



Freely adapted

Ex-tempore remarks by the Mr. Nirupam Sen, Permanent Representative,
at the Informal Plenary of the General Assembly on January 29, 2009.

We thank the President of the General Assembly (PGA) for his presentation of the results of the consultations of the Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) since the start of the 63rd UN General Assembly Session and express our appreciation of the hard work done by Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan who has chaired these meetings.

We are grateful to the PGA for announcing that the inter-governmental negotiations will commence on February 19th. We look forward to receiving his Work Plan and the short term Schedule of Meetings on the five key issues. In addition, we join the couple of speakers who have just spoken in stating that the best way to organize these negotiations would be for the PGA to prepare a composite paper that would aggregate, under each of the five key issues, the positions and proposals of the member states which is the basis for negotiations in terms of the unanimously adopted Decision 62/557. This would make possible systematic negotiations on these proposals and help to simplify the range of options for Security Council reforms as well as reveal the range of support.

One of the Permanent Representatives from the Uniting for Consensus spoke of listening to the small states. We have now listened to the voice of the small states – to Singapore, to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, to Barbados. We endorse entirely what they have said. As the PGA has said, our lodestar will be Decision 62/557, the UN Charter, the World Summit Outcome Document, the relevant UN GA Rules and Procedures and the repertory of practice. As Saint Vincent and the Grenadines said, and I would like to reiterate this, the views of the member states can be taken into account only to the extent that they are consistent with these documents. The Rules of Procedure already exist: there is no need to re-invent the wheel.

The PGA now, and once before, spoke of the OEWG's great achievement of September 15, 2008. It is useful to examine in some detail the basis of this achievement. It was only made possible when legal advice showed that a vote could be taken in the OEWG and physical preparations were made for voting and there was a readiness to vote. In short, the achievement was not of the OEWG but in spite of the OEWG, not of following the OEWG's traditions and conventions but of breaking with these, of basing ourselves on the GA Rules of Procedure. In short, it was an

achievement of the GA Rules of Procedure and shows that they have to be the lodestar.

In conclusion, let me recall the Latin saying: "Hic Rhodus, hic salta" (the rose is here, dance here). This is what the Uniting for Consensus were trying to tell us in the OEWG but we found that what they offered were not roses but artificial and painted flowers. In spite of this, by blocking or trying to eliminate real flowers they were not able to hold back the spring. We look forward to the spring.

I thank you sir.

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