



Permanent Mission of India to the UN New York

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Statement by Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin, Permanent Representative, at the Informal Plenary Meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on 'Question of equitable representation on an increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council' : ' Size of an Enlarged Council and Working Methods of the Council' on February 22, 2016

Madame Chair,

It is with a sense of trepidation that I take the floor as I may have the dubious distinction of taking the floor on the same subject without any movement on it 20 years apart. Today is my fate to face every diplomat's nightmare scenario of the recurrence of 'ground hog day', that too, 20 years later. Yet, I take the courage from the fact that you, Madam Chair, have been a fellow traveller from the start on this journey.

Thank you for convening today's meeting of the Informal Plenary of the IGN on the key issue of ['Size of an enlarged Council and Working Methods of the Council'](#) and for outlining in your letter of 11 the February the broad guidelines that Member States shall identify areas of convergence on the topics on our agenda today.

At the outset, I would first like to align my position with the statements delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of St. Lucia, on behalf of the L.69 Group of Developing Countries, as well as the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Germany on behalf of the G-4. I also support the proposals offered by my distinguished colleague on behalf of CARICOM.

Madame Chair,

Numbers of all kinds are always a fascinating issue to explore. So let me start by placing our discussion of numbers and size in a historical perspective.

When the UN Charter was adopted in 1945 - 'we the peoples'- in whose name the Charter was agreed to numbered about 2.35 billion worldwide. Today 'we the people' are estimated to be more than 7.3 billion. 'We the peoples' have more than trebled since 1945.

Let us look at another set of numbers.

At the time of the signing of the UN Charter in 1945, the Security Council had 11 members including five permanent members and 6 non-permanent members and the UN comprised of 51 members. In other words, there was one Council member for every five Member-States and 1 permanent member for every 10 members of the General Assembly. Today the membership of the UN has increased more than 3 times.

In essence, Madame Chair I fail to understand that if since 1945 the total population of the UN's membership has increased more than 3 times, the number of countries members of the UN has increased more than 3 times, yet we are hearing voices saying that increase of the size to less than 3 times what it was in 1945 is too much. Can someone explain to me the rationale of this numbers game?

Madame Chair,

The argument we have heard is that the low 20's is compact and efficient while the mid 20's or 27 seats results in undermining the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council. Is there a causal link between effectiveness and numbers? If that is so can someone demonstrate it to us? Also, if that is so are we to accept that in 1945 we agreed to an inefficient size to represent 2.35 billion 'peoples' and the 51 countries that were UN members then? On the other hand one can well make the case that a Council of 11 Members in the phase of the Cold War was infinitely less effective than the larger Council in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War. Efficiency is not merely an issue of numbers but stems from a broader set of factors such as credibility, equitability, legitimacy and representativeness.

As stated by Ambassador Rambally, PR of St. Lucia and Spokesperson of L.69 Group that 'efficiency' is not an arithmetical or managerial concept, it is a function of optimal and just decisions perceived to be fair and just. We therefore must recognize that the case for optimal size of the expanded Council needs to be built on contemporary realities, as well as the need to ensure that the under-represented & unrepresented regions including the developing countries of Africa, Latin America and Caribbean and the vast majority of Asia and Pacific find their due place in this long overdue expansion of the size of the Council.

Earlier today the Representative of Philippines also provided numbers of how small a part of the total global population finds representation in today's Council.

Madame Chair,

In our own countries such a minority percentage representing such a vast majority would be unheard of.

Madame Chair,

On the issue of the working methods of an enlarged Security Council, it is clear from the statements made so far and the positions submitted in the text and its annex circulated by the President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly in his letter of 31 July 2015 that significant convergence exists. I would like to highlight some of common ideas among these proposals which could be further consolidated into a streamlined and shortened text. We note that a large majority of Member-States support the following:

First and foremost improving working methods to ensure a more transparent, efficient, effective and accountable functioning of enlarged Security Council. This is the main theme of proposals submitted by 12 countries (Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Croatia, Ireland, Malaysia, Philippines, Poland, Romania and Serbia). It also embraces positions expressed by other Member-States such as Paraguay and Georgia.

Second, equal and effective participation by elected members in the decision making process of enlarged Council and better access for non-council members to the work of Council through more exchange of information, consultation and cooperation. These are common points of proposals and positions submitted by 17 countries (Paraguay, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Ukraine, Bahamas,

Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago, Panama) and members of L.69 Group.

Third, improvement in working methods including decision making process of subsidiary bodies and sanctions committees and distribution of their chairmanships in an equitable and transparent way as proposed by 5 countries (Hungary, Liechtenstein, Ireland, Singapore and Lithuania).

Fourth, ensure that non-permanent members of enlarged Council to hold the presidency at least once during their tenure. This has support of 15 countries (Belgium and Luxembourg, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago, India, Brazil, Germany, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein) plus 42 countries of L.69 Group.

Fifth, enlarged Council should enhance cooperation and coordination with regional and sub-regional organizations, particularly with the African Union as put forward by 5 countries (Australia, Poland, Romania, Viet Nam, Malaysia) and 42 members of L.69 Group. This proposal also has support of 54 African Countries.

Sixth, formalize the provisional Rules of Procedure of the Security Council in order to improve its transparency and accountability as proposed by 14 countries (Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago, Singapore, Malaysia, Cuba) and 54 Member States from Africa.

Seventh, enlarged Council to fully utilize the provisions of other relevant Chapters, where appropriate, including Chapters VI and Chapter VIII, before invoking Chapter VII which should be a measure of last resort, if necessary. More than 80 countries including members of L.69, African Group, Vietnam and Cuba share this position.

Echoing the sentiments of a large number of Member States expressed today and also during the last IGN meeting held on 3 February, I would request you Madame Chair to consolidate the text on the basis of convergence reached on various issues so that we could all have a better appreciation of where we stand. By our account, there is more that unites us than what divides us; there is greater convergence than divergence.

You could count on our full support in this endeavour.

I thank you Madame Chair.

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