

**Intervention by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative,
at the informal meeting (closed) of the plenary on the intergovernmental
negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in
the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the
Council, on 2 March 2011.**

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by welcoming your decision as the Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform to convene this meeting today. At the outset, I would like to place on record my delegation's willingness and determination to continue to participate actively in these negotiations.

I would like to begin with a few words on the third revision of the negotiation text which forms the basis for our meeting.

When I entered this room this morning, Mr. Chairman, I thought of drawing inspiration from a major Bollywood [movie](#). I know Indian movies used to be popular in Kabul. And in terms of size, as you would all know, Bollywood is bigger than Hollywood. I was reminded of a Bollywood movie of the last decade called **Kabhi Khushi, Kabhie Gham** which can be loosely translated as 'Joy sometimes, despair at other times.' The title of the movie summed up our efforts here.

It gives me joy when I think about the transformation you, Mr. Chairman have brought about along with the member-states from the waffle of the OEWG to the start of intergovernmental negotiations in March 2009. This was followed by some despair

which lifted when more than 140 countries wrote to you calling for the start of text-based negotiations.

Clearly, Mr. Chairman, you have attempted to imaginatively approach the issue of the modalities for shortening the text. You have called on member-states to "make great strides towards a substantive give and take." Let me state that what you have produced is something on which we can work.

One of the earlier speakers referred to Rev3 as an 'editorial fix.' My view is that if it is a fix, and here I am very careful in choosing words, because words have meaning and this will show up. On the other hand, even if there is a 'fudge', the strength of the positions can show the 'fudge' for what it really is.

Seeing the fruits of your labour, I am convinced that you have done a good job under the circumstances. At the same time, however I would like to make a sincere plea to those who have been holding you back. Those very member-states that say please do not take precipitous action are also the ones who are trying to hold you back. But my answer to them is that both these positions can be satisfied. You maintain the process and we will give you the proposals.

Mr. Chairman,

Permit me to explain with a bit of personal example. I have spent 37 years in the Indian Foreign Service. During nearly half this period of time, the international community has spent considerable effort in achieving reform of the Security Council. We retire as Ambassadors quite early at 60. So, I don't have many more years left. But I want to give encouragement to my younger colleagues sitting here behind me. One has just about one decade, is very mature and also looks quite like me. And the other who is younger and has about 25 years left in the service.

What do I tell them?

Do I tell them that something terrible and awful should happen – and I hope this never happens- for the appropriate international architecture to be put in place? How do I tell them that there are some in the Council who were victors of a past war and say well, we are permanent members and continue to perpetuate their privileged position? Do I tell them to be blind to the fact that in the months of January and February 2011, more than 70% of the Council's meetings were on African issues and in terms of the amount of time spent, more than 90% of the Council's attention was focused on African issues. And yet there is no single permanent member from Africa! Do I tell them that in the instance of the Latin American region, all slots have been filled up for the Council's elected seats till 2034 and so there are no further opportunities. And be happy with this continuing under-representation. Do I tell them that it is par for the course that the

large majority of the UN member-states, namely the small states, small island developing states, LDCs and LLDCs should never get a fair chance to serve on the Council just because it cannot be expanded?

And I must recall, Mr. Chairman, that we were in the Security Council one day on an issue on which there was no agreement and the PR of one of the P5 countries said that while there are some who oppose reform, they are not able to explain how the Council would be harmed by adding numbers when it is finding it difficult to deliver with the existing numbers.

Or Mr. Chairman, do I tell them that there are two clear choices. Either we continue to waffle or we make a determined push for reforms that should have already taken place.

At the same time, I see some light at the end of the tunnel. For those people who are holding your process back by calling for a member-states driven process, I would say there is a way out and that is by member-states themselves giving proposals to the Chair.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is of the view that it will not augur well for the reform or for the process if we were to try and contain it, in which case it can take the wrong shape. I recall what Machiavelli had said "The mass is wiser and more constant than the Prince." I feel that