



MISION PERMANENTE DE LA REPUBLICA DE COSTA RICA  
ANTE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS

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**Debate in the General Assembly  
Equitable Representation and increase in the membership of the Security Council**

**Statement by**

**H.E. Bruno Stagno**

**Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica  
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*Check against delivery*

Mr. President,

Let me thank you for convening this debate on the reform of the Security Council. While the issues that we are considering today are undoubtedly important, we are convinced that no reform of the United Nations will be ever complete unless it includes a deep revitalization of the General Assembly, our principal deliberative and representative body.

I would like also to stress our conviction that the Security Council requires an integral reform that would confer upon it transparency, democracy, rotation and efficiency, and which would enable it to carry its responsibilities on behalf of all the Members States in full conformity with the provisions of the Charter.

In this sense, we are pleased for this opportunity to make comments on the proposals before us, and, in particular, on the proposals by the G4 and by Uniting for Consensus. While those proposals follow different approaches, they also contain important areas of coincidence which, in our opinion, should serve as the basis for elaborating consensual solutions that respond to the best interests of all the Member States. Such areas of coincidence deserve deep reflection and greater consideration.

The potential impact of any reform of the Security Council is so broad, both within the Organization and at the regional and global level, that they deserve enough time for their consideration and analysis. As noted by the Secretary General in the report *In Larger Freedom: "the cause of larger freedom can only be advanced by broad, deep and sustained global cooperation among States."*

Mr. President,

So far, our consultations of the Security Council have focused on the increase in the number of its members. This has been inadequate, considering that we now have a real opportunity to be more ambitious, to go beyond mere adjustments in order to hammer a new consensus on the manner in which this Organization should deal with current threats. We believe that collective security is the security of all, by all and for all. We acknowledge that, in accordance with article 24.1 of the Charter, all Member States have conferred upon the Security Council the primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security and we recognize that the Security Council acts on behalf of all when it fulfills the functions that derive from that responsibility. In this sense, we believe that it would be opportune to focus on fine tuning that representation thus ensuring that Security Council action expresses effectively the will of all, by all and for all.

### **On the Veto**

We must not let pass any opportunity, in this collective effort to reform the Security Council, to limit the use of veto with a view to its eventual elimination. In this sense, and as a first step, we believe that it is indispensable to move towards the definition of concrete limits on the veto power through specific amendments to article 27.3, such as, for example, a prohibition to the use of the veto on matters related to genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and massive violations of human rights. Our conscience leaves us no other option. As noted by the Secretary General in his report: *“it cannot be right, when the international community is faced with genocide or massive human rights abuses, for the United Nations to stand by and let them unfold to the end.”*

### **On working methods**

Without an in-depth reform of the working methods, we will not have a real reform of the Security Council but just a mere increase, a mere adjustment. Democracy, transparency and accountability all depend on the working methods. Consequently, it is indispensable to prepare a draft resolution or an annex to the draft outcome document prepared by the President of the General Assembly containing clear and concrete measures to substantially improve those working methods. We trust that all parties really committed to the reform of the Security Council will contribute to such an effort.

### **On the Cascade Effect**

As we noted in document A/59/856, on the Cascade Effect, we are convinced that: *“it is necessary to seriously examine this issue, as any extension of the Cascade Effect could potentially affect the sense of collective ownership which necessarily underlies the United Nations.”* If we truly desire that UN action be of all, by all, and for all we must end the cascade effect and we must steer clear of all initiatives likely to extend its scope. In this sense, it would be opportune to adopt adequate safeguards that would counter the cascade effect with a view to its eventual eradication.

Mr. President,

Moving along to the proposals that we have now on the table, let me note some of the concerns and worries we have regarding the content and procedure foreseen in draft resolution A/59/L.64. We already expressed some of these concerns in previous occasions when commenting on the reform of the Security Council.

### **On the permanent status**

When examining the proposals for an increase in the membership of the Security Council in both categories, we have been unable to couple the creation of new permanent members with the calls for greater democracy and rotation. A permanent status could become a privileged position that would answer the calls for greater transparency, rotation, and transparency for all. A permanent status does not foster the accountability of those who are unchangeable. With assured permanency, they would have no worries or concerns.

