With regard to equitable representation, it is imperative that more of the traditionally underrepresented States — especially developing States, African States, island States, States in Latin America and the Caribbean and States in Asia and the Pacific — become active participants in the deliberations and especially in the decisions of the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies. With that participatory vision, Panama has proposed a conciliatory, time-based solution to Security Council reform whereby, over a period of from 15 to 30 years, we would transition to a Security Council that by the United Nations hundredth anniversary, in 2045, would be made up of 26 members, all serving on an equal basis and all elected for a term of three years, with the option of consecutive re-election.

In brief, Panama shares and supports the approaches of those countries that want to modernize, update and strengthen the Security Council by increasing its membership as an expression of the legitimacy and representativeness of the 193 States and of geographical balance; by increasing participation by States, principally developing countries, in the decision-making process; by getting rid of the veto; and by eliminating special status and exclusive powers within that body, in the interest of the sovereign equality of all its members.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that in a world convulsed by terrorism, extreme violence and growing humanitarian crises, international public opinion hopes for and expects more from the United Nations. That having been said, progress in the reform process is dependent on good-faith and ethical negotiations conducted in absolute transparency, as well as on detachment, respect and open-mindedness towards the interactive debate that we are now resuming.

Ms. Sapag Muñoz de la Peña (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile is grateful for the convening of this meeting in the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform to address the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. We would like to express our appreciation

for the work done by Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, and we recall the framework document prepared by Ambassador Rattray during the sixty-ninth session. Also, we welcome the Permanent Representatives of Romania and Tunisia as co-Chairs at the current session, and we wish them every success in their work.

In that connection, we appeal for compromise solutions that would allow us to move forward with the reform to make the work of the Security Council truly legitimate and transparent. The recent selection process for the Secretary-General, as well as the dynamic observed in the work of the Council in particularly complex and painful situations, make it more necessary than ever before to make progress towards ensuring those two qualities: legitimacy and transparency.

Regarding the categories of Security Council membership, we stress that we must expand both the permanent and non-permanent categories so that the Council can be a truly representative body that reflects the new geopolitical realities and can address the situations on its agenda appropriately. At the same time, we recognize the progress that has been made since the last reform of the Council. We reiterate our position that the expansion of the category of permanent members does not mean an extension of the right of veto. In that regard, Chile reaffirms its commitment to the code of conduct on restricting the use of the veto, promoted by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, of which we are a member, and also to the joint France-Mexico political declaration.

The various proposals — on the categories of members, the question of the veto, regional representation and the relationship between the Council and the Assembly — as a whole must lead to more efficient working methods that make it possible for the Council to address the challenges to international peace and security in a timely manner. Equally, we must avoid reforms that impede the working methods of the Council.

Chile reiterates its support for the co-Chairs and our commitment to advancing the reform of the Council.

Ms. Sande (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Uruguay expresses its gratitude for the convening of this meeting of the Assembly to address the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. We congratulate the Permanent Representative of Romania, Ambassador Ion Jinga,

and Ambassador Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, on their task as co-Chairs.

As we have said in previous statements on the subject, Uruguay has upheld the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Since the Organization was established, we have struggled for the growth of the Organization because of the resulting benefits in terms of peace, the promotion and protection of human rights and the development of States. We are convinced that the Security Council exercises a most important responsibility in the task of maintaining peace, and the democratization of its composition and decision-making processes is essential.

Uruguay understands why at the time when the United Nations was established — and given the failure of its predecessor, the League of Nations — it was necessary for States to commit to the provisions of its founding Charter and the involvement of the victors of the Second World War as a way to ensure the continuity and functioning of the Organization. We believe that today's world requires more action and commitment on the part of States when they work together and cooperate in order to prevent and resolve conflicts. And in that regard, having more members in the Security Council would undoubtedly create balance in the decision-making processes.

Uruguay reiterates its support for both the United Nations and the commitment it assumed from the outset to supporting the development of the Organization and any growth or change in it that would lead to a greater balance and facilitate the realization of its objectives.

Uruguay has opposed and continues to oppose conferring the privilege of veto power on any new permanent members resulting from the reform. Uruguay's position goes back to the very moment when the Organization was established at the San Francisco Conference. The delegation of Uruguay underlined the need to not have differences of prerogatives or rights among the members of the Security Council, while accepting that those countries that had borne the greatest burden of the war would have seats on the Security Council — not indefinitely, but for a period of time considered prudent.

Accordingly, we wish to announce that, given the development of the discussions and the nature of the proposals put forth, the delegation of Uruguay will support the consensus and assumes the commitment to

work towards a balanced increase in the membership and a change in the voting procedure.

Mr. Awad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the President for convening such an important meeting. I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the Permanent Representatives of Romania and Tunisia on their appointment as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. We assure them of our cooperation in the upcoming negotiations on Security Council reform, as the United Nations cannot be reformed unless the Council is reformed.

Allow me at the outset to clarify the position of Syria on the important issue before us. Syria is among those countries that have been calling for reform of the Security Council over the past 24 years. We participated effectively in the first Open-ended Working Group with a view to ensuring that the Security Council reflects the status quo of today, many years after its establishment.

My delegation is of the view that in the negotiations, the five key issues of reform set out in decision 62/557 — categories of membership, the question of the veto, regional representation, size of an enlarged Security Council and its working methods, and the relationship between the Council and the Assembly — should be discussed together. Moreover, we believe that the United Nations intergovernmental negotiating machinery should be used for the negotiations.

