



Permanent Mission of the Republic of Namibia to the
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**Statement by H.E. Mr. Neville Gertze, Ambassador and
Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations,
on the “Question of Equitable Representation on and
Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and
other Matters Related to the Council,
at the informal Meeting on the Intergovernmental
Negotiations**

01 May, 2018

Distinguished Co-facilitators,

1. I wish to join my distinguished colleagues who have taken the floor before me in thanking you for convening this fourth informal meeting of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council Reform. I also want to thank you for your dedication and professionalism in facilitating this important process.
2. Namibia is a member of the Committee of Ten (C-10), which has been mandated by the AU Assembly to advance, promote and solicit support for the African Common Position as articulated in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. My delegation therefore, fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Union Member States. However, in my national capacity, I wish to contribute a few thoughts mainly on the issue of regional representation.
3. But before doing so, I would like to put on record our profound gratitude and appreciation to all our distinguished colleagues who have expressed their support to the African Common Position. All too often it may seem that we are stuck in the past and that our global organization is found wanting when confronted with the realities and challenges of the 21st century.
4. But, distinguished colleagues today I am happy to say that we value your expression of support to the African Common Position as a clear sign of your appreciation of and conviction that the historical injustice done to the African continent needs to be rectified. Surely, this brings us closer to the fulfillment of the preamble paragraph 2 of the Charter where the Founders of this World Body declared...and I quote: “We the peoples of the United Nations determined to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of

men and women and of nations large and small, ...have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims.” end of quote.

Co-Facilitators,

5. I shall not remind us of the long journey we have all been on towards bringing the much needed, and yet so far, illusive reform to the Security Council. But I do want to remind us that we have over the years had meeting of minds when we amongst others adopted consensus decisions 62/557 in September 2008 and 63/565 the following year in 2009 which carried the process of comprehensive reform onto the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations. We cannot deny that behind this consensus decisions, was and still is a shared belief that reform in the Security Council is needed to better reflect contemporary world realities, and to be more accountable, representative and transparent.
6. We recognize today, as we did then, that as stated in Article 24 (1) of the Charter, the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and that the Council carries out this heavy responsibility on behalf of the Members of the United Nations. However, while one hears from time to time arguments that Council members serve in their individual and sovereign capacities, one cannot but wonder what then was the rationale for the provision in Article 23 (1) which stipulates that in composing the Council, due regard be paid to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to other purposes of the Organisation, and also to equitable geographical distribution.
7. It is an incontrovertible fact that The United Nations comprises of Member States drawn from the five geo-political/continental groupings of the world. There is little, if any, argument that democratic representation of these five regions will ensure accountability to the United Nations membership. I have also no

doubt that this will serve as an arena for creative and responsive leadership of the Security Council. As I have already pointed out, The Security Council acts on behalf of the entire United Nations. Now, since we agree that the entire United Nations comprises of Member States from the five geo-political or continental groupings, then surely it stands to reason that the Council in its composition should be consistent with equitable geographical representation.

8. My delegation is further of the view that since the Security Council acts on behalf of the United Nations membership, it is imperative that the Charter should be amended to accommodate enlargement of the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories in line with the principle of equitable geographical representation. This will ensure that the Security Council is “more broadly representative, efficient, and transparent and thus further enhance its effectiveness, and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions”.

Distinguished Co-Facilitators,

9. Geographical representation should be dealt with on an equitable and balanced manner, so that every region could contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.
10. The current composition of the Security Council does not reflect broader representation; hence it needs to be reformed to reflect the present geo-political realities. This will enhance the democratic credentials of the Security Council, give legitimacy to its work and implementation of its decisions.
11. The principle of equitable representation gives voice to the entire constituency of the United Nations membership. .
12. Reforming the Security Council along the lines with the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter that promotes equity, a fairer world based on universalism, sovereign

equality of Member States and the dignity of all peoples, will further protect the legitimacy of the Security Council, enhance its effectiveness, efficiency, transparency and continuing utility of the United Nations in promoting international peace and security.

13. In conclusion, distinguished Co-Facilitators, for us in Africa, it is a very clear that we cannot all be in the Security Council. But we want it to be understood very clearly that if the responsibility of the Council Members is to act on behalf the entire Membership of the United Nations, then there is a need to make adjustments to the current structure of the Council to ensure that all the shareholders are equitably represented. While I have read George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, like many of you distinguished colleagues here have as well, it simply cannot be that in today's world where we live in an era where this Body, the United Nations, and all its agencies are to be the embodiment of democracy, we still ascribe to a philosophy that some must be more equal than others.

14. Africa has historically been on the receiving end of injustice. Namibia is strongly opposed to any second-class permanent membership status for African countries, or any other member states. Africa is no less capable of taking up the decision making responsibility for world peace and contributing towards the maintenance of international peace and security. It is against this background that I want to leave us with the wisdom from an African Proverb that instructs us that: "If you wish to move Mountains tomorrow, you must start by lifting stones today". Time has come that we put more momentum in our collective efforts to reform the Council if it is to be more democratic and "fit for purpose" as our DSG so eloquently reminds us every so often.

I thank you.