As the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Costa Rica, Mr. Roberto Tovar Faja, noted in a recent appearance before our parliament: *“there is something contrary to the nature of Costa Rica - and I am sure I am speaking for almost all - there is something consubstantial to our national character, and that is that we do not find natural voting for somebody or for a certain country per secula seculorum ... a State that does not requires reelection is, for all practical purposes, a State that is not accountable, that has nothing to worry about.”* Based on such basic principle of democracy and rotation, Costa Rica values those proposals that create new seats subject to periodic elections and to effective accountability.

In this context, Costa Rica considers favorably, in the context of a possible amendment of article 23 of the Charter, the possibility of creating new non permanent members - with longer periods and immediate reelection - in so far as there are the necessary guarantees to ensure democracy, rotation, and accountability, and subject to the decision of the respective regional groups. We note, in particular, that the current period of only two years, and even four years, is too short from the point of view of the institutional memory of the Security Council.

### **On elections by fatigue**

Regarding the procedure for the increase of the category of permanent members, I would like to comment on two particularly problematic situations, which should be considered carefully before embarking on such uncertain endeavor.

Our first concern relates to the possibility of convening an endless electoral process; that is, a process without any limit on the maximum number of rounds required for selecting those states that will enjoy the privilege of occupying the proposed permanent seats. While, theoretically, it could be possible that all vacancies be fulfilled in the first round, we must be responsible and consider all the possible and probable scenarios. In this sense, I would like to recall that, of the 59 elections held to fill the non-permanent seats, only 27 of those filled the seats available in the first round of vote. In the other 32 elections, the General Assembly required an average of 13 rounds of votes. In 1955, 36 rounds were held before the candidates reached an agreement to share the mandate. In 1959, 52 rounds were held before the process was concluded by a similar agreement to

share the mandate. In 1979, it took 155 rounds for the candidates to withdraw and to have a third state endorsed to occupy a non-permanent seat. (See the chart enclosed).

Two questions are relevant in this context. First, unlike elections to fill non-permanent seats, where the number of rounds does not affect the legitimacy and credibility of the candidates, the elections for permanent members do. We believe that a candidate that manages to reach the required number of votes to occupy a permanent seat only after a protracted number of rounds, increasing its support slowly, one by one and round by round, would not have the necessary legitimacy or credibility to occupy a permanent seat on the Security Council. Second, contrary to the aforementioned cases, where it was possible to find a solution through the withdrawal of a candidature or through an arrangement to share the mandate, for the permanent seats it would only be possible either to be elected by general fatigue or to desist in the aspirations, and, in such a case, we would have to ask ourselves what would we do with the seat(s) that we were unable to fill.

### On elections by default

Our second concern relates to the fact that, in some regions, there is only one candidate. If there is to be regional representation, then each region must have the possibility of find the required consensus. Purported regional representation, in absence of the endorsement by the respective regional group, would run contrary to the logic and the spirit of true regional representation.

Operative paragraph 3(a) of the G4 draft resolution gives only a single week for other states to present their candidatures and established a maximum of just 3 months from the opening of the reception of candidatures to the date of the probable election. This bias should be corrected, to ensure greater participation of each region and to prevent those single candidatures that do not result from an endorsement by the regional group.

Mr. President,

Let me assure you that my delegation will continue to take part in these negotiations constructively, with a view to find a consensus solution, satisfactory for all Member States. If, in the coming negotiations, none of the current proposals becomes an acceptable basis for an agreeable solution, Costa Rica will be ready to present an alternative model that would take us away from the extremes, that is, from the total impasse on Security Council reform that we now witness.

I would like to conclude by quoting the Secretary General in his report *In Larger Freedom* in which he underlines that *“in a era of global interdependence, the glue of common interest, if properly perceived, should bind all States ... working together on the basis of shared principles and priorities – which is, after all, the very reason the United Nations exist.”* We trust that each and every one of us will have the patience is sometimes needed to attain that common interest.

Thank you