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33rd plenary meeting
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Official Records

President: Mr. Muhammad-Bande (Nigeria)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Šimonović (Croatia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 122

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

The Acting President: The President of the General Assembly is currently traveling and has asked me to deliver the following remarks on his behalf.

The reform of the Security Council is very important. Knowing the value that many delegations attach to this process, the President has been actively engaged in consultations to identify co-chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations framework. As all members will appreciate, the President is seeking co-chairs that are equidistant from the various parties involved. That will ensure a non-biased and transparent process. Finding such co-chairs has been exceptionally complex. Therefore, the consultations and search remain ongoing.

The President wishes to reassure all members that he is very much engaged in the process and that co-chairs will be appointed soon.

Mr. Heusgen (Germany): I have the honour to address the plenary today on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, a theme

that has been and remains at the top of Germany's agenda in the Security Council.

I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the Group of Four — Brazil, India, Japan and my own country, Germany. Many statements have been made by the Group of Four before this one. I am starting to feel like Scheherazade in *The Thousand and One Nights*, but her tales were clearly more exciting and colourful than ours. She would not have survived until dawn by asking for text-based negotiations and the extension of membership in both categories.

We are not Scheherazade, but underperforming on our task comes with a high price, too. By procrastinating on the reform of the Security Council, we risk seeing that body lose its authority and the legitimacy of its decisions. And just in case “procrastination” sounds too harsh, we have been stuck in this process for decades now, with the only change being in the name of the format. Contrary to the old fable of the tortoise and the hare, which teaches that slow and steady wins the race, we find ourselves not one step closer to the finish line than we were last year or several years ago.

To this day, we have proven incapable of reforming the United Nations principal organ for maintaining international peace and security. To this day, we have not succeeded in getting closer to text-based negotiations despite an overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations having asked for them. So far, we have collectively failed to address one of the most relevant issues in the multilateral system today. Defending the multilateral system on Sundays

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and then blocking the reform of one of its central organs from Monday to Saturday will no longer do the trick.

In order to enable progress, we need a concise negotiating text that will allow us to finally start concrete, results-oriented negotiations. The Group of Four will continue its engagement with other reform-minded countries and groups in order to make substantive progress.

Over time, the intergovernmental negotiations have appeared ever less capable of moving beyond the mere repetition of well-known positions. Much like Little Red Riding Hood, we have been repeatedly and collectively led off the path by those who do not want us to reach our goal. We cannot waste any more time picking flowers in the meadows while grandmother is at risk of being devoured.

The intergovernmental negotiations' quest for consensus allows a select few members of the General Assembly to successfully put a spoke in the wheel of Security Council reform. But those who prefer moving in circles rather than in a linear fashion owe the rest of us a convincing answer to the question of how they want to ensure that the Security Council is equipped to deal with the complex challenges the world faces today on questions of international peace and security.

Group of Four Ministers stressed in September that an expansion of the Security Council in both categories is indispensable to making this body more representative, legitimate and effective. Only if we manage to reform the Security Council will we stop it from becoming obsolete. Broader membership of the Security Council — especially with increased and enhanced representation of Africa — will allow it to preserve its credibility and create the political backing needed for the peaceful resolution of today's international crises. This has been recognized on many occasions, including for the first time at the Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement earlier this year. We express our support for adequately reflecting the Common African Position, as contained in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

A large majority of Member States would like to see Council reformed. The time to act is now. Those who are willing to make progress need to push the reform process further along its way, including by showing some flexibility. What we need is a representative Security Council to help us restore confidence in international cooperation and global governance,

especially in these testing times. We can find our way if we do not continue to drop breadcrumbs that are eaten by the birds and instead finally use little stones to guide us through the forest. That is easy; let us simply put what we have into a text.

I wish to conclude by saying that we look forward to working together to advance these issues throughout this session of the General Assembly with the new co-chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations and with all members ahead of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations in 2020. We sincerely hope that the President of the General Assembly will appoint co-chairs as soon as possible. We are ready to work with him on finding ways to allow for a speedy resumption of the intergovernmental negotiations' work. We should not waste any more valuable time. We need a strong, legitimate United Nations that can help us restore confidence in global governance and cooperation. Together with the Assembly, we are willing to give the intergovernmental negotiations a last chance despite their constraints and flawed working methods. Once the co-chairs are nominated, we can start the discussions in the intergovernmental negotiations straight away — immediately after today's debate. We do not have to end our discussions in May, as we were forced to do at the last session. We can discuss until July and even into September.

The intergovernmental negotiations should be guided by the decision-making requirements and working methods laid out in the Charter of the United Nations and in the rules and procedures of the General Assembly. States Members of the United Nations rightfully expect it to be a more results-oriented process. We have two documents at hand: the document from the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly and the paper from the last session. Let us use those two documents to create the text for negotiations.

Over the past decade in the intergovernmental negotiations, we have called out all the names we could think of to break the spell forcing us to go in circles. It is time we said "Rumpelstiltskin".

The Acting President: I thank the representative of Germany for bringing to our attention the commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. I firmly believe that the elimination of violence against women should be the priority of everyone — Governments and individuals alike.

Mr. Kabba (Sierra Leone): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of African States and to thank you, Sir, for having convened this debate on agenda item 122, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council".

Let me also utilize this occasion, on behalf of the African Group, to congratulate Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande once again on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. We take note of his instructive opening remarks and reiterate the commitment of the States members of the African Union to this very important issue, despite the existing difficulties in achieving consensus.

Let me also express our support and readiness to work with the new co-chairs to be appointed in building on the gains made thus far in the reform process. We also want to thank the previous co-Chairs, Ambassadors Christian Braun and Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representatives of Luxembourg and the United Arab Emirates, respectively, for their stewardship of the process at the seventy-third session.

The Common African Position on the reform of the Security Council, as articulated in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, is widely recognized in the Assembly. However, for purposes of clarity and accuracy, let me restate the main elements of the Common African Position as follows. Africa demands no less than two permanent seats with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership, including the right of veto, and five non-permanent seats. Even though Africa is opposed in principle to the veto, it is of the view that so long as it exists and as a matter of common justice, it should be made available to all permanent members of the Security Council.

As far as we are concerned, the comprehensive reform of the Security Council means that Africa is clear on all five clusters as outlined in decision 62/557 and reflected in the text and its annex, circulated on 31 July 2015 by the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session. That document, supported by 120 Member States, is commonly referred to as the framework document. It adheres to the principle of the membership-driven nature of the reform process and serves as the main reference document for the intergovernmental negotiations.

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

First, there is a need for the co-Chairs to accurately reflect the views of Member States, as expressed in all meetings, in any outcome document at the end of the session. This would not only enhance the trust and credibility of the process but also encourage more Member States to participate in the discussions.

Secondly, the low turnout of Member States at intergovernmental negotiation meetings at the last session was cause for concern. It sends the worrying signal that Member States are frustrated with the process for whatever reason. The African Group is of the view that, as guarantor of the process, the President of the General Assembly should, in the spirit of multilateralism, use his good offices to encourage Member States to own the process by actively participating. Such an effort would be most welcome. The African Group is of the view that the legitimacy of the process is enhanced when more Member States participate in the intergovernmental negotiations.

Furthermore, in terms of procedure, we are of the view that Member States, in conjunction with the President and the co-Chairs, should agree at the start of the intergovernmental negotiation session on the number of meetings, the type of outcome and the timing of the release of documents.

As mentioned earlier, we remain true and faithful to decision 62/557 and other relevant General Assembly decisions seeking the comprehensive reform of the Security Council, encompassing the five main clusters and taking into consideration their interlinkages. What is of critical significance in guiding the reform process is the acknowledgment of the interlinkages of the five negotiable clusters. Indeed, we cannot talk about the size of an enlarged Security Council without talking about the categories of membership, the reason being that an enlargement of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories would no doubt affect its size. In addition, the size of an enlarged Council would affect the cluster on equitable regional representation. That explains the need for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council, as opposed to a piecemeal or intermediate procedural reform.

Accordingly, in seeking progress on the reform process, we must at this stage endeavour to reach an agreement on how to move forward and reconcile or

harmonize the outcome documents produced during the sixty-ninth and seventy-third sessions, with a view to forming the basis of the work of the intergovernmental negotiations during this current session. Given the current international landscape, it is unacceptable for Africa to be the only continent not to be represented in the permanent category and at the same time underrepresented in the non-permanent category of Council membership.

We will therefore continue to demand the allocation of no less than two permanent seats for Africa, with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership, and a total of five non-permanent seats. The selection of such representatives will be done by our regional organization, the African Union. That demand, which is a continental aspiration, is to ensure Africa's right to fair and equitable geographical representation in the Security Council. The need to adhere to that demand and address the grossly unjust scenario is fundamental. Any delay would mean further perpetuating and compounding injustice, while concomitantly denying the region its rightful place in the major decision-making organ of the Organization.

We remain firmly convinced that the Common African Position continues to enjoy the broadest support of the majority of the membership and remains a viable option for the reform process. Africa therefore continues to urge all interest groups, stakeholders and the wider United Nations membership to demonstrate commitment to correcting this historical injustice by taking concrete action to support the Common African Position in its entirety.

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

Therefore, in fulfilment of the forthright vision of our leaders at the 2005 World Summit, we look forward to engaging with all States Members of the United Nations and interest groups in an open, transparent and inclusive membership-driven process with a view to achieving progress that will lead to the

ultimate realization of making the Security Council more broadly representative, democratic, effective and transparent, which will enhance the legitimacy of its decisions.

Ms. Juul (Norway): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and my own country, Norway.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Ambassador Braun of Luxembourg and Ambassador Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates for leading the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during the previous session of the General Assembly, and particularly for their work on the revision of the elements paper, which has been built on and improved over the past three sessions. While that work has certainly been gradual and far from the text-based negotiations we have frequently called for, the fact that we can all come together around one document reflects progress that should be recognized as a basis for moving forward.

On the substance of the matter at hand, the Nordic countries seek a more transparent, accountable and representative Security Council, better equipped to address current global challenges and that better reflects current global realities, not least in its representation. That requires a balanced expansion of the Council, including the increased representation of developing countries, greater possibilities for small States to serve as elected members and certainly ensuring that Africa takes its rightful place on the Council through an expansion of both permanent and non-permanent seats for Africa, redressing the historical injustice done to the African continent.

Those are all consistent positions of the Nordic countries, which we are happy to reiterate in this format of the General Assembly in plenary session, but we would like to see the plenary debate become the primary place for general statements about the intergovernmental negotiations. We want to empower the co-Chairs to move straight to the substance of the matter as we begin our informal meetings of the intergovernmental negotiations, rather than starting with another general discussion. The intergovernmental negotiations process needs to create the space for more genuine dialogue among Member States and interaction on each other's positions and proposals. The Nordics stand ready to enter that phase of negotiations and will

support all efforts made by the co-Chairs to get us there.

We welcome the clear guidance for our work at this session provided by decision 73/554. That decision outlines only two documents as the basis of our work, commonly known as the revised elements paper and the framework document. We welcome the continued recognition of the framework document. It remains an important resource for informing our work as the most up-to-date reflection of the direct positions and proposals of Member States. I spoke earlier on the progress represented by the elements paper, but we also see that it has more space for improvement, particularly by expanding on more difficult issues, such as membership categories, the question of the veto and regional representation.

Meanwhile, we see that the remaining two issues of working methods and the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly have been comprehensively covered. The intergovernmental negotiations process must stick to its mandated focus of a future expanded Council, rather than making our already difficult task more so by straying into ongoing work on improving the Council in its current format. That work is already being undertaken in the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions and through the General Assembly revitalization process.

That having been said, one major issue that straddles both the current and future Council is effectiveness. It must be recognized that in instances today in which the Council fails to live up to its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, a main source of its inability to act is the veto. That must be given careful consideration in our deliberations concerning an enlarged Council.

