

**Statement by
His Excellency Raymond Wolfe,
Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the UN
at the Open-Ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable
Representation on and Increase in the
Membership of the Security Council
Monday, 17th November 2008**

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation appreciates the opportunity to participate in this follow-on meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council (OEWG). We welcome your decision on the appointment of H.E. Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, as Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council Reform and also as your facilitator.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation views the main purpose of this meeting as one in which we should reinforce, not weaken, the central thrust of UNGA Decision 62/557. By this Decision, the General Assembly unanimously agreed to commence Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council Reform, during the current Session, in Informal Plenary meetings of the Assembly within the stipulated time frame.

Our urgent task is, therefore, to move forward in earnest to facilitate the early commencement of Intergovernmental Negotiations and scrupulously avoid any action which seeks to obfuscate, delay or obstruct the commencement of the Negotiations.

My delegation is, therefore, disturbed at the trend observed in a number of the interventions made by some of our colleagues at the meeting of the OEWG held last Thursday, where there was an evident attempt to reopen the debate on issues which have already been fully ventilated, as well as to again put on the table, unnecessary conditionalities and strictures designed to impede the commencement of the Intergovernmental Negotiations.

It is therefore appropriate for us to recall that UNGA Decision 62/557 is a landmark decision which now points us in the right direction towards the commencement of the substantive negotiating process, and away from the cycle of endless consultations and fruitless debate, which has characterized the deliberations of the OEWG during the past 15 years.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation has taken careful note of the schedule proposal recommended by the Permanent Representative of Mexico which envisages a series of meetings of the OEWG over the next three months. We do not doubt the sincerity and good intentions behind the proposal. At the same time, we are extremely concerned and indeed fearful that, given the experience of the past 15 years, we could end up in yet another cycle of fruitless consultations and fractious debate which could very well jeopardize the commencement of the Intergovernmental Negotiations, well beyond the timeline stipulated by the UNGA Decision 62/557.

Moreover, Mr. Chairman, we are not at all very hopeful that this proposed OEWG road map will in any way facilitate the commencement of Intergovernmental Negotiations or propel us beyond the significant momentum already created by UNGA

Decision 62/557. In particular, we are very concerned to note that the list of items mentioned for discussions in the OEWG road map such as “objectives of the Reform, guiding principles for negotiations, agenda for negotiations and nature of the agreement” are concepts which are laden with so many preconditions and ambiguities that we run the risk of yet again becoming bogged down in an unnecessary and protracted procedural debate.

The framework and modalities for the negotiations are issues which are already settled. Since we have decided to commence intergovernmental negotiations in informal plenary meetings of the General Assembly, based on reports and proposals of Member States, the rules of procedure of the General Assembly would apply. Any further actions on these issues can be worked out as part of the negotiation process, as has been the case with other negotiations.

My delegation, therefore, recommends Mr. Chairman, that you proceed in earnest, to prepare a document containing all the positions and proposals by Member States together with the list of elements to be considered in the Intergovernmental Negotiating process. This document could then be presented in advance to all Delegations, prior to the convening of the Informal Plenary meeting. We are confident, Mr. Chairman, that based on your own consultations, and technical support from the staff of the Secretariat, an orderly and comprehensive schedule can be established for the commencement of the first phase of the Intergovernmental Negotiating process.

Finally Mr. Chairman, we should all be aware that the time for action has long come. There is no more reason for delay and we should all exercise the requisite political will in moving forward in earnest towards comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

I thank you.
