



The Bahamas

60th SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PLENARY

**AGENDA ITEM 9: "REPORT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL"
& AGENDA ITEM 117: "QUESTION OF EQUITABLE
REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND RELATED MATTERS"**

JOINT DEBATE

**STATEMENT BY H.E. PAULETTE BETHEL
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS**

10 NOVEMBER 2005

Please check against delivery

Mr. President,

While The Bahamas aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Barbados, on behalf of the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), we wish to offer a few additional comments from a national perspective.

Mr. President,

In 1945, the nations of the world, fresh from the horrors of war, embarked upon one of the greatest undertakings in international diplomacy – the United Nations. At that time, fifty-one States decided that the best chance for sustained peace was to bind their common hopes and aspirations in this world organization, based on the principles of international law, international security, economic development, and social equity. Today, 60 years later, the United Nations’ nearly universal membership of 191 Member States is a testament to its appeal and indispensability. As the sentinel for international peace and security within the UN system, the Security Council has often taken center stage as we all grapple with the challenges brought on by an increasingly complex international order and the attendant opportunities, obstacles, and threats.

Mr. President,

In compliance with Article 24 (3) of the United Nations Charter, we are today considering the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly which is contained in document A/60/2. This report has been the object of much comment over the years, given its potential to be a major point of interaction between these two principal bodies of the organization. This potential takes on great significance because, according to Article 24 (1) of the Charter, the Member States of the United Nations “...confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf.”

Inasmuch as the Council acts on behalf of all UN Member States in the maintenance of international peace and security and, while few would argue that the report is not comprehensive, many countries, The Bahamas included, agree that it could and should be more substantive and analytical, presenting a reflective view and assessment of the Council’s activities. It is also in this vein that The Bahamas supports the idea of an interactive exchange between the Council and the General Assembly when this report is being considered by the latter.

Mr. President,

The report before us today certainly illustrates the width and breath of the actions undertaken by the Council on our behalf, and, as stated therein, the report reveals that there has been a continuous increase in the volume and scope of the Council's activities. The greater number of these activities were, in our view, rightfully geared toward bringing resolution to a number of conflict and post-conflict situations, particularly in Africa. We commend the Council for its focus in this area, especially in light of the acknowledged nexus between peace, security, and development, and the need to ensure that Africa makes significant strides toward the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

The Bahamas also welcomes the Council's sustained focus on our sister Caribbean nation, Haiti, through the activities of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), in an effort to resolve the complexity of challenges confronting that country. As such, we note, with satisfaction, the Council's acknowledgement of "...the importance of promoting long-term economic development alongside security and political stability..." within Haiti. It is absolutely imperative that the international community continues to provide Haiti with the required assistance and support for its upcoming elections and beyond.

Mr. President,

The Bahamas also takes a keen interest in the work of the various counter-terrorism bodies of the Council, particularly their efforts to increase coordination in their respective fields of work, as well as the provision of technical assistance to those States in need. The sometimes Herculean effort required to implement critical counter-terrorism measures adopted by the Security Council, as well as to meet reporting obligations under various resolutions, continues to pose a challenge to many States, particularly small States. The Bahamas would encourage the Council to continue its efforts to coordinate much-needed assistance to States in all aspects of their counter-terrorism obligations, in our collective fight against this scourge.

Allow me at this juncture, to convey the condolences of the people and Government of The Bahamas to the people and Government of Jordan on the loss of life and destruction wrought by the terrorist bombings in Amman yesterday.

Mr. President,

We acknowledge the service and efforts of the Member States that are members of the Security Council. We believe it is vital that all Member States with the capacity to serve on the Council be given an opportunity to do so, and therefore we feel that the expansion of the membership of the Council is appropriate and should be given careful and due consideration.. A Council that is truly representative of the present world must more equitably reflect the current membership of the Organisation,

allowing developing countries, including small island developing states, to play a greater role in its activities. Expanding the membership of the Security Council is, however, only one dimension of the reform that needs to take place in that body. The other equally important dimension is reform of the Council's working methods.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome Document acknowledges and speaks to this aspect directly, recommending that the Council "... continue to adapt its working methods so as to increase the involvement of States not members of the Council in its work, as appropriate, enhance its accountability to the membership and increase the transparency of its work."

Mr. President,

In tandem with the Report of the Security Council, we are also, appropriately, considering the Report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council which is contained in document A/59/47. I had the distinct honour and privilege of co-chairing that Working Group, along with Ambassador Christian Wenaweser of Liechtenstein, during the 59th Session of the General Assembly. During that period, the Working Group discussions concentrated on matters related to the working methods of the Security Council or Cluster II issues as they are commonly called. As evidenced by this report of the Working Group, many Member States place great emphasis and importance on the working methods of the Security Council as a means of making the body more transparent, inclusive, accountable, and effective. The Bahamas believes that positive contributions to the work of the Council could and would be made by many countries, which would otherwise be kept on the periphery or totally excluded, if the working methods of that body were modified. There is a plethora of recommendations and suggestions that have issued forth from the Open-ended Working Group, in this regard, last year and in preceding years, and we invite the Security Council to consider them from a constructive and progressive frame of reference.

In this vein, The Bahamas is heartened by the discussions on working methods that have been generated in the wake of the draft resolution crafted by the "Small Five" (S5) delegations of Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore, and Switzerland. We commend the S5 for this initiative which we hope will lead to a groundswell of dialogue and action culminating in a positive outcome for all concerned. This could be a critical first step in actualizing the agreement of the Summit in September that early reform of the Security Council is an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations.

Mr President,

We are all familiar with the saying that with great power comes great responsibility. Nowhere is this old adage more appropriate than when it comes to the Security

Council. We believe that primary among the Council's responsibilities is that of engaging regularly and constructively in dialogue with those on whose behalf it acts, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. It is the sincere hope of my delegation that this debate and the ensuing relevant discussions will all contribute to that end.

Thank you, Mr. President.