We look forward to the appointment of the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations process for the seventy-fourth session. They certainly have a challenging job ahead of them. Given the work already undertaken in the 10-year history of the process, it is not an easy task to chart a path for further progress, especially if our current parameters of engagement remain unchanged. In that light, perhaps it is time for us to also examine the working methods of the intergovernmental negotiations process itself with a view to weighing the merits of proposals, such as greater transparency in the process or even simply ensuring

better institutional memory between successive co-Chairs, as we have done when transitioning between successive Presidents of the General Assembly. Those small changes could help our process in the long run.

Ahead of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, we all understand the gravity of this topic in terms of both the monumental change it could bring about and the risks for the United Nations if we do not succeed. We know that African countries, among others, cannot be kept in the waiting room forever. It is in the best interest of the Security Council that the continent is ensured equitable representation. That includes permanent representation.

The Nordic countries stand ready for constructive dialogue this session with all Member States and groups of States, and will make every effort to support the co-Chairs towards continued progress.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the Group of Arab States under agenda item 122, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council".

It is a great pleasure for me, first and foremost, to express the full support of the Group of Arab States for President Muhammad-Bande's efforts in guiding the work of the current session of the General Assembly, in particular the agenda item before us today, which is of great importance to all States Members of the United Nations, including the members of the Arab Group.

I cannot fail to thank the representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg, Mrs. Nusseibeh and Mr. Braun, respectively, for their great efforts as co-Chairs during the negotiations in the course of the previous session of the General Assembly. We look forward to the appointment of the co-Chairs of the negotiations during the current session.

The Arab Group believes in the importance of pushing the reform of the Security Council forward by pursuing consensus-based solutions that are widely acceptable to Member States, while taking into account the positions of States and groups, including the Arab Group, especially after two decades of discussions aimed at expanding the Council and improving its methods of work.

While the United Nations is undertaking various reform processes to promote the Organization's role

and ensure that it is capable of meeting the increasing challenges faced by the international community, the reform of the Security Council and equitable representation within it are considered to be among the essential components of a comprehensive reform of the United Nations. That makes us more determined than ever to step up our efforts to effectuate true, comprehensive reform of the Security Council, the organ entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, so that it becomes more effective and better able to take up the challenges before it in a more representative, transparent, impartial and comprehensive manner.

In that connection, the Arab Group reiterates that the intergovernmental negotiations within the General Assembly are the only forum for reaching solutions for the reform and expansion of the Security Council, in accordance with decision 62/557, adopted by consensus in the Assembly, which sets forth the fundamental pillars of the negotiations.

We once again reaffirm that the five primary negotiation topics are all interconnected. They have shared components that require them to be addressed in a way that maintains this interconnectivity and achieves the comprehensive reform of the Council. There are many challenges pertaining to the reform of the Security Council, including the right of veto, the frequent abuse of which by some permanent members has damaged the integrity of the decision-making process, and in some cases paralysed the Council and its ability to shoulder its responsibilities and take the steps necessary to maintain international peace and security. In fact, the use of the veto on such occasions is clearly a manifestation of the narrow national interests of those States or their allies. It is therefore quite regrettable that most uses of the veto, especially over the past three decades, have been on issues concerning the Arab region.

The primary and broader goal of Council reform and expansion is to ensure an equitable and sound regional and geographical representation in the membership of the expanded Council. Against that backdrop, I reaffirm that, due to its political and cultural character, the Arab Group deserves, as a stand-alone group, a broader representation in the expanded Security Council. In that regard, I note that our Group represents 350 million people and 22 Member States — some 12 per cent of States Members of the United Nations.

Furthermore, several items on the Security Council agenda deal with the Arab world, which requires an equitable and proportionate representation of the Arab world within an expanded Council in order to guarantee that its opinion is heard and to lend legitimacy to the work and resolutions of that organ. As we have often stated over the years, the Arab Group believes that fair representation requires proportionate Arab representation in the non-permanent category within an expanded Security Council.

Therefore, the position of the States members of the League of Arab States regarding the reform of the Security Council is to request permanent Arab representation endowed with all the legal powers of a permanent seat in case any future Security Council expansion materializes. We also wish to confirm our position in support of the unity of membership and opposed to undermining the credibility of the intergovernmental negotiations by imposing any steps that do not enjoy the consensus of Member States and to setting any artificial deadline that could hamper the achievement of true and comprehensive reform. In that context, all documents published in the course of negotiations should meticulously reflect the views of all Member States and groups, including those of the Arab Group, so as to ensure that the positions and proposals of States are the basis of negotiations, in conformity with decision 62/557, and to uphold the principle of ownership by Member States of the intergovernmental negotiations.

In connection with the improvement of the working methods and procedures of the Security Council, we must ensure greater transparency and efficiency in its work, including by taking into consideration the need to agree permanent rules of procedure instead of the provisional ones that have been in place for decades. Furthermore, concerned States should be given a role in the endeavours discussed by Council in the decision-making process. These meetings should ensure real opportunities for non-Council members to participate in ongoing discussions on issues related to them in the Council and to consult with concerned States, in accordance with Article 31 of the Charter of the United Nations. We also invite the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council and the other Committees to ensure that all States Members of the United Nations are provided with all relevant information with regard to their activities.

We reaffirm the need for the Security Council to strictly adhere to its mandate, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nation. The Arab Group has welcomed progress in the negotiations on the issues of identifying commonalities and points of divergence that require further discussion. These efforts reflect a great deal of convergence among States and groups of States on the five main topics that are being negotiated. At the same time, they have highlighted many key differences of opinion towards reaching a common ground for a consensus on a solution that enjoys the widest possible political acceptance and achieves the true, comprehensive and envisaged reform of the Security Council

In conclusion, we are determined to continue participating constructively and positively in the upcoming cycle of intergovernmental negotiations. We are open to negotiating with all other regional groups with the goal of achieving a comprehensive and true reform of the Security Council in a constructive and transparent spirit.

Mrs. Zappia (Italy): On behalf of the Uniting for Consensus (UFC) group, I wish to thank you, Sir, for convening this important debate. The UFC group looks forward to cooperating with the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, whom the President of the General Assembly will appoint. I wish to once again thank Ambassador Nusseibeh and Ambassador Braun for their excellent efforts carried out during the previous session on intergovernmental negotiations — the only process approved by the entire United Nations membership that can lead to a consensual reform of the Security Council.

The UFC group is confident that the upcoming intergovernmental negotiations, as has been the case in past sessions, will deliver positive results that will advance the reform process owing to the continuous engagement of all Member States Members. Last year we managed to achieve some important progress, duly reflected in the revised elements document. The support for increased representation on the Council for developing countries, Africa, small island developing States and small States, along with strengthened language on the Council's working methods and on the interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly, demonstrate that we can find commonalities and that the negotiations are making advances towards reform — slowly but surely.

However, the path towards a comprehensive reform of the Security Council is still being pursued. Only through a transparent process that takes into account the voices of all Member States will we be jointly able to define a consensual path to reform, and only through consensus will we be able to create a legitimate Security Council that functions effectively. We all know that some obstacles have thus far impeded the achievement of meaningful reform. Aiming for a good outcome and common goal, we should now focus not on the walls that divide us but on the bridges that can be built among us, in a true spirit of flexibility and compromise.

Let us start from the broad convergences that we were able to identify last year, such as the following. First, an increase in non-permanent seats is supported by all Member States and is common ground for advancing Security Council reform. Secondly, all Member States agree that any such expansion of seats should favour underrepresented regions of the world, especially Africa. And thirdly, a significant and growing number of Member States oppose expanding the power of the veto to other States and instead support limiting or abolishing it.

The UFC group firmly believes that the Security Council needs to become truly representative, accountable, democratic, transparent and effective. Our proposal — the most detailed and comprehensive on the table — is aimed at achieving that goal. The UFC proposal has been adjusted over the years based on what we have heard in the different rounds of negotiations. It takes into consideration the positions of all negotiating groups. It is informed by the spirit of flexibility that inspires our group. We are ready to continue to engage in constructive discussions during the next round of intergovernmental negotiations. However, rushed formulas for reform must be avoided at all costs. There can be no procedural shortcuts to reaching consensus on achieving Security Council reform. That is one of the main lessons learned over the years. The reform process can succeed only if it is reflected as an amendment of the Charter of the United Nations that every State Member of the United Nations, including the five permanent members, can approve and ratify. An approach that serves a minority cannot be imposed on the entire membership.

Let me briefly recap how we envision a reformed Security Council. We propose creating new, longer-term non-permanent seats with the possibility of immediate re-election, and increasing the number of

two-year-term non-permanent seats. The longer-term seats would fulfil the legitimate desire of some Member States to make a greater contribution to the work of the Council and at the same time foster a fairer system of rotation. The Security Council would consist, then, of 26 members, 21 of which would be non-permanent, assigned as follows: six seats to the Group of African States, three of which would be longer-term seats; five seats to the Group of Asia-Pacific States, three of which would be longer-term seats; four seats to the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, two of which would be longer-term seats; three seats to the Group of Western European and other States, one of which would be a longer-term seat; two seats to the Group of Eastern European States; and one seat reserved for small island developing States and small States. That rotating seat would not prevent States from running within their regional group but would instead be an additional way for them to gain access to the Security Council.

That reform model would greatly enhance regional representation. Africa would constitute the largest regional group in the reformed Council, the Asia-Pacific region would have the highest percentage increase, the small island developing States and small States would have greater access to the Council and both Latin America and Eastern Europe would double their representation. Our proposed distribution would also allow for an increased and more stable representation of cross-regional groupings, such as the Group of Arab States.

Under the UFC proposal, everyone benefits, no one loses out and everyone gains better access to the Council. Our proposal also entails adjustments to the working methods. It is also the most realistic on the table, as several Member States from various regional groups have repeatedly acknowledged. We need a reformed Council in order to foster the trust of international public opinion in this institution and strengthen multilateralism. Our common goal must be to increase the Council's legitimacy in the eyes of both the general membership and the world's citizens whom the Organization serves. That would enhance the Council's authority and ultimately its effectiveness, making the United Nations more fit to face new global challenges and realities.

We have mentioned time and time again that the Council in its current form is either unequipped or unwilling to deal with some of the world's most pressing

issues and is thus failing our citizens. It is therefore time to show them that the United Nations can function well by working together towards creating a new and improved Council that can address their needs. It would indeed be appropriate to get closer to that goal on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Organization, moved by a true spirit of democracy and confident in the long-standing values of multilateralism. The UFC group stands ready to cooperate with the President of the General Assembly, the new co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations and the entire membership in order to advance this process.

Let me conclude by saying a few words in my national capacity.

Today, 25 November, marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The fight against all forms of violence against women is a priority commitment of Italy's foreign policy. Italy strongly supports the Orange the World awareness campaign, which is focused on the fight against rape and is promoted by UN-Women, as well as the Generation Equality campaign, which invites everyone to take new steps towards gender equality — a goal that, sadly, no one in the world can claim has been achieved.

Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): It is my honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the L.69 group — a diverse, pro-reform group of developing countries that are in favour of justice, sovereignty and equity in the reform of the Security Council, both in process and in outcome.

I wish to begin by expressing our gratitude for the convening of this meeting. We are ready, as always, to engage constructively on this important issue. We look forward to working with the President of the General Assembly and the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations whom he will appoint. We welcome his leadership in moving the process forward. We also appreciate the efforts made at the seventy-third session under the guidance of his predecessor, Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, and the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations, Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, and Mr. Christian Braun, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg.

We welcomed the changed format of the roll-over decision, with the recognition of and emphasis on early comprehensive reform, as well as the more concise referencing of the framework document, which

remains to date the most comprehensive reflection of the positions of Member States, and the current revised elements paper. Those small changes have restored a little faith in the purpose and progress of this critical process, and we hope to continue to build on and consolidate those gains in the current session as we work towards text-based negotiations. We also welcomed some acknowledgement of the support that the Common African Position now enjoys, although we believe that more work needs to be done in ensuring proper reflection of the Common African Position, as espoused in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. On that point, the recent outcome document of the Non-Aligned Movement clearly articulates the support of 120 States Members of the United Nations.

