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## **STATEMENT**

**BY**

**H.E. MR. NEVILLE GERTZE**

**AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

**74<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

**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 SECOND INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
NEGOTIATIONS MEETING**

**NEW YORK  
4-5 MARCH 2020  
(Check against delivery)**

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished Co-Chairs,**

1. I take the floor to join colleagues in expressing our appreciation to you for convening the second Intergovernmental Negotiations on the reform of the UN Security Council in 2020. I also wish to thank the Co-Chairs, the distinguished Permanent Representatives of Poland and the United Arab Emirates, respectively for steering our work.
2. As a member of the Committee of Ten – the Committee mandated by the African Union Assembly to advance, promote and solicit support for the African Common Position as articulated in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration - I align my statement with the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, on behalf of the African Member States.

**Co-Chairs,**

3. In your letter dated 24 February, you proposed that delegations focus on the cluster of “regional representation” during this present meeting with a view to clarifying our positions on this cluster. Prior to outlining and further detailing certain aspects of this cluster, I wish to note that we seem to continuously discussing the 5 clusters – namely, categories of membership; the question of the veto; regional representation; size of an enlarged Security Council and working methods of the Council; and the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly – and their interlinkages without really moving forward or taking any concrete steps. I wish to emphasize here, as I did in my statement last month, that we owe it to the future generations to ensure that we collectively conclude this matter.

**Co-Chairs,**

4. I am in no way qualified to speak with my authority for other regions, but I can do so for the region I hail from and represent in these proceedings. As a member of the C10, the Committee charged with the responsibility to promote, advocate and defend the Common African Position as espoused in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, allow me to give you insight into the current reality as it relates to Africa’s representation in the Security Council. As it was stated eloquently earlier today, Africa has long arranged itself in a well organized region to represent the interests and aspirations of the Continent as a whole in various platforms. So, it is that

Africa has chosen by herself how best to be represented here in the Security Council, under the current circumstances.

5. Thus, under the current structure and rotation procedure for African-allocated seats on the Security Council, one seat is permanently allocated to the West African region as it is the most populous region. The Northern and Central, and Southern and Eastern regions, respectively, obtain a seat on a rotating basis. This is so because there are only 3 seats currently available to us in the Security Council. This does not in our view provide for adequate regional representation of Africa, but given the limitation of only 3 seats currently available in the non-permanent category for Africa, this was the best way the African Union could provide for equitable distribution amongst the 5 regions.
6. While the current allocation of the 10 non-permanent seats on the Council ensures a representation of each region, the permanent category does in no way reflect equal regional representation. Africa is a continent of 1.3 billion people according to the latest United Nations estimates, and much of the agenda of work of the Security Council is focused on the African continent. Surely, these 2 factors speaks to the need for Africa not be excluded from decision-making in the permanent category of the Security Council.
7. Here, I would once again like to take the opportunity to reiterate the Common African Position as espoused in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, adopted by the African Union, which calls for *“not less than two permanent seats with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership including the right of veto; five non-permanent seats. In that regard, even though Africa is opposed in principle to the veto, it is of the view that so long as it exists, and as a matter of common justice, it should be made available to all permanent members of the Security Council”*. Co-chairs, I request that this precise reflection of Africa’s position on the reform of the Security Council in the two categories of membership be reflected verbatim in your record of this year’s IGN session.
8. Namibia firmly believes that the Common African Position as just quoted above would ensure that each of the 5 African sub-regions is represented in the non-permanent category. Most importantly that the continent will also be represented in the permanent category. This will allow for our voices to be heard and present at the table when issues of peace and security relating to our own continent and indeed the world at large are discussed. Let me also just clarify that the permanent seats sought by Africa are not going to be on a rotation basis. The AU will elect the candidates to be presented to the General

Assembly for election by all member states to the permanent category of the Security Council.

9. Our demand is simple and straightforward, and in line with how we in Africa, through the African Union, carry out our work. We are simply seeking through the Common African Position to redress the historic injustice of our exclusion from the permanent category of the Security Council, and to ensure an adequate regional representation on the Security Council at large. I would once again like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank those who have expressly outlined their support for the Common African Position.

**Co-Chairs,**

10. In 2000, the United Nations adopted resolution A/RES/55/2, commonly referred to as the United Nations Millennium Declaration. Paragraph 30 refers directly to Security Council reform and states: *“We resolve therefore to intensify our efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects”*.

11. Again, in 2005, world leaders gathered in New York to adopt, after extensive negotiations, the World Summit Outcome document. This document again refers directly to the reform of the Security Council and expands on the goals set out for the reform of the Council in 2000. Here I would like to quote directly paragraph 153 of the World Summit Outcome document: *“We support early reform of the Security Council – an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations – in order to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent and thus to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions. We commit ourselves to continuing our efforts to achieve a decision to this end”*.

12. Surely you will agree with me that given that these resolutions were adopted without a vote, no doubt confirms that the need to reform the Security Council enjoyed the support of all Member States then and now.

**Co-Chairs,**

13. Following the adoption of the Framework Document in 2015, the President of the General Assembly during the 69<sup>th</sup> session, Mr. Sam Kutesa from Uganda, welcomed its adoption and underscored that the United Nations today — with 193 Member States — was “vastly” different from what it had been at its founding 70 years ago, with only 51 Member States. Achieving the noble

objectives enshrined in the United Nations Charter required bold steps to transform the Council in a way that reflected today's geopolitical realities.

14. These words were true when they were spoken 5 years ago, and still ring true today. We as a body of united nations can and must take bold steps in this reform process. We can no longer stand idly by as the world we live in has fundamentally changed, while the body that is supposed to represent us and ensure international peace and security, does simply not reflect the realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Just as reform of the Security Council was undertaken and completed in 1965, it must happen again to reflect modern day realities at a time when we celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> of the United Nations.

15. Namibia has and will remain committed to advocating for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council, one where the African continent is duly represented in both the permanent and non-permanent categories.

16. I once again wish to assure all member states that my delegation is ready to engage and looks forward to continued consultations and the eventual conclusion to this matter.

**I thank you.**