



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya
to the United Nations, New York
Security Council - 2021-2022

AGENDA ITEM: “STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM”
GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON THE VETO OF THE SYRIA
HUMANITARIAN CROSS BORDER MECHANISM

THURSDAY, JULY 21ST 2022 - 10:00AM

STATEMENT BY AMB. NJAMBI KINYUNGU, DEPUTY PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. President,

I thank you for convening this meeting under Agenda item 124: “*Strengthening of the United Nations System.*”

On 8th July, the Security Council took action on the renewal of the Syria humanitarian cross border mechanism. It voted on two competing draft resolutions. Both failed. One to a ‘no’ vote by a permanent member, and the other for lack of sufficient votes.

The impasse was the result of a difficult negotiation based, essentially on disagreements about the length of the mechanism's renewal. The draft tabled by the co-penholders (Norway and Ireland) called for a 12-month renewal, while that by the Russian Federation called for a 6-month period.

Extensive negotiations were undertaken to offer a single consensus draft, but they did not succeed. The Council's inability to unite endangered a critical channel of aid.

Kenya as the E-10 Coordinator for July, facilitated a conversation that confirmed the elected members support for the co-penholders' draft. An important point of unity for the E-10 was that a 12-month renewal offered humanitarian organisations more certainty in their operations, particularly during the coming winter.

The E-10 agreed on a common position reflected in an Explanation of Vote, before the vote, supporting the penholders' draft. The E-10 was also ready to support a compromise, reflecting its primary focus on the need to prioritise humanitarian aid to the Syrian people.

We believe that the E-10 played a constructive role in seeking to bridge divides and identify useful compromises between Council members. Perhaps a lasting lesson that the General Assembly can take from this experience is that elected members who are ready to work across divides are important to the success of the Security Council.

The experience has also left us with a conviction that E-10 unity is an important pillar of an effective Security Council. In time, the role of this elected block should be strengthened procedurally and considered when it comes to fundamental Security

Council reform. It is also important that the permanent members engage the E-10 as a bridge to unity and necessary compromises in the implementation of the mandate.

Mr President,

The immense efforts by the elected penholders to find a compromise may also inform future changes to the penholder system, especially at this time when some members of the P5 are engaged in far-reaching geopolitical confrontations.

Despite the differences, the Security Council was able to adopt **Resolution 2642 (2022)** on 12th July. We listened carefully to the reasons for the veto and we believe that more could have been done by all delegations to close the divide.

We are encouraged that the initial failure to pass a resolution and the subsequent compromise will make for a more realistic and more united Council when the 6-months cross-border mechanism expires and there is a need to negotiate a continuation.

In time, we hope that Security Council resolutions will not be necessary for humanitarian access in Syria. For that to happen, Syria and regional countries should undertake trust building, dialogue, and negotiations for a security solution that puts the needs of the Syrian people first.

In closing, as Kenya draws close to the end of its term in the Security Council, we want to make clear that our primary motivation has been to support every measure that relieves the humanitarian suffering of the Syrian people.

I thank you.