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STATEMENT

BY

**H.E. MR. NEVILLE GERTZE
AMBASSADOR & PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

**ON THE QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION
ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY
COUNCIL AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO THE
COUNCIL (AGENDA 124) AT THE SECOND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS MEETING**

AT THE SECOND INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS MEETING

**NEW YORK
25- 26TH FEBRUARY 2019**

(Check against delivery)

Madam President,
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 2019. I also wish to thank the Co-Facilitators, the distinguished Permanent Representatives of the United Arab Emirates and Luxembourg, respectively for steering our work.

Madam President,

2. The African Union at its 32nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government reaffirmed its commitment to the Reform of the UN Security Council through 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. More specifically on the three clusters as enumerated. Additionally, in my national capacity, I wish to further emphasize the priorities on this matter before us.
3. It is well known to us that this matter has been longstanding and deserves our due consideration and finalization. We are again reminded that the Intergovernmental Negotiations has now been going on for 10 years and that we have yet to see real negotiations take place. There is legitimate concern on the slow pace of this process and we owe it to the further generations to ensure that we collectively conclude this matter. Africa therefore seeks through the Common African Position, to redress the historic injustice of its exclusion from the permanent category of the Council. At the technical level, as a member of the C10, Namibia together with 9 other African Members States is tasked to represent AU Member States in promoting the African Common Position and engage the international community on the reform of the Security Council. Namibia therefore has an obligation to represent and defend Africa's interest first and foremost.
4. We hope to see considerable progress through the IGN process. I reiterate that desirable landmark of any negotiations is the progress made or achievements registered in any given period of time.

5. Namibia is therefore grateful for the support and understanding which Africa continues to receive from many of the member states during our discussions on the reform of the UN Security Council.
6. Co-Chairs, my delegation wishes to seek better understanding of a few issues, especially as they relate to the guidance given by you for today's discussions:
 - i. We have been reminded by some delegations that what makes the negotiation process unique or shall I say different, is the fact that this exercise unlike other reform processes involves amending the UN Charter. We would like to better appreciate this reality, but need to better understand what if any limitations are foreseen in terms of amending the Charter? In other words, are there no-go areas as far as amending the Charter?
 - ii. It would seem to my delegation that it is inevitable that when we are done with the negotiations and ready to give effect to the reformed Security Council, it would be at that point that we shall reflect the new reality in the Charter. Thus any amendment or change will be at the tail end of the process.
 - iii. It is my delegation's understanding that the call to reform the Security Council was a collective decision of the sovereign body of World Leaders who directed that their institution responsible for the maintenance of peace and security on behalf of the international community, be reformed to make the institution more transparent, accountable and relevant to modern day realities. Given this unique directive of the World leaders to have this body, the UN Security Council reformed, my delegation wishes to seek clarification on whether or not such directive implies that in executing the reform directive, current holders of the Veto power would be able to use such power? Perhaps this is an issue which would need to be interrogated further, if not subjected to legal Council for advice.
 - iv. On the issue of regional representation, my delegation wishes to reiterate the strong arguments presented by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Union member States. It is the expressed wish of the African member states as espoused in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration that Africa's participation in the reformed Security Council would be on behalf of all the citizens of the African continent, equitably represented in the non-Permanent category by regional representatives of all the 5 regions on the continent and that Africa as one of the regions of the world be represented by a minimum of 2 chosen member states from the continent in the Permanent category.

- v. With regard to the size of a reformed Council, my delegation has observed that some members, while in agreement for enlargement, have yet to be more specific as to what is meant by “low twenties”. Colleagues would appreciate my curiosity when I hear delegations expressing their support for the African position, (for which I want to reiterate our profound gratitude), and yet the numbers they have in mind are at variance with the numbers set out in the African Common Position. For the benefit of all, I wish to repeat the words of the Distinguished Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on this matter: “In connection with the cluster on **categories of membership**, Africa calls for enlargement of the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories; and our position for the permanent seats is, a total of eleven (11); with no less than two permanent seats for Africa. For the non-permanent seats, a total of not less than fifteen (15) seats including two additional seats for Africa.
6. With regard to the issue of the Veto, the Common African Position is very clear. We firmly believe that should the Veto be retained, the privilege of using it should be extended to all members of the permanent category of the Security Council, who must in this regard enjoy all prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership as a matter of common justice. Without this, the reform risks creating a third category of membership – permanent without veto. My delegation believes that the directive from the World Leaders to reform the Council was expressly aimed at the 2 existing categories of Council membership and no consideration or order was given for the creation of additional categories of membership.
7. I want 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 further call on all of us to redouble our efforts to work to ensure meaningful progress and deliver tangible results that will be to the benefit of all and, especially of our future generations.
8. I want to echo what the President of the General Assembly reaffirmed at the last meeting when she said that she “believes in the power of dialogue and the ability and diplomatic skills of member states to make meaningful progress on this issue in the coming months”. I too believe that we can negotiate, in good faith, and make meaningful progress.

I thank you.