Against the backdrop of the mandate issued by our leaders for early comprehensive reform, and in spite of some of the aforementioned gains, we remain alarmingly far away from the intended destination. That is glaringly evident when we consider that 10 years have already elapsed since the intergovernmental negotiations process began and we still have very little to show for it. Differences in Member States' positions remain unbridged because the process does not allow for real give-and-take discussions that are based on a single text, in keeping with normal United Nations practice and procedures. The L.69 group believes that it is time for definitive movement towards a normalized process. For that reason, we reiterate the call for attribution, as it would necessarily facilitate a more focused and results-oriented process and spur movement towards true, text-based negotiations.

Furthermore, we call for greater openness, transparency and inclusiveness in the intergovernmental negotiations. We call for official records of meetings and for our meetings to be webcast, thereby bringing the intergovernmental negotiations more in line with other more effective processes at the United Nations. Additionally, we believe that we must utilize the calendar more fully by beginning the intergovernmental negotiations meetings sooner and by increasing the number of meetings. Small States, such as those that largely comprise the L.69 group, would also benefit from as much advance notice as possible regarding the calendar of meetings in order to plan properly and participate effectively.

Challenges around the world are increasing and faith in multilateralism is waning. A paralysed Security Council that is out of touch with contemporary

geopolitical realities is not cost-free. Unreformed, the Security Council cannot create the future we want. We are at a critical juncture of the intergovernmental negotiations process.

We reiterate that after a decade of the intergovernmental negotiations process and more than a quarter of a century of Security Council reform deliberations, we have made very limited progress. We all know the saying that to repeat the same actions over and over while expecting a different result is indeed the definition of madness. As we approach the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, a sincere assessment of our times should inspire renewed focus and increased determination in the comprehensive reform process with the aim of achieving a more viable Security Council. We believe that it is imperative that we get to the task of completing the mandate given to us by our leaders. We must now collectively and courageously take the necessary next steps to ensure the continued relevance of this critically important Organization.

With the visionary yet pragmatic leadership of the President of the General Assembly, we look forward to the work that will be carried out during this seventy-fourth session. We are hopeful that we can achieve a concrete and positive outcome in the Security Council reform process during the seventy-fifth anniversary year of the United Nations. If we do not, history may not judge us kindly, for we the people are growing weary.

Ms. De Man (Netherlands): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Kingdom of Belgium and my own country, the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg for their leadership of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly. We look forward to the appointment of the new co-facilitators and would urge the President of the General Assembly to appoint them expeditiously.

For the past 26 years, we have been discussing Security Council reform, first in the framework of an open-ended working group and since 2010 through intergovernmental negotiations in an informal plenary of the General Assembly. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations next year would be

a timely moment to finally deliver on our commitment to making the Security Council more representative, effective, transparent and, as a result, more legitimate.

In order to step up our efforts, I would like to put forward the following three points. First, we must ensure the transparency and inclusiveness of the intergovernmental negotiations. Secondly, we should enable text-based negotiations. Thirdly, we must enable more focused and result-oriented negotiations.

With regard to ensuring the transparency and inclusiveness of the intergovernmental negotiations, I wish to note that, to date, there are no official records of the discussions held in the intergovernmental negotiations, nor are the meetings available through United Nations webcast. Given that the process should result in a more transparent and inclusive Security Council, the transparency and inclusiveness of the intergovernmental process should be front and centre. In addition, ensuring transparency and inclusiveness in the intergovernmental process would bring the negotiations in line with past and present United Nations intergovernmental negotiations. That would also ensure the creation of institutional memory and enable the participation of civil society.

With regard to enabling text-based negotiations, there is much more that unites us than divides us. For instance, States Members of the United Nations agree on the proposed enlargement of the Security Council, especially by including Member States from underrepresented regions of the world, and more and more Member States oppose the expansion of the veto and support limitations on its use. Starting text-based negotiations would enable us to focus on those areas of commonality, notwithstanding the understanding that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. Having said that, starting text-based negotiations would help us to use the negotiating text to find areas of convergence and reach a compromise on the various positions held by Member States.

The two points I have just mentioned automatically lead to my third point — the need for more focused and result-oriented negotiations. If that were achieved, the negotiations would force Member States to have a more focused, result-oriented discussion on each main issue of reform. Without that, we will continue to repeat our positions without genuinely moving closer to a negotiated outcome.

Belgium and the Netherlands continue to strongly support reforming the Security Council in order to ensure that all regions of the world are represented in the principal organ for the maintenance of international peace and security, which must be fit for purpose to address the security challenges of the twenty-first century.

Ms. McGuire (Grenada): On behalf of the 14 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), I have the honour to deliver this statement on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council. At the outset, I would like to express CARICOM's gratitude to Ambassadors Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Braun of Luxembourg for their stewardship of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform over the past year.

At the founding of our Organization 74 years ago, the drafters of the Charter of the United Nations entrusted the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security to the Security Council, one of the six main organs of the newly formed Organization and the only one vested with the power and authority to enforce compliance with its resolutions and decisions. The world had just emerged from the Second World War, a conflict that the League of Nations, the predecessor to the United Nations, had proved powerless to prevent. The declared purpose of the new Organization, the United Nations, was therefore to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which had brought untold suffering to humankind twice in the twentieth century. And a case may be made that in that great purpose the United Nations has succeeded. Humankind has not eliminated armed conflict, but over the course of the past 74 years we have been spared the catastrophic consequences of a third world war, which would alter life on the planet as we know it.

Today, nearly two decades into the twenty-first century, the threats we face are not military ones alone, and if left unchecked they too have the potential to alter life on our planet as we know it. These new and emerging threats include terrorism and transnational organized crime perpetrated by non-State actors, transborder cybercrimes and climate change and its effects, which include the mass displacement of people and climate refugees. In the context of these threats to international peace and security, the instruments of

the mid-twentieth century can no longer be viewed as fit for purpose. The Council's working methods must therefore be reviewed in order to enhance its ability to respond to these new challenges. Its membership must be increased and made more representative of the peoples of the world so as to enhance its legitimacy in the eyes of those who are subject to its decisions and in whose name the Council exercises its authority.

As small, weak and defenceless States, the members of CARICOM are particularly sensitive to the need to strengthen the legitimacy of the Council by ensuring equitable representation and an increase in membership. We are grateful for the support given to one of our members, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in the elections held earlier this year for a non-permanent seat on the Council. CARICOM has proposed that a reformed Security Council should provide for a rotating seat for small island developing States, which can bring a unique perspective to the Council's deliberations and whose particular vulnerabilities are increasingly recognized.

As we approach a new round of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, we hope that this item will be accorded the priority it deserves on the agenda of the General Assembly. There can be no more fitting way to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations than by achieving notable progress on reform of its most important organ with a view to better aligning the composition of its membership and its working methods with the new realities of the twenty-first century.

Mr. Fifield (Australia): Like others, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and I can assure colleagues that the tie I am wearing, with its five shades of orange, was actually fashionable 15 years ago. It is indeed important that we use whatever means possible to highlight that important issue.

Australia welcomes the ongoing system-wide reforms aimed at improving the effectiveness of the United Nations in contributing to sustainable development and sustaining peace. But there are important areas of reform needed at the United Nations that have not been advanced. With the United Nations approaching its seventy-fifth anniversary in 2020, Australia once again calls for the Security Council to be reformed and evolve in order to respond effectively to the challenges of the twenty-first century. The

international rules-based order that upholds global stability, security and prosperity is under significant strain. Now more than ever we must urgently find ways to ensure that the Council can act as it must in order to address the challenges of today and maintain international peace and security. Questions hang on whether the Council is set up in the best way possible to maximize its effectiveness. Reform is well overdue, and Australia has been consistent in urging for change on three points. First, we need a Council that best reflects contemporary geopolitical realities, with greater representation for Asia, Africa and Latin America. Secondly, we must improve the Council's working methods, including through better coordination with the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission and other partners, and ensure greater use of coherent analytical information from across the United Nations system and better consultation with troop- and police-contributing countries. Thirdly, better standards should be developed on the use of the veto so that its use is more transparent and limited.

We regret that progress on reforming the Council has been merely incremental to date, moving at a glacial pace if at all. One way in which we can better catalyse the reform process and shape its direction is by moving from discussions to engaging in text-based negotiations. That would build the momentum needed to effect change. The intergovernmental negotiations should take steps to identify specific proposals, attribute support and strive to achieve a more transparent process that can be formalized in the General Assembly. Our world is increasingly complex and contested, and we can do better to meet contemporary pressing challenges to peace and security. We are clear-eyed that comprehensive and meaningful reform will not come quickly, but Member States clearly want us to move on from the status quo.

In conclusion, Australia reinforces its commitment to working with all Member States on Security Council reform so that we can better ensure stability, prosperity and human rights for all in a more peaceful world.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina expresses its solidarity with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and reaffirms its unwavering stance against sexual violence.

I would first like to express our gratitude for the outstanding work carried out by Ambassadors

Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Braun of Luxembourg in the difficult task of co-facilitating the intergovernmental negotiations on reform of the Security Council during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly. To them and the new co-facilitators to be appointed for the coming round of negotiations, I want to reiterate that Argentina will continue to cooperate constructively with a view to achieving tangible progress on this very important issue. Despite the fact that Argentina subscribes to the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group, I would like to underscore some specific points.

Argentina reiterates its commitment to a negotiating process governed by the principles of transparency and democracy and a spirit of flexibility, and reaffirms its deep desire to achieve a successful outcome on a multilateral basis. Together with the Uniting for Consensus group, we are ready to continue working for viable and realistic reform, exploring intermediate and alternative formulas, which, through respect for the equality of States and an appropriate rotation of membership, would enable us to reach the broadest possible consensus. Argentina believes that in order to make concrete progress during this session of the Assembly and achieve the broadest possible political support for Security Council reform, it is essential to find a common denominator that is capable of bringing positions closer together and finding an agreement acceptable to all. Far from achieving that, attempts to use procedural shortcuts as strategies that are deceptive or seek to simulate solutions can only harden positions that we are all familiar with and would definitely lead us away from the political agreement that we all believe we must achieve.

In Uniting for Consensus we have demonstrated flexibility and willingness in working for a compromise solution based on longer terms for new non-permanent members with the possibility of immediate re-election. That responds to the fact that the proposal that has Member States' unanimous support is that of increasing the number of non-permanent members on the Council. Argentina hopes that all delegations will act with the same multilateral drive to make progress in the run-up to the tenth anniversary of the intergovernmental negotiations on this subject and the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

As Italy said in speaking on behalf of Uniting for Consensus, there is also consensus on the need

to correct the underrepresentation of certain regions, particularly Africa. The Uniting for Consensus proposal addresses that concern and is the only compromise proposal submitted in the past few years, urging for a balanced and fair response to the desires expressed by the various groups involved in the deliberations. We also believe that we should improve the discussions on the issue of the veto, owing to its scope, implications for reform and consequences for the Organization's credibility. Argentina believes that the veto restricts, reduces and limits the actions of the Council, and we are therefore in favour of abolishing it. As long as that cannot be done, we will adhere to the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group on Security Council action regarding genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, as well as the French-Mexican initiative. The sovereign equality of States, a principle that Argentina defended even before the creation of the Organization itself, can be honoured only when we achieve conditions that would enable all Member States to have access to non-permanent seats on the Council, avoiding privileges for a select few countries and giving greater weight to equitable regional representation.

Improving the Council's working methods continues to be a very important issue for Argentina, and we have taken every opportunity to urge for a Security Council that works openly and transparently and is accountable for its actions to the entire Organization. In that context, we hope that the principles of democracy and accountability will continue to guide this process during the next round of negotiations and to favour the broader participation of Member States.

