



STATEMENT BY DR. KAIRE M. MBUENDE, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, AT THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE SIZE OF AN ENLARGED COUNCIL AND WORKING METHODS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON APRIL08, 2009

Mr. Chairman

First of all I would like to thank you for the manner in which you have been conducting the affairs of the Assembly on the question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and other related matters.

Let me also thank you for your letter of April 13 on the subject matter of our consultations today. We note that it contains excerpts that reflect assessment of the various positions on the size and working methods of a reformed Security Council.

Namibia aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Africa Group.

Mr. Chairman

I was initially puzzled by the combination of the size of an enlarged council with the working methods in one session. On face value, the relationship between the size of an enlarged Council and the working methods is not clear. The size belongs to the realm of representation while working methods belong to rules of procedures. On closer examination however, I found that the two are closely related. Reform of the council is not simply an act of enlargement or a numbers game but of fundamental transformation of the operation of the institution and its relations with other role players in the arena of maintenance of international peace and security.

The authority, legitimacy and effectiveness of the council cannot simply be enhanced by adding a number of seats without addressing the business practice of the Council. Transparent rules of procedures are needed to enhance effectiveness and accountability to the general membership of the UN and regions in the operation of the Council.

Mr. Chairman

It is a fact that the United Nations have changed over the years in terms of membership and complexity of its operations. The mechanism for collective security that was designed to prevent a third world war among the protagonists of the Second World War cannot necessarily provide adequate security to the rest of the world today. Why should the security of all be the responsibility of some? Furthermore, the types of conflicts have changed from primarily inter-state to intra-state. The sources of insecurity are varied. Deprivation of political, social and economic rights, foreign occupation, poverty, environmental degradation and access to energy are among the current significant potential sources of instability and threat to international peace and security. There is clearly a need for a broader security framework in the form of a more representative, democratic, transparent and accountable Council. In this new security architecture the different regions of the world should be adequately represented. There should also be recognition for the contributions of various entities to the maintenance of international peace and security. It is our considered opinion that a representative council that takes into account the various factors that I have enumerated should be composed of twenty six members. Anything less would make such a council not representative and will not give due recognition to the important role played by small countries and regions.

Mr. Chairman

Any reform process involves difficult choices. What are the choices that we have to make in dealing with the issue of the size of an enlarged Council? The question of efficiency and effectiveness was raised as potential weakness of a larger Council. Some delegations went as far as to argue that the Council should be composed of no more than 20 or 21 members. We listened with keen interest to learn about the manner in which an enlarged Council of 20 or 21 could be more effective than one of 26. We only heard what sounded like arbitrary preference. We are waiting for empirical demonstration of the cause and effect relationship between a Council of 20 or 21 and efficiency and effectiveness. I am somewhat under the impression that we are going to wait in vain for such evidence.

Mr. Chairman

I must admit that the proponents of the link of the smaller size of an enlarged Council to efficiency have a point in so far as the current situation is concerned that is characterized by provisional rules. The absence of clear, transparent and predictable rules is bound to impact on the efficiency of any organization or institution including the Council irrespective of size. On the other hand, the adoption of standing rules and orders will significantly contribute to efficient management and effectiveness of the Council.

Mr. Chairman

Democracy through adequate and effective representation is not negotiable. Fortunately we do not have to choose between democracy and efficiency. We believe that a Council of 26 with streamlined rules of procedures can be more efficient than the current one. A Council that lacks legitimacy as it does not reflect present day geo-political and economic reality and the composition of the United Nations membership cannot be effective. Besides, it is a poor reflection on the quality to international relations.

Mr. Chairman

Transparency in the work of the Security Council is important for confidence building among Member States and especially in affected countries and regions. There should be a clearly defined relationship between all role players in pursuit of peace and security. The relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly leaves much to be desired. Article 24 (3) provides for the submission of reports of Council to the General Assembly for its consideration on issues of current international concern such as peacekeeping operations, imposition of sanctions and other enforcement measures and any other matter of interest to the membership as a whole. This provision is not always adhered to and whenever reports are submitted they are not considered with the seriousness that they deserve.

Mr. Chairman

Participation is a hallmark of democracy. It is important that transparent mechanisms are put in place for the participation of non-members of the Council in the Council's work where their interest is directly affected. Furthermore, Council's subsidiary bodies should include in their work, on a case by case basis,

non-members with strong interest and relevant expertise. For instance, members affected by sanctions should, upon their request, be given the possibility to participate in the meetings of the relevant sanctions committee.

Mr. Chairman

As part of the reform of the Council, cooperative procedures between the UN and regional organizations should be put in place to give expression to Article VIII of the Charter. This is will be in keeping with present day reality where regional and sub-regional organizations are important role players in the maintenance of international peace and security.

I thank you Mr. Chairman

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