My delegation is of the view that the issues of categories of membership and regional representation require further discussion, because, after what we have witnessed, there is the potential to deepen the existing divides in the Security Council in its current structure. Certain countries that have become members of the Council are not politically independent, but rather are pressured by other countries. Those countries are set on satisfying the influential countries, whose agendas they serve at the expense of international legitimacy. The positions advanced by those countries in the Security Council are merely a reiteration of the positions of the super-Powers in that organ. This has impeded the Council from playing its important role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

We would like to see an enlargement of the Council, but we must be wary about which countries are to be chosen. When it comes to the election of

States to the Security Council, the criteria of neutrality and objectivity must be observed. The Council, in its current structure since its reform in 1965, has not been able to maintain international peace and security. It has become an organ that establishes peacekeeping operations and deploys them to one or another location. The evidence to support this thesis lies in the fact that conflicts have doubled in number since the end of the Cold War. That is a true reflection of the Council's failure to maintain international peace and security, and of its neglect of many acts of aggression, especially the invasions of Iraq, Lebanon and Gaza, as well as the current events in Yemen, where the Council has failed to implement its own resolutions regarding anti-terrorism.

In conclusion, my delegation confirms that it will actively participate in the upcoming negotiations on Security Council reform in order to create a Council that is committed to the Charter of the United Nations and to humanitarian law, and that respects the sovereignty, independence and integrity of countries and the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs.

Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation welcomes the letter of the President of the General Assembly dated 26 October 2016, which emphasizes the importance placed on the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We also welcome the appointment of Ambassador Ion Jinga and Ambassador Mohamed Khiari to co-chair those negotiations. We are prepared to make a positive contribution to those very important negotiations.

As of today, we have been debating the issue of Security Council reform for 23 years. Numerous international and regional initiatives have been launched with respect to the five pillars of the reform, as set out in decision 62/557. The goal has been to move the intergovernmental negotiations forward, yet certain points remain unclear. Greater political will is required, particularly on the part of the five permanent members of the Security Council, in order to achieve our common objective.

The accelerating momentum of events in the world must spur us to press on with the negotiations and to consider rational positions. However, any decision to enlarge or otherwise modify the Security Council should enjoy the broadest possible consensus. That is why Kuwait supports the code of conduct proposed by the Accountability, Coherence and Accountability group regarding the improvement of the Council's

working methods, as well as the restriction of the use of the veto in the event of crimes against humanity. We also welcome the joint proposal of France and Mexico for a voluntary agreement on non-use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities.

In recent years, the position of Kuwait on Security Council reform has not changed. It is based on the following principles.

First, reform of the Security Council must be accompanied by the reform of the United Nations as a whole in order to add complementarity and balance to the work of the Organization. We must also improve the relationship between the Security Council and other bodies so that the Council does not encroach on the prerogatives of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Its role should be limited to the maintenance of international peace and security.

All the ideas put forward regarding Security Council reform should be based on our shared aim to improve the representation of Member States on that organ and to reflect the international reality, which has changed significantly since the United Nations was founded in 1945. It is also important to pursue efforts to improve the Council's working methods and increase their transparency. In addition, the provisional rules of procedure must be replaced by permanent rules of procedure.

Secondly, the use of the veto should be limited to cases covered by Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. Any increase in the number of seats should allow small States to be represented on the Council and to participate in its work. We must also not forget the rights of Arab and Muslim States to have a seat on the Council. In that regard, we call for a permanent seat and a non-permanent seat to be accorded to Arab members.

Thirdly, the intergovernmental negotiations should be the only means of achieving consensus on Security Council reform, in accordance with decision 62/557, which laid the basis for the negotiations.

Lastly, Kuwait believes that a successful reform of the Security Council will depend on the principles of flexibility and compromise. Lack of consensus will only undermine the credibility of those negotiations.

Mr. Khiari (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, on behalf of both myself and my colleague, Ambassador Ion Jinga. Permanent Representative

of Romania, I thank the President for the trust that he has placed in us by designating us as co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We are aware that the responsibility is a heavy one and that the negotiations are extremely important to the President and the Member States. The process of reforming our Organization depends on the negotiations, while dealing with today's challenges to international peace and security is in turn dependent on that reform. I also thank my colleagues Ambassador Tanin, Ambassador Rattray and Ambassador Lucas, who chaired the negotiations during previous sessions.

The President's letter addressed to Member States, dated 26 October 2016, emphasizes the importance of continuing to build on what was achieved during the two previous sessions with respect to intergovernmental negotiations, as outlined in the 31 July 2015 text and its annex and the elements of convergence circulated on 12 July 2016.

(spoke in French)

The positions and proposals of Member States and negotiating groups are, for the most part, known to all of us. What lies ahead in the short term is exploring any paths, means and options that will allow us to advance in the negotiation process, which we want to be inclusive, trust-based and carried out in good faith. In accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, we will lead the negotiations in a neutral, independent manner that is open to the participation of

all groups and Member States. Our goal continues to be to achieve together results that reflect and build on the achievements of recent years, results that respond to our aspirations to conduct a reform process leading to a Security Council that is more representative and efficient and more capable of meeting the challenges to international peace and security.

In that regard, I recall that, as reaffirmed today by several delegations, progress in the process of reform depends primarily on Member States. The success of our mission will therefore be largely dependent on the resolve and determination of Member States and various negotiating groups to move forward in our joint endeavour. We welcome the broad support expressed today, as well as the disposition of Member States to cooperate closely with a view to reconciling their views and positions on various reform-related elements and issues. The goal is to work together in a coherent and flexible manner in the framework of a dialogue that we want to be constructive and productive.

In the coming days, we will begin to contact and consult with Member States and negotiating groups. We will update everybody as soon as possible on the next steps. It goes without saying that our doors are open to all Member States. We will do our utmost to fulfil our responsibility. The steady support of Member States will be a certain help to us.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.