Finally, we believe it is essential to speak to one another in a clear, frank and direct manner, and above all to listen to one another.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): Session after session, discussions on Security Council reform succeed each other without the launch of any real negotiations. The year 2020 will mark the fifteenth anniversary of the 2005 World Summit, whose outcome document (resolution 60/1) called for reforming the Council in order to make it more representative, more effective and more legitimate. Very little progress has been made in accomplishing such reform since then, while the urgent need to strengthen the Organization, not to mention multilateralism, is ever more pressing. Despite that, successive co-facilitators have redoubled their efforts to enable the adoption of useful documents

such as the framework document adopted at the sixty-ninth session aimed at prefiguring comprehensive negotiations, as well as the “Elements of convergence on two key issues of Security Council reform” document put forward by Ambassador Sylvie Lucas of Luxembourg and the document entitled “Elements of commonality and issues for further consideration” produced under the leadership of Ambassadors Mohamed Khaled Khiari and Ion Jinga.

Like many other members of the Assembly, France believes that negotiations must be launched based on a draft text. That familiar process, which our Organization uses systematically, would ensure that we avoid the endless repetition of positions that are now well-known to all of us. That is why the role of the co-facilitators is so crucial. They must be carefully selected based on their ability to give us new impetus to move forward. We call for the appointment of the new co-facilitators as soon as possible so that we can begin the intergovernmental negotiations without delay. My delegation has every confidence in the President of the General Assembly’s determination to change the status quo, whatever the difficulties. His personal involvement is essential. France will provide its full support to him and the co-facilitators to ensure the success of their respective missions. It is up to the Assembly and each Member State to assume its responsibilities and conduct comprehensive, good-faith negotiations. We believe that is urgent.

The year 2020 will also mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations and our Organization. The celebration will be an opportunity to create a new dynamic for accomplishing the reform we all desire. France’s position is consistent and well-known. We hope the Council will take into account the emergence of new Powers that have the will and ability to take on the responsibility of a permanent presence on the Security Council and are able to make significant contributions to the Council’s activities, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. France supports enlarging both of the Council’s membership categories. We therefore support the candidacy of Germany, Brazil, India and Japan as new permanent members, as well as the strengthened presence of African countries among the permanent and non-permanent members. An enlarged Council could therefore have as many as 25 members, including new permanent and non-permanent members, who should be proposed by all members of the General Assembly and not just

their regional group, which would be contrary to the principles of the Charter. Such an expansion would make the Security Council more representative of the world of today and would strengthen its authority while preserving its executive and operational nature.

With regard to the question of the veto, we know it is a clearly sensitive issue, and it is up to the States seeking the granting of a permanent seat to make up their own minds. The dual goal must still be to first strengthen the Security Council’s legitimacy and then its own capacity to meet its responsibilities in maintaining international peace and security. It is in that spirit that France proposed several years ago that the five permanent members of the Council collectively and voluntarily suspend the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities. That voluntary approach does not require a review of the Charter of the United Nations but rather a simple political commitment. Today that initiative, which we put forward with Mexico, is supported by 102 countries, and we call on all Member States that have not yet joined it, particularly the other permanent members of the Security Council, to do so.

Mrs. Blokar Drobič (Slovenia): At the outset, let me join others in saying that gender equality and the elimination of violence against women remain foreign policy priorities for Slovenia. We wish to reiterate our support for the “Orange the World: Generation Equality Stands against Rape” campaign. The answer to violence is always no, and victims must be listened to and heard.

We find ourselves yet again debating the issue of Security Council reform, which we have been doing for more than a decade now within the intergovernmental negotiation process and previously in the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council Reform. This may be a record even for a lengthy and slow-paced process. It is therefore no secret that Slovenia is advocating for greater efficiency and effectiveness in the process itself. We were very happy with how the two co-Chairs, Ambassadors Braun and Nusseibeh, led the discussions during last year’s session of the General Assembly. We are very grateful for the paper on revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration, which in our view fills a lot of previously existing gaps, both in the commonality part as well as among the issues that need to be further discussed. We know that through both the general and the cluster-oriented debate in the intergovernmental negotiations

process, some positions could be clarified and some differences narrowed.

We believe, however, that the time has come to move forward, live up to the name of the process and start proper negotiations. We think that the positions are clear enough at this point and that concrete texts could be produced and negotiations carried out. If some countries feel that their ideas and proposals have not been taken into consideration, we encourage them to say so in the intergovernmental negotiations. At any time during the negotiation process, additional or new positions can always be taken into account and added, with nothing lost. We also believe that attribution for proposals would make negotiations easier. We see that as a way to achieve real progress. It is inconceivable that after all these years we are still unable to adopt a decision on how to reform the Security Council even when an overwhelming majority of Member States want it to happen. As has been mentioned, Slovenia would prefer to have a concrete negotiating text of proposals so that through proper negotiations, gaps could be narrowed and consensus emerge.

We are of the view, however, that many of the issues debated within the intergovernmental negotiations could already be implemented, especially those to do with the Council's working methods and its relation to the General Assembly. Slovenia wishes to commend the delegation of Kuwait for heading the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions and for organizing an open debate on the issue, in which we participated (see S/PV.8539). It clearly showed the interest of the wider membership in steps and measures to strengthen the work of the Council and make it more effective, transparent and efficient. We outlined some of the issues we see as the most important and where we think real progress has already been achieved, or can be. They include consultations with the troop and police-contributing countries, interaction with the Peacebuilding Commission and the participation of civil-society representatives in briefings.

When it comes to the Council's relation to the General Assembly, I reiterate Slovenia's view that it should be mutually reinforcing and complementary without either body infringing on the other's purview. There have been rich, substantive discussions in the past on how to achieve that, and we believe that the paper on revised elements of commonality contains an excellent collection of ideas. As we have stated before,

including during negotiations, we once again call for the timely production and presentation of the Security Council's report to the General Assembly. We believe it could be more analytical and substantial, and would thereby help the entire membership to better understand the decisions taken in the Council.

As for other questions concerning the reform, let me briefly outline Slovenia's positions on some of the questions from the five clusters. As the Charter of the United Nations states, countries that are members of the Security Council must bear greater responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In addition, special attention must be paid to equitable geographical distribution. We believe that neither must be neglected in favour of the other. On the questions of equitable representation in the Council, it is clear that changes are needed. Slovenia supports Africa in its demands for more seats on the Council. Small developing States should also have a greater voice. Related to that, of course, is the question of how to arrive at a process of candidatures and elections that ensures that every country really does have an equal chance of being elected.

We share the view that some groups are underrepresented, and we advocate for an additional non-permanent seat for the Group of Eastern European States, whose membership has tripled in the past 30 years. When it comes to the use of the veto, we believe that an amendment to the Charter would be needed for any substantial change. However, much can already be done now. The veto right puts a special responsibility on countries with that right and in our view should never be abused. As a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, Slovenia advocates for its code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, to which more than 120 countries have adhered.

Regarding the categories of membership, we reiterate that in our view the Charter provides for two categories — five permanent members and additional non-permanent members. Paragraph 2 of Article 23 states that the non-permanent members of the Security Council shall be elected for a term of two years and that outgoing members cannot be immediately re-elected. For any change in either category, we believe the Charter would have to be amended accordingly. It does not mean that we oppose any other solutions. We welcome them as the part of process of creating a more democratic Security Council.

As I mentioned, these are just some thoughts and ideas regarding the substance and process of the intergovernmental negotiations. The Security Council needs reform. Next year this Organization will mark its seventy-fifth anniversary. The time leading up to it is an excellent opportunity to continue its reform, including within the Security Council, if we want a strong and democratic United Nations that is prepared to face a growing number of existing and new global challenges.

Mr. Akbaruddin (India): I thank the President for convening this meeting so that we can all gather here for the twenty-eighth consecutive session to articulate our views on the agenda item entitled “Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council”. We welcome the importance that the President of the General Assembly gave this subject in the statement made on his behalf at the beginning of this discussion.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered earlier this morning by the Permanent Representatives of Germany, on behalf of the Group of Four, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, on behalf of the L.69 group.

Sitting and listening to this debate every year, one is reminded of the tragic Greek myth of Sisyphus, cursed by the gods to roll an immense boulder up a hill only for it to roll back down, dooming him to fruitless toil for eternity. Sadly, the story of the 11 years since the start of the intergovernmental negotiations process and, indeed, the four decades since this item’s inscription on the agenda of the General Assembly, reads more and more like the Sisyphian struggle. We enact this Greek tragedy year after year, oblivious to the warning signals all around us. The signs that global visions are changing, universal norms are shifting and established rules are evolving are evident. Only this month the Secretary-General warned that the world is breaking apart and the status quo is untenable (SG/SM/19852). Yet every year we fail to find a pathway by which we can agree on something, in our quest to decide on everything before proceeding on anything.

This inaction on our part is not without cost. The Security Council is being called on to address increasingly complex issues of international peace and security. Yet it finds itself unable to act credibly or even effectively, for it lacks legitimacy and accountability.

An obsolescent global governance structure cannot be fit for the purpose of addressing the challenges of peace and security in the twenty-first century. Unlike the mythical boulder that Sisyphus kept rolling up the hill, our collective failure to deliver on the promise of reforming the Security Council has serious implications not only for the continuing relevance of global governance institutions but also for the lives of millions of people around the world.

It is understandable that it takes time to adjust an existing multilateral architecture. Of course, it is also understandable that it can be contentious, because we may have differences regarding our preferred outcomes of reform. However, what is not understandable is an unwillingness to follow the basic ground rules of multilateral processes. More than 10 years after the start of the intergovernmental negotiations, what has resulted is still not a normal United Nations negotiating process. That entails an initial sharing of views, followed by written documentation provided by those leading the process, which then becomes the basis for transparent, give-and-take negotiations through attributed additions, deletions and amendments. While a normalized process does not in itself guarantee results, it does express the good faith and sincerity of the entire membership.

The intergovernmental negotiations has so far been limited to the repetition of known positions without any genuine effort to narrow differences. It is the only process of its kind in the United Nations in which negotiations have been conducted in a multilateral setting without any text. That goes against the very essence of multilateral diplomacy. Several delegations, including mine, have repeatedly stated that an inclusive text that reflects the positions of all delegations is not just the next logical step, but the only step that can lead to negotiations. The absence of a text cannot narrow differences. It is rather the primary reason that the process is not moving forward.

The Assembly’s adoption of decision 73/554 at the 92nd plenary meeting of its seventy-third session, on 25 June, reflects the desire to transition to a single text. It provides a proto-text that we have all worked on for four years now. We hope that the discussions at this session will build on the past, not supplant it. We seek a structured format in a single document that can be negotiated one issue at a time. This is an established practice of multilateral diplomacy that works for every other United Nations process and must be given a chance

to work for this issue too. As in all other negotiating processes of the General Assembly, the use of a text for negotiations should not be seen as an expression of bias against any individual country or group of countries. If anything, the absence of a negotiating text goes against the explicit mandate given to us by our leaders in their 2005 call for reform of the Security Council as soon as possible. We have tried for more than a decade without a text and have not succeeded. Let us venture forward in the normal way in order to give reform a chance to progress.

I now turn to the key issues of substance. We believe that the vast majority of Member States are in favour of expanding both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership of the Security Council. Delegations have repeatedly articulated that position in this and other forums. That includes several Member States, in their individual capacities, as well as groupings such as the L.69, the Group of Four, the African Union Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government, the Caribbean Community and the Group of Arab States. My delegation reiterates its support for the reflection of the common African position, as specified in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, in any document under consideration. This year the leaders of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries have also added their voice of support to this position for the first time. Integral to any Council reform is greater accountability and transparency of its working methods, a goal that also has very broad support.

Next year, 2020, is a landmark year for the Organization, as we commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of its establishment. If there was ever a year for undertaking decisive action, this is it. We must therefore proceed during this session with the objective of making progress in that direction. The exercise of undertaking Security Council reforms cannot be an unending merry-go-round. This is not an artificial timeline. The mandate under which we are discussing this subject was agreed to unanimously on the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations. It was a mandate for early reforms. Let us begin by consolidating and building on small, incremental steps forward. For this session, we call on the co-Chairs to facilitate a normal process from the first meeting onwards, based on an inclusive and holistic document that enables us to structure our negotiations transparently. We also request that we be allowed as much time as necessary

to continue our discussions. Only by showing mutual respect, promoting better understanding and providing time and space for deliberations, can we enhance ownership of the process by all.

They say nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come. If that is the case, the goal of a reformed multilateral order to preserve peace and security qualifies as a long overdue idea. For its part, India stands ready to play a constructive role in promoting this common objective of a structured reform process.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the President for convening today's meeting. The issue of reform of the Security Council is one of the most complex as well as most important issues on the Organization's agenda. That is because in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council is the organ that bears the main responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

We thank the Permanent Representatives of Luxembourg and the United Arab Emirates for their work as co-facilitators during the previous session of the General Assembly and look forward to seeing the co-facilitators for the current session appointed as soon as possible.

Today's meeting launches the discussions on Security Council reform in the Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. Those discussions have been going on for years. Overall, there have been 15 rounds of intergovernmental negotiations. While Member States have managed to make progress towards reform to some degree, we have not yet seen the possibility of a universal solution that could satisfy a majority. The approaches of the main players on Council reform still differ considerably and are sometimes diametrically opposed. In the circumstances, we see no alternative to continuing the careful, step-by-step work of bringing those positions closer together.

Our position is well-known. As a permanent member of the Security Council, Russia notes how essential it is to make that body more representative and balanced, above all by increasing its representation of developing States in Africa, Asia and Latin America. We are in favour of righting a historical injustice with regard to Africa, whose number of Council seats corresponds neither to its current role in international affairs nor to the number of African States as a whole.

However, the efforts to expand the Council should not have a negative impact on its ability to react quickly and effectively to emerging challenges. In that context, we are in favour of maintaining the Security Council's compact character. Its optimal size should not exceed the low twenties. We believe that any ideas that would end up infringing on the prerogatives of the current permanent members of the Security Council, including the institution of the veto, are unacceptable. It is important to remember that the veto is an important factor in encouraging the members of the Council to seek balanced solutions. Its use or threat of use has frequently rescued the United Nations from associating itself with dubious ventures.

We should ensure the ownership of all Member States, without exception, in the Security Council reform process, while its eventual formulation should have the broadest possible support of all members of the Organization. If we cannot reach a consensus on the issue, it will in any case be politically important to ensure the support of a significantly larger number of Member States than the legally required two-thirds majority within the General Assembly. We believe that the issue of Security Council reform cannot be settled purely arithmetically by voting on various models in order to ensure the minimum number of required votes. Such a result would hardly add to the Council's authority or effectiveness and would certainly not help to strengthen the United Nations. At the same time, we are willing to consider any sensible version of expanding the Security Council's composition, including one based on the so-called interim solution compromise, as long as it is founded on as broad an agreement as possible within the United Nations.

We cannot make progress in reforming the Security Council by imposing on Member States facilitators' texts, negotiation documents or any other initiatives that have not been agreed to by all the participants in the process. Previous Assembly sessions have shown the futility and danger of attempts to force a solution to the issue of reform without concern for Member States' broad support. Progress on Council reform is entirely dependent on the political will of Member States and their willingness to reach a sensible compromise. We call on everyone to heed that fundamental principle. We hope the efforts of the President of the General Assembly and the co-facilitators of the negotiations will be focused on assisting the negotiations as much as possible while understanding that it must be the

Member States that own the process. This painstaking work should be conducted in a calm, transparent and inclusive way without arbitrary time constraints. It is important that we all be aware that there is no place in our work for artificial deadlines or attempts to resolve this complex problem with a single stroke of a pen.

Russia's commitment to achieving results in the framework of the existing format for discussions is unchanged. The current intergovernmental negotiations platform possesses a legitimacy that is both unique and universal for the entire range of issues pertaining to reform. Abandoning it could lead to the collapse of the entire negotiations architecture and set the process back many years. We cannot allow that in the run-up to the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, which should serve as an opportunity to demonstrate the world's unity in dealing with global problems. And given the turbulence in international relations today, it is all the more important that the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform should not create new dividing lines or worsen the existing ones among Member States. Let us move forward while bearing in mind these risks and dangers.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the President for convening today's meeting. At the outset, I would like to thank the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform for the seventy-third session of the Assembly, Ambassadors Lana Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Christian Braun of Luxembourg, for their significant efforts to advance Security Council reform. Through their excellent facilitation, Member States held in-depth discussions on the five clusters of issues concerning Council reform, which helped them increase their mutual understanding, find common ground and consolidate the principle of ensuring enhanced representation on the Council and a greater voice for developing countries, especially African countries. China commends their efforts.

The year 2020 will mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and the end of the Second World War. The United Nations, the most important outcome of the war, was created in the wake of the fight against fascism, in which so many people made the ultimate sacrifice. As the core of our collective international security mechanism, the Security Council has played a critical role in maintaining international peace and security and preventing another world war ever since. Looking

ahead, we must learn from history and war. We must reflect on the causes of war, support the status and role of the United Nations and uphold the core values of the Charter of the United Nations in order to shape a better future, free from the scourge of war, for generations to come.

Today the world is undergoing greater change than we have seen in a century, with the collective rise of developing countries being a defining feature. China supports reasonable and necessary reform of the Security Council to meet the needs of the times. Priority should be given to increasing the representation and say on the Council of developing countries, especially African countries. Most States Members of the United Nations are small- or medium-sized. However, 63 countries have never yet held a seat on the Security Council, and some small and medium-sized countries have managed it once in 40 or 50 years. This is regrettable and unfair. Reform must increase the opportunities for small- and medium-sized countries to sit on the Council and participate in its decision-making processes. That is the only way to make it more democratic, transparent and efficient.

Multilateralism is under severe attack. What the United Nations needs most is unity and cooperation. Security Council reform pertains to the vital interests of all Members of the Organization and affects the future of the United Nations itself, and should ultimately result in a major adjustment of the global governance system and the international order. We need thorough communication and democratic consultation if we are to find a package solution that accommodates the interests and concerns of all parties, enjoys the widest possible political consensus and receives the support of all Member States. The intergovernmental negotiations are the only legitimate platform for Member States' discussions on Security Council reform. We hope that this year's negotiations in the General Assembly will continue to be membership-driven and will hold in-depth discussions on the five clusters of issues through informal plenary meetings.

There are currently serious disagreements among the parties on the general direction and approach for reform. In that light, rushing into text-based negotiations, setting artificial timelines or even trying to force through premature reform proposals will not help the sound development of the reform process and will only exacerbate division and lead to conflict or even confrontation. China is categorically opposed to such

attempts. If not handled properly, the reform process will make no progress and instead could jeopardize the consensus already reached, undermine the interests of all Member States and do even less to address the underrepresentation of developing countries in the Security Council, which is not what we want to see.

China expects the President of the Assembly to appoint experienced candidates with fair and objective perspectives to serve as co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations, and will support them in their work under the President's guidance, in line with decision 62/557, in which they should listen to and respect the views of Member States, bridge differences and facilitate agreement among them. China calls on all Member States to demonstrate political will, engage actively and constructively in this session's intergovernmental negotiations and work for the widest possible consensus. China is ready to work with all parties to take Security Council reform in a direction that serves the fundamental interests of all Member States and the long-term interests of the United Nations.

Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico endorses the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group and would like to make the following additional comments in its national capacity.

This is a crucial moment for the United Nations. We must seek an effective multilateralism that serves the interests of our peoples and has an impact on the ground. Strengthening multilateralism makes sense as long as its benefits are not limited to a small number of countries, it is done with respect for the principles of democracy, transparency and accountability and strictly adheres to the Charter of the United Nations. That is why it is important to pursue the intergovernmental negotiations aimed at a reformed Security Council that is qualitatively and quantitatively better than the one we have now. The negotiations have shown that there are some points of agreement on which we can move forward. For example, there is a good consensus on increasing the number of non-permanent seats. There is also agreement that the expansion should be representative and favour underrepresented regions. And a huge number of Member States support limiting, regulating or even abolishing the right of veto. There are therefore some common criteria that would be worth exploring in greater depth and that give support to the notion of continuing the negotiations and dialogue.

What Mexico is proposing is a balanced reform of the Security Council that includes both expanding the number of its elected members and improving its working methods and decision-making processes. An increase in the number of permanent members of the Security Council would not necessarily lead to an improvement in its working methods or efficiency. In fact, it would make it more difficult for them to agree, and increasing the number of members with the power of veto would make the Council even less effective. Where the Council's working methods are concerned, it is important to remember that with regard to the voting rule that requires the concurring votes of the five permanent members, as set forth in paragraph 3 of Article 27 of the Charter, the so-called right of veto was adopted in circumstances that were very different from the current international political situation and from what nations now expect from the United Nations. What has happened is that the veto has ceased to be exceptional and has become a recurring practice that undermines the effective ability of both the Council and the United Nations to prevent mass atrocities and humanitarian crises and, in critical moments, to safeguard international peace and security.

We therefore reiterate our belief that we can regulate the behaviour of the permanent members of the Council. For that reason, Mexico and France, together with more than 100 other countries, have proposed a voluntary restriction of the use of the veto on the part of the permanent members of the Security Council. Our proposal complements that of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, and we encourage countries that have not joined those initiatives to seriously consider doing so. They could prevent tragic, perhaps irreparable situations that could claim human lives. Let us continue to negotiate. Let us resolve to reach compromises. There is little point in voting hastily on matters if we have not achieved minimum agreements that can ensure progress towards what we all want, which is a more democratic, transparent and effective Security Council in which all Member States, without exception, are better represented.

Mr. Ishikane (Japan): Japan aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Germany on behalf of the Group of Four, and I would like to add a few words in my national capacity.

Japan is deeply concerned about the lack of progress on Security Council reform. Nearly two decades have passed since we committed in the Millennium

Declaration in 2000 to intensifying our efforts to achieve comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. It has been nearly 15 years since we committed to early reform of the Council in the 2005 World Summit outcome document (resolution 60/1). Yet we are no closer to that goal than we were then. As Prime Minister Abe said in his address here in September (see A/74/PV.4), three quarters of a century has now passed since the founding of the United Nations, and structural reform, including of the Security Council, is absolutely imperative. The Council's membership must be reformed to better reflect our contemporary realities, which means including those among us who have the willingness and capacity to contribute to international peace and security.

We have to say with regret that after another year of intergovernmental negotiations, we have not achieved much. The Common African Position now has wider support and is slightly better reflected in the paper entitled "Revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration", and we welcome that. But apart from that, there are still many areas where progress could be made. To ensure that this session will be more productive than its predecessors, we have four simple requests, each of which has broad support among the membership.

First, let us start the intergovernmental negotiations earlier and have more extended discussions, rather than limiting ourselves to five meetings over just a few months in which we largely rehash well-known positions. We request the President to nominate co-facilitators as soon as possible so that we can swiftly commence our work. We stand ready to begin in December. We can continue into the summer. Let us use the full calendar.

Secondly, as a result of this session's discussion let us produce a text on which we can negotiate. The two documents that we rolled over from the previous session are a solid basis on which we can build a text that ensures that our work produces tangible results in this session.

Thirdly, in order for us to have a text, we request that the paper on the revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration have attribution so that we know who owns which proposal. Furthermore, we request that the sections entitled "Commonalities" and "Issues for further consideration" under each of the five clusters be merged so we can have a clear sense of each proposal and its level of support.

Fourthly, let us formalize the intergovernmental negotiations process. There are no official records or webcast of the meetings so we cannot build on what we have done in the past; instead, we reinvent the wheel each year. The intergovernmental negotiations should be a normal process within the General Assembly and should be guided by its rules and procedures. Let us discuss how to make that process more open, transparent and formal.

Let me reiterate one more time our long-standing position: text-based negotiations are how we deliberate at the United Nations and how we resolve and bridge our differences. It is high time that we treat the issue of Security Council reform the way we do every other issue. The intergovernmental negotiations that we have been undertaking are not negotiations but rather a mere repetition of the same statements. Let us start true negotiations in this session.

A small minority of States would insist that we need to achieve consensus before negotiations begin, but if we demanded consensus as a precondition to negotiations, we would never agree on anything.

The Assembly can rest assured that it has our full support throughout this session, as will the co-facilitators once they are nominated. But time is of the essence, and we must demonstrate to the world that we are capable of completing the task before us.

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

I wish to extend our thanks to Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, and Ambassador Christian Braun, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, for their role in co-chairing the intergovernmental negotiations at the General Assembly during its seventy-third session.

Mongolia associates itself with the statements delivered by Ambassador Rhonda King, Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, on behalf of the L.69 Group. I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

We look forward to our working methods being inclusive and transparent and making genuine efforts to make the Security Council fit for the new global geopolitical realities of the twenty-first century.

Unfortunately, there has been little progress achieved despite our efforts over 26 years aimed at reforming the Security Council by establishing the intergovernmental negotiations on the question of Security Council reform in 2008 and its predecessor, the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council, in 1993.

The long-overdue intergovernmental negotiations process has shown that there are divergences and convergences raised by Member States. During this General Assembly session, we therefore should strive together to put an end to the repetitive presentations of all the different positions and take the intergovernmental negotiations process to the next level. The revised paper should fully and accurately reflect the positions of the relevant groups, including those of the L.69 and the Group of African States.

We support the early appointment of the co-Chairs and early intergovernmental negotiation meetings lasting well into July. The discussions should be more focused and provide enough room for mutual understanding and compromise among the groups and Member States. Taking this opportunity, let me reaffirm Mongolia's long-standing principled position on the five clusters.

The Security Council should be expanded in both the permanent as well as the non-permanent categories so that its composition appropriately reflects the diversity of the United Nations membership and the geopolitical realities of the world today.

The question of the veto is a key and complex aspect of Security Council reform. The veto should be abolished. As long as the use of the veto power exists, it should be extended to all new members of the permanent category of the Security Council, which must enjoy all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership in the permanent category, including the right of veto.

The adequate representation of all regions, particularly those that are not represented or are underrepresented, in both categories of the Security Council must be duly considered. The solution ought to be fair and just. We therefore attach high importance to the criterion of equitable geographical distribution through an emphasis on non-represented and underrepresented groups, particularly Africa, Asia and the Group of Latin America and Caribbean States.

The relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly must be improved through analytical and special reports, as well as adequate consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries.

The Security Council should increase opportunities for all Member States, in particular small developing countries, to seek election to the Council on a regular basis. In that respect, my delegation also supports the allocation of additional seats to the current regional groups, while ensuring the representation of small developing States.

We hope that decisive progress towards the shared and necessary goal of the comprehensive reform of the Security Council will be made during this session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): The drafters of the Charter of the United Nations intended for the Security Council to be the cornerstone of the international rules-based order in the area of peace and security. Unfortunately, it has become a sad reality that the Council is unable to act decisively on many of the defining crises of our time. The gap between the Council's mandate and its performance increases, as does the use of the veto to block Council decisions against the required majority of nine votes.

The effects are detrimental to the United Nations as a whole and therefore to all of us in this Assembly. While the current size and geographical representation of the Security Council membership call for urgent reform — maybe our only common understanding in this Hall — enlargement is neither a silver bullet nor a condition sine qua non for improved Council performance. An enlarged Council will obviously need to adapt its working methods. But the better work and functioning of the Council in its current shape are just as necessary and, indeed, even more urgent.

Year after year, we have been stating that we are unable to overcome the blockade on enlargement. The intergovernmental negotiation process continues to be the sole platform for these discussions and has become more of a guarantor of the status quo than the driver of change it was meant to be. In the absence of any indication of flexibility from those with fundamentally opposing positions, it is hard to imagine a way forward that would take us beyond the same point we find ourselves at time and again in this debate.

Liechtenstein has actively contributed to the intergovernmental negotiation process, and we appreciate the ongoing high-level engagement by Member States. At the same time, there is no question that the intergovernmental negotiation process has come to benefit the most those who show the least interest in progress. We are therefore of the view that the next round of discussions should include a serious assessment of the fundamentals of the intergovernmental negotiation process, if once more we do not make a decisive step towards real negotiations on the basis of a text. Another rollover without a concrete perspective for progress will be difficult to explain to our constituencies, in particular at a time when the United Nations is looking for positive momentum to celebrate its 75 years of existence. In the meantime, we should look for meaningful change outside the intergovernmental negotiation process where it is available.

In an attempt to bridge divides and foster consensus, Liechtenstein has suggested an enlargement model based on a new category of long-term seats for eight to 10 years, with the possibility of immediate re-election. The model's main elements are no new veto powers, flexibility to add new two-year seats, a strong review clause and a flip-flop clause that bars States that have lost an election for long-term seats to run for short-term seats. Liechtenstein is aware that many other States and groups have also put forward concrete proposals, and we see absolutely no obstacle to reflecting the current diversity of views in a negotiation text.

Enlargement of the Council does not imply, or automatically lead to, improved performance. Efforts to enhance the Council's transparency, efficiency and accountability have been successful only when pursued outside of the enlargement discussions and, in fact, often outside of the Security Council itself, at least originally. We work consistently together with many like-minded States in that respect and have achieved important results. The Office of the Ombudsperson was a successful initiative from outside the Council, and we continue to advocate for the expansion of its mandate to other sanctions regimes.

Another key initiative is the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group code of conduct against atrocity crimes, currently supported by 121 States, 10 of which are current Security Council members. While the code is first and foremost a commitment for Security Council members, it also enshrines an expectation on the part of a majority of

Member States towards the Council. We will continue to invoke the code in situations such as Myanmar, Syria and Yemen. As recently expressed by the ACT group, subscribing to the code of conduct is increasingly considered a minimum standard for candidates to the Security Council. We will continue our policy to support States' candidatures to the Security Council only if they have committed to the code of conduct, a very concrete measure all members of the Assembly could take to improve the Council's performance.

Liechtenstein sees the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council as mutually reinforcing and complementary. In that sense, the General Assembly has a responsibility to step in whenever the Security Council is unable to act, as it did with the creation of the International Impartial and Independent Mechanism for Syria. The Charter of the United Nations makes it clear that the General Assembly may address any issue it deems important and that its role and authority include matters of peace and security. In the light of the increasing use of the veto, we support a standing mandate for the General Assembly to debate any use of the veto in a formal meeting as a measure of accountability and a means of empowering the Assembly. Such a debate should take place without prejudice to any possible outcome and independently of the substance of the draft resolution that was subject to a veto. The Security Council should be invited to contribute to the discussion with a special report. Liechtenstein will work with all interested delegations on mandating such a debate in the coming weeks.

Mr. Sinirlioğlu (Turkey): I thank the President for convening this meeting.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group. I would like to make the following additional remarks in my national capacity.

Security Council reform is both necessary and urgent. We must make sure that a reformed Council reflects the realities of our time. For that, we must strive for reform that ensures that the Security Council mirrors the ever-changing contemporary world. Therefore, the outcome of the reform process should not be the creation of a static body. Avoiding that requires a comprehensive and inclusive approach and emphasis on the common good over individual national interests. Needless to say, the resulting reform should

be adopted with the acceptance of all Member States. That is the only way the Security Council can be more representative, democratic, accountable and effective.

The insistence on increasing the number of permanent members of the Council is the main reason for the lack of progress in the reform process. Yet, time and again, the discussion on Security Council reform is exhausted by efforts to allocate additional permanent seats with veto power. Make no mistake, permanent membership with the veto is the reason that we need to reform the Council in the first place. It is the very reason that the Security Council has on many occasions failed to carry out its mandate and provide timely and adequate responses to crises. It serves nothing but the national interests of those that hold the privilege. It makes the Security Council dysfunctional, unaccountable and undemocratic, thereby eroding trust in the United Nations and multilateralism in general.

The reform process needs to look for ways to address the current problems of the Security Council, not for ways to consolidate them. The Security Council will be more representative and responsive if we increase the number of elected seats and the possibility for all Member States to serve on the Council. The Security Council will be more accountable if the performance of members is subjected to periodic election. A better ratio between non-permanent and permanent members will improve the decision-making process, making the Council more effective.

The Security Council needs to fulfil its mission as the primary United Nations organ in maintaining international peace and security. It is time to work together constructively to achieve the broadest possible agreement. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations offers us a great opportunity for that. We invite all Member States to demonstrate the political will and flexibility to facilitate the reform process.

Mr. Santos Maraver (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): On this International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, Spain wishes to join this discussion and endorses the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Italy, who set out in detail the position of the Uniting for Consensus group regarding the annual debate on Security Council reform. Nevertheless, I would like to share some additional thoughts on the topic.

Before I do that, let me join all those who spoke before me in thanking the outgoing co-Chairs of the

intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, the Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg. We eagerly await the appointment of their successors by the President of the General Assembly to carry out this important task.

As the President of the Spanish Government said at the general debate in September,

“[w]e need to strengthen multilateralism. It is the only tool that offers a solution to the challenges”.
(A/74/PV.4, p. 46)

Strengthening multilateralism and the rules-based international order is necessarily predicated on strengthening the United Nations. To that end, we must successfully conclude the negotiations begun a decade ago to reform the Security Council, based on consensus — as the only guarantee for its broad and shared support — that is even broader than the two-thirds majority provided for in Article 108 of the Charter of the United Nations. In addition to the process, we must not lose sight of the fact that the multilateral action demanded by today’s challenges will truly be possible only if we conclude the intergovernmental negotiations by achieving a Security Council that is more democratic, representative and transparent, in which, moreover, through the holding of periodic elections, accountability is ensured, and that enjoys a higher degree of legitimacy and, at the same time, effectiveness.

Such reform guided by those principles would ensure that the Council is better prepared and adapted to meet the challenges and changes of the future. We must abandon the power dynamics and outdated approaches of 75 century ago, as the President of the General Assembly recently wrote in an editorial for *The Guardian*, so that we can ensure that the Security Council is effective in safeguarding international peace and security instead of reaching stalemates or considering proposals that increase the risk of such stalemates.

Spain understands, and has fully embraced, the need to promote a rules-based world order, underpinned by multilateralism as its overriding principle, as the only way to ensure world peace and security, complemented by open economies and close global cooperation, and that incorporates democratic values within the international system. For that reason, as the Ambassador of Italy pointed out, we advocate a model of reform that strengthens regional

representation more than other models might in a more democratic and transparent manner, while stressing the equality of Member States, without preventing those that legitimately aspire to do so from assuming greater temporary responsibilities.

We will continue to strive to avoid the dynamics of a zero-sum logic based on seeking profit at the expense of others. We believe that falling into the trap of such logic would undermine negotiations and necessarily lead to a negative outcome, which would weaken the Organization and cause us all to lose out in the long-term.

The Uniting for Consensus group has demonstrated its openness and flexibility. It is well known by all that our position has evolved as a result of the negotiations. Ours is a flexible, dialogue-oriented and balanced position that has succeeded in adopting and taking ownership of its and other groups’ proposals for the sake of seeking a consensus based on agreements and compromises in which, to varying degrees, we can all see reflected our objectives pertaining to the reform of the Organization. It must include everyone.

