



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya
To the United Nations, New York

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MARTIN KIMANI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
DURING THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE REFORM OF THE
UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL: VIEWS ON CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP
AND HOW TO RECTIFY HISTORICAL INJUSTICES DONE TO THE AFRICAN
CONTINENT

MONDAY, 3RD APRIL 2023

Thank you, Co-Chairs,

Kenya endorses the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Africa Group. I am making this additional remark in my national capacity.

We thank the delegations that recognise the important role African countries play in the protection of international peace and security. And the delegations who support reform of the Security Council prioritising an increase in African membership; including in the permanent category.

There is a famous adage of uncertain provenance that says: 'if you are not at the table then you're probably on the menu.'

For more than a century, the high table of multilateralism has excluded African nations and states to the great detriment of our sovereignty, territorial integrity, peace, security and prosperity.

In 1884, fourteen, mostly European, countries met to formally partition Africa. There were no Africans at the table. The result was the colonialism that included multiple genocides and many atrocities and crimes against humanity.

Three decades later, Africans again played no decisive role as the Covenant of the League of Nations was agreed in 1919. The League, which we remember today mainly for its helplessness in the face of aggression, endorsed colonial rule. The league's ultimate failure and World War Two begun with its inability to stop the aggression of Italy against Ethiopia.

A third of humanity was under the yoke of colonialism when the UN Charter and the Bretton Woods institutions were negotiated and agreed.

We won our independence in a global order divided between the Western and Eastern Blocs.

The superpowers were permanent members of the UN Security Council, a privilege they often utilised to advance their interests in Africa and elsewhere.

Today, Africa remains unequal in the highest levels of global decision-making.

Kenya, as a recent non-permanent member of the Council, can affirm that despite our efforts, the prerogatives of permanent membership continue to exclude the just interests of African states and peoples in the protection of international peace and security.

The Council has far too little appreciation of the decisions and positions of the African Union despite Chapter 8 of the UN Charter providing for the role of regional organisations.

In the emerging multipolar order, and the transition to a net-zero global economy, if Africa is not at the top table, it will be on the menu. When the League of Nations was formed, there were about 125 million Africans. Today there are 1.35 billion. In 2050, we will likely be 2.5 billion.

To include youth or women in the work of the UN means by dint of these numbers to include Africans.

Given the history I have outlined and the explosive growth in population and relevance to the global economy, I am sure you will agree with me that supporting the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration is a stand for the foundational principles of the United Nations.

Thank you.