We are convinced that renewed multilateralism is analogous to the reformed Security Council that we have proposed based on the Uniting from Consensus model. I therefore call on everyone to consider our proposals in this light. Everyone will see that it is not merely a matter of an abstract reform proposal but a reform proposal anchored in the present, predicated on the needs of today’s world and geared towards addressing current and future challenges. We are convinced that our proposals would allow us to restore trust in the international system and the ability of all of us, as Member States, and of the United Nations system itself to adapt to the new challenges of today and the future.

Mr. Koba (Indonesia): Let me first thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting. I would also like to thank the previous co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, Ambassador Nusseibeh of the United Arab Emirates and Ambassador Braun of Luxembourg, for their leadership and hard work, including their update entitled “Revised elements of commonality and issues for further consideration”. We need to continue discussing and build upon that document during the intergovernmental negotiations at this session.

Given the increase in conflicts in recent years, with some old ones remaining unresolved, there are legitimate questions on the ability of the Security Council to perform its responsibility mandated by the Charter of the United Nations. The Council must uphold international law and the Charter's principles. It must be more effective, accountable and democratic, as well as better reflect contemporary world realities.

The world has waited far too long for a solution to the question of Council reform. That is why Indonesia — while it acknowledges the need for comprehensive reform on all five key issues — also emphasizes greater focus on low-hanging-fruit issues, which would likely result in less disagreement and concrete outcomes. Nonetheless, we see consensus as important in conducting a comprehensive Security Council reform that receives the broadest political acceptance. To that end, consultations and engagement must continue among United Nations States Members, including the five permanent members of the Council. With that in mind, my delegation would like to underline following three points.

First, with regard to regulations governing the use of the veto, while Indonesia supports the abolishment of the right of the veto, considering the present entrenched realities, we welcome steps that would regulate its use. We support a workable mechanism that will ensure that the veto is not used for subverting the cause of humanity and justice. There is considerable support in a wide range of countries across different groups for a voluntary mechanism against the use of the veto in cases involving genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Indonesia, as a signatory to the code of conduct of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group and supporter of the France-Mexico initiative on veto regulation, calls for greater focus on various proposals related to the use of the veto.

Secondly, with regard to improving the working methods of the Security Council, the Council needs to work constructively with the rest of the United Nations membership to make the Council more open, accessible, transparent, democratic, efficient and accountable. Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter should be implemented by fully taking into consideration the views of affected non-Member States. Affected non-members should be granted access to the Council and its subsidiary organs, including with the right to participate and provide substantial input.

Better communication and coordination are required among all principal organs, as well as their relevant subsidiary entities and Secretariat departments, to develop the needed synergy. Indonesia would also like to see improved consultations among the Security Council, troop- and police-contributing countries, host countries and countries contributing financially. That is an essential feature for effective peacekeeping and the broader sustaining peace agenda.

Thirdly, concerning increased regional representation, Indonesia firmly believes that the multidimensional global challenges cannot be met unless various regional perspectives are properly reflected in the Council's decision-making. The emerging nations that are proving their strength in democracy, peace, security and sustainable development can greatly assist the Council with their comprehensive expertise and unique networks of influence. As Asia and Africa are exceptionally underrepresented, each region should have at least four additional non-permanent seats, with additional seats for Latin America and the Caribbean. But until that materializes in the reform process, we urge the Council to intensify its substantive interaction with relevant regional and subregional entities.

Let me conclude by emphasizing the fully intergovernmental and all-inclusive nature of the Council reform process. We also underline the importance of political wisdom, dialogue and flexibility, with the mutual respect of all sides. For its part, Indonesia will continue to contribute actively to bring about meaningful Council reform. We are once again ready to work constructively with all delegations to that end.

Mr. Vieira (Brazil): At the outset, let me thank the President for convening this meeting, which allows us to take stock of our recent work and discuss how to move forward in the negotiations regarding the reform of the Security Council.

Brazil aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representatives of Germany and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on behalf of the Group of Four and the L.69 group, respectively. Please allow me to add a few considerations in my national capacity.

In June, during the meeting at which the General Assembly decided to roll over the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform (see A/73/PV.92), we highlighted a number of changes that are indispensable to make the process more effective

and results-oriented. As members of the Assembly know, fatigue has already been plaguing the intergovernmental negotiations, and we fear that the Member State engagement will decrease further if substantive improvements are not urgently undertaken. Holding general debates and repeating well-known positions is not an acceptable option anymore. It is high time to renew the intergovernmental negotiations, with a view to enhancing its format in order for us to move closer to real negotiations. Right now, our main purpose should be to reach a succinct, workable text that can lead us into a real give-and-take exchange. It is only through text-based negotiations that we can reach common ground on the key issues pertaining to Security Council reform.

We have consistently advocated that the meetings of the intergovernmental negotiations should start earlier, preferably in the first few months of General Assembly sessions. Likewise, they should not end prematurely, as happened during the seventy-third session, when we wrapped up our work by the end of May. In short, we should work more, and not less, to bridge our differences. For that to happen, the appointment of facilitators should take place as soon as possible. In that regard, we regret that, at this late stage, the co-Chairs have not yet been announced. We urge the President of the General Assembly to do that as soon as possible so that we can quickly resume our work. Whomever they are, the facilitators should have as their primary task the revitalization of the discussion on Security Council reform.

We are still very concerned about the lack of openness and transparency in the intergovernmental negotiations. Once again, we underscore that the intergovernmental negotiations are not a normal process within the General Assembly. It is rather an exception; there are no webcasts, official records, institutional memory or attribution of positions in the outcome documents, and, of course, there is no single workable text. Achieving tangible progress in those areas will ultimately be the parameter by which our success will be measured. We must make strides towards more transparency and make the intergovernmental negotiations a more formal process in the General Assembly. There are many other processes that can serve as a template for that, such as the negotiations on the revitalization of the General Assembly. The original goal of the intergovernmental negotiations was to move from discussions to negotiations. After more

than 10 years, we have fallen short of doing that. Let us do our best to change this state of affairs at the meeting during which we are going to prepare for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

The end of the previous session was very frustrating for all Member States interested in heeding the call made by the Heads of State and Government during the 2005 World Summit to achieve an early reform of the Security Council. Instead of that, we are running in endless circles. The time has come to rid ourselves of the business-as-usual mentality and renew our approach to this relevant topic. In June, we agreed to roll over the intergovernmental negotiations with only two documents to guide our debates, namely, the 2015 framework document and this year's outcome document. We did that reluctantly, in the hope that by the end of the current session we would be able to achieve a single document, preferably with attribution, and start real negotiations.

That is the only way to reform the structure of the Security Council to make it more transparent, representative and effective, bring to the table actors capable of making meaningful contributions to international peace and security and address the historical injustice against Africa, a continent that still lacks permanent representation on the Security Council. After 75 years, it is not acceptable that the main body in charge of international peace and security does not reflect our current reality and does not include permanent members from Africa.

We hope that, under the leadership of the President of the General Assembly, we will be able to end the cycle of repetition and halt the mounting frustration among a wide number of Member States, thereby avoiding further harm to the legitimacy of the intergovernmental negotiations process.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I thank the President for convening this important debate.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Italy on behalf of the Uniting for Consensus group.

We are once again considering the important issue of the reform of the Security Council. The rationale and justification for that reform is clear. The Council should be reformed to make it more representative, transparent, accountable and effective. However, there

remain significant differences on how those objectives can be achieved.

The positions of all parties on the reform of the Security Council are well known. The position of the Uniting for Consensus group is also known to the entire membership. It was outlined again this morning by the representative of Italy. The members of the Uniting for Consensus continue to believe that our proposal offers the most promising basis to evolve a consensus, especially on the issue of equitable representation on the Security Council. Let me reiterate the virtues of the Uniting for Consensus proposal.

First, our proposal is fair and equitable. It respects the principle of the sovereign equality of States and does not discriminate among Member States. Secondly, it will increase the opportunity for all Member States, including the small and medium States, to secure more representation on the Security Council. Thirdly, it will enhance the accountability of Security Council members through the democratic mechanism of periodic elections and, if agreed, re-elections. Fourthly, our proposal is simple. It proposes a direct amendment to the Charter of the United Nations for adoption by the Assembly. Fifthly, the Uniting for Consensus proposal is realistic. If adopted, it is likely to secure the required ratifications, including the necessary ratification of the five permanent members of the Security Council. Sixthly, the greatest virtue of the Uniting for Consensus proposal is its flexibility. It can accommodate, through variable arrangements in each region, the aspirations and interests of the majority of the membership, including regional groups such as the Group of African States.

We respect and understand Africa's desire for equitable representation on the Security Council. Africa is striving to redress a historic injustice. We believe that the Uniting for Consensus proposal is entirely compatible with the African approach. Both our position and that of the African Union is based on the principle that each region should be in a position to determine its own specific arrangement for representation on the Council. Africa's demand for two "permanent seats", in our view, is different from other proposals, which seek permanent membership for individual States. Africa, as we see it, seeks permanent seats for the entire region. We note also that, against the two empowered seats sought by Africa, representation on the Council could begin at two, or through rotation rise to a larger number of African States, under

arrangements to be made by the Africans themselves. In our view, rotation is the best means to ensure the representation of regional interests, including those of Africa, as well as to provide greater opportunities to all States to secure more frequent membership on the Security Council.

Since our proposal is based on a regional approach, it could also accommodate the interests of subregional groups, such as the League of Arab States and the Caribbean Community, as well as Central America. Other groups, such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, could also secure assured representation against the seats allocated to the African and Asian regions. Moreover, through the provision for possible re-election, the Uniting for Consensus proposal offers the possibility for long-term, and even continued, membership for some States if they are nominated for the purpose by their respective regions.

The position of the Group of Four is different. No one, other than themselves, has nominated those countries to represent their regions. While decrying that the Security Council is unrepresentative, they seek permanent membership for themselves. There have been many occasions in history when the seekers of power and privilege have come forward to declare that they have not come to praise Caesar, but to bury him. The Council's legitimacy and efficacy is not solely a function of its composition or the addition of new permanent members. The size and power of a State does not in itself qualify it for permanent membership of the Council or other privileges within the United Nations, which requires respect for the sovereign equality of States.

At least one of the Group of Four countries does not, in our view, qualify for membership of the Security Council, permanent or non-permanent. It is in blatant violation of the resolutions of the Security Council. It is perpetrating a reign of terror in a territory it occupies with 900,000 troops. It has imposed a complete curfew and lockdown on 8 million people for over a 100 day. And it is perpetrating massive violations of human rights against them and against its own minority communities.

We are all aware that agreement among the general membership on the issue of representation on an enlarged Security Council requires difficult and patient dialogue. There are five clusters of issues that need to be addressed and resolved. Member States must

be allowed the necessary time and space to reconcile their positions on all issues and to evolve a solution acceptable to the entire membership. It is therefore essential to engage in dialogue and constructive negotiations to achieve an equitable and widely acceptable solution.

The difficulties that have been encountered are not due to any deficiencies in the process. There is no such thing as a normal process at the United Nations. The General Assembly works in various different formats and modalities. Consensus can be evolved more easily through informal consultations, rather than formalized processes. No text can be imposed in such consultations as the sole basis for negotiations. The broadest possible agreement, which is required, can be reached only if all display flexibility and mutual accommodation, not by threats and references to majorities, which remain in the realm of virtual reality.

Pakistan believes that any decision on the reform of the Security Council should be adopted by consensus or, at least, the widest possible agreement. Our reasons for taking this position are clear. The reform of the Security Council is an important issue. It impinges on the national security interests of every Member State. Any precipitate moves to secure a decision by a vote would revive regional tensions and resurrect divisions within the Organization. It would once again eclipse, and possibly derail, the work of the entire world Organization and, most important, on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Moreover, any proposal for Security Council reform that is adopted by a divisive vote is unlikely to be translated into reality, as it will not obtain the ratification of all those that are required to ratify an amendment to the Charter of the United Nations. Indeed, a divisive vote or an imposed decision is likely to freeze the status quo in the Security Council, and thereby squander the opportunity for an early and equitable reform of the Council.

Mr. Aidid (Malaysia): Allow me, at the outset, to commend the work of the previous co-Chairs — Her Excellency Ms. Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates, and His Excellency Mr. Christian Braun, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg — in bridging the gaps among Member States on the issue of Security Council reform.

The reality is that reforming the Security Council is not easy. The last reform took place 54 years ago. At

the 2005 World Summit, our leaders agreed to make the Council more broadly representative, efficient and transparent to further enhance its effectiveness and legitimacy. It will be a lost opportunity if we cannot resolve our differences and reach an agreement to reform the Council as we celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations next year. Continued impasse will only bring joy to those that oppose reform of the Security Council.

My delegation has been consistent in reiterating our position that, in order to make it more legitimate, representative, democratic, accountable and transparent, the reform of the Security Council should be comprehensive both in terms of its working methods and an expansion of its membership. To strengthen the Council's role and representation, Malaysia supports the expansion of both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. An enlarged Council would not only reflect the current number of States Members of the United Nations, but would also replicate the ability of the Security Council to represent the interests of all Member States. At the same time, it is important for us to recognize the need for Africa to be more represented, given that the region features prominently on the agenda of the Council. Malaysia also agrees with the proposal for equitable regional representation in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories, so as to ensure that no region will be underrepresented in the Council.

Malaysia is generally against the use of the veto power. We continue to call for restraint in the use of the veto, especially in cases of international crimes of the most serious nature, such as in instances of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. By extension, we are not in favour of extending veto powers to any new permanent members. However, we need to be realistic in what we can accomplish. During the general debate on 27 September, my Prime Minister reiterated our proposal that the veto should be valid only if two permanent members and three non-permanent members agree to apply it (see A/74/PV.10).

We have to step up our resolve for an early reform of the Council as we approach the year 2020. We have been engaging in mere statement-reading meetings without any concrete outcome for almost 15 years, since the 2005 World Summit. To make progress, Member States must be willing to compromise and show considerable flexibility. Hence my delegation is of the view that a text-based negotiation constitutes

the ideal step forward in this reform process. Such a document should encompass all the different proposals by Member States, to allow us to clearly identify areas where differences could be bridged. In that context, my delegation supports the adoption of the revised elements of commonalities prepared by the previous co-Chairs, as a legitimate working draft on which we can base our upcoming intergovernmental negotiations.

The commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of our Organization next year will be an opportune time for us to elevate this vital issue to a higher level. Under the theme “The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism”, there is no better time for us to transform our Organization for the better in the interests of international peace, security and prosperity.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting to address an important topic of great importance to all Member States. We also thank the former co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiations for their efforts.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Kuwait on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

The issue of Security Council reform is a major challenge for the international community, as it is closely linked to one of the pillars of the United Nations, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security. A successful reform process will therefore contribute to fulfilling the goals of the United Nations and achieving a rules-based world order underpinned by multilateralism, equity and regional balance. Taking into account the realities of the contemporary world, there is an urgent need for collective action to improve mechanisms that will enable us to tackle the challenges we face and provide us with the impetus to move forward with our negotiations for a comprehensive and substantive reform of the Security Council, thereby rendering it more capable of fulfilling its mandate under the Charter of the United Nations.

The reform of the Security Council continues to be an important issue not only for Member States but for the entire United Nations system. A more representative, efficient and transparent Council will enhance the legitimacy and the timely implementation of its resolutions, as well as promote multilateralism and

contribute to efforts to achieve a more democratic and effective system of global governance. Accordingly, the success of the reform process requires adherence to its key terms of reference, especially the interdependence of the five components of the reform process, in line with decision 62/557, as well as the principle of the equality of all States in the decision-taking process of the Council.

After more than two decades of discussions on Security Council reform — given the growing need for in-depth dialogue and openness and as a contribution to provide an opportunity to advance intergovernmental negotiations — the State of Qatar hosted a retreat on Security Council reform in Doha in 2017. Members of the Council, as representatives of all regional groups, participated in the retreat, where discussions concluded that meeting the increasing number of challenges we face is contingent upon the existence of a Security Council that represents the entire world, embodies contemporary geographical, political and economic realities and keeps abreast of global developments and changes.

The intergovernmental negotiations have demonstrated that small States and small island developing States should have an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process in an expanded Council. We therefore stress that Council reform must not undermine the interests of small States, which should be given the representation they deserve in an expanded Security Council. Qatar also reiterates that any reform of the Council must go hand-in-hand with improvements in the working methods of the Council and the decision-making mechanism. We also underline the fundamental role of the General Assembly on matters pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with Article XI of the Charter, including in making recommendations to the Security Council. The complementary relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly is vital and extremely important in order to balance the work of the United Nations. The State of Qatar also wishes to highlight that the issue of the veto is central to the reform process. Experience has demonstrated that limiting the use of that right in cases of serious crimes, such as war crimes and genocide, can prevent the commission of such crimes.

The objective of the Security Council reform process is to achieve the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Consequently,

any violation of the Charter or of international law weakens the role of the United Nations, undermines the credibility of its organs and affects international efforts to strengthen mechanisms for the maintenance of international peace and security. Threats posed to the sovereignty of States or the threat of the use of force therefore constitute a challenge to the mandate of the Security Council and the international community, as well as a flagrant violation of the Charter, international law and the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

In conclusion, the State of Qatar will continue to contribute positively to the intergovernmental negotiations aimed at reforming the Council in order to render it efficient and accountable, with capacity to take decisions in a timely way for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): We welcome the convening of this important and highly relevant debate on the agenda item entitled “Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council.” We appreciate that the President identified the reform of the Security Council as one of the key priorities of his presidency.

We look forward to the early appointment of the co-Chairs in order to start the intergovernmental negotiations as soon as possible. I would therefore like to reassure the President of my delegation’s unwavering support in this endeavour. I trust that, through his leadership, considerable progress will be made in moving the intergovernmental negotiations process forward.

My delegation aligns itself with statements delivered by the representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, on behalf of the L.69 group, and by the representative of Sierra Leone, on behalf of the Group of African States. We wish to make the following additional remarks.

This year marks 74 years since the Security Council was established in 1945, as well as 54 years since the first and, sadly, the most recent expansion of the Council took place. In a little under two weeks from now, on 11 December, we will mark the twenty-seventh anniversary of the adoption of decision 47/62, which initiated the process for the Assembly’s consideration of the agenda item dealing with the reform of the Security Council. This year is exactly 11 years since

the start of the intergovernmental negotiations process, and 14 years since the World Summit of 2005, where we unanimously agreed on an early reform of the Security Council. It is with deep regret that, despite those efforts, the process of the reform of the Security Council has not produced any significant results.

Speaking from this very rostrum on 28 September, Minister Naledi Pandor called for the negotiations on reforms to be invigorated (see A/74/PV.11). It is with that in mind that South Africa urges all Member States, under the leadership of the President of the General Assembly, to take full advantage of the seventy-fifth anniversary consultation processes, as well as the upcoming the intergovernmental negotiations session, to spare no effort to reinvigorate the negotiations process with the aim of achieving the momentum needed for moving the negotiations on the reform of the Security Council forward to their logical conclusion. South Africa firmly believes that continued, direct and results-oriented engagement by Member States is urgently required. In that context, we would like to propose the following.

First, we join other Member States that have called for us to explore options for moving the intergovernmental negotiations process forward, including through the immediate normalization of negotiation modes within the intergovernmental negotiations process and the establishment of a road map with clear implementable time frames for the reform agenda.

Secondly, we reiterate the view that we do not need to reinvent the proverbial wheel in the intergovernmental negotiations process. The current revised document produced during the seventy-third session is a positive step that we could build on. In our view, the revised document is not perfect, but it is a step towards the next logical stage of give-and-take negotiations. South Africa would welcome an improved reflection of the Ezulwini Consensus in the revised document in line with the overwhelming support that the Common African Position has received across the United Nations membership.

Likewise, we also strongly advocate for the expansion of permanent and non-permanent membership to ensure that all five subregions are represented in the Council. The reformed Council should have at least 26 seats. Furthermore, my delegation welcomes with appreciation the unwavering support for the Ezulwini Consensus voiced by the Heads of State and Government

of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM) during its eighteenth Summit, held in Baku last month, and as reflected in the Baku outcome document. The Movement is commended for joining the overwhelming support for the Common African Position. We therefore request all States members of NAM to relentlessly advocate this aspect of the NAM position during the intergovernmental negotiations.

Thirdly, the idea of ending the work of the intergovernmental negotiations before June, as was the case in the previous three sessions, does not utilize time efficiently and denies the process adequate opportunity for full discussions. The ending of the intergovernmental negotiations four months before the session ends creates the impression that there is no urgency to this very important and long-outstanding process.

In the light of what I have said here, my delegation would like to emphasize and reiterate the urgent need for the speedy reform of the Security Council. The world and the work of the Council have evolved and become more complex, and indeed more pressing, over the past 74 years. The unreformed structure of the Security Council runs the risk of losing legitimacy, credibility and acceptance if the General Assembly fails to urgently implement the necessary and required reforms. The current stalemate in the Council and its glaring failure to carry out its historical mandate of maintaining international peace and security is largely attributed to its current configuration. It is for that reason that South Africa calls for urgent practical steps to be taken during the seventy-fourth session.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm my delegation's commitment to the comprehensive reform of the Security Council. In that regard, we remain committed to working with the President and other Member States to ensure that this session of the intergovernmental negotiations is indeed a success. We reiterate our call for this session to produce a fair and progressive outcome to restore the credibility and the legitimacy of the Council as one of the critical organs of the United Nations. We must seize this moment to finally realize the mandate given by Heads of State in 2005 to urgently reform the Council. Making progress on the comprehensive reform of the Security Council would be a fitting tribute to our diamond jubilee celebrations next year.

Ms. Rodríguez Abascal (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to take this opportunity to

acknowledge the work conducted by the co-Chairs of the intergovernmental negotiation process for the reform of the Security Council during the seventy-third session, namely, the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates, Mrs. Lana Nusseibeh, and the Ambassador of Luxembourg, Mr. Christian Braun.

Cuba supports the comprehensive reform of the Security Council, including its working methods, to render that organ more transparent, democratic and representative. That would include, among other things, transparent informal negotiations; the adoption of its rules of procedure, which to date remain provisional; the issuance of official records of its informal consultations, which should be the exception and not the practice; and the issuance of exhaustive and analytical annual reports on its work.

We support the expansion of the Security Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories of membership, with the goal of rectifying the insufficient representation of developing countries. Security Council membership should be comprised of no fewer than 26 seats. Such expansion should include an increase in new permanent members from at least two countries in Africa, two from developing countries in Asia and two from Latin America and the Caribbean. The category of non-permanent members should be increased to at least 15 seats.

Cuba has always opposed the existence of the veto power. However, as long as the veto is not eliminated, new seats created in the category of permanent members must have the same prerogatives and rights as the current ones, including the veto power. Cuba is not in favour of creating new categories or subcategories of members, as that would only deepen existing differences and encourage division within the Council. The Council must also refrain from interfering in matters beyond the scope of its competence, in particular in those matters that fall within the mandate of the General Assembly.

We reiterate the importance of continuing the intergovernmental negotiations on this topic as a way to comprehensively address all of the issues related to the reform of the Council through an analysis of the five key reform issues outlined in decision 62/557, namely, the categories of membership, the question of veto, regional representation, the size of an expanded Council and its working methods, and the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly. The final document submitted by the co-Chairs of the

process, which details common elements and issues for future consideration by the Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, demonstrates the diversity of existing positions and, in that connection, the need to continue dialogue among States Members in an inclusive and transparent manner.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker for this meeting. We will hear the remaining speakers this afternoon. I would like to thank the interpreters for enabling us to work beyond 1 p.m.

We started this meeting with a reference to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and, in conclusion, I would like to add that as we commemorate this year the fortieth anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, this day carries special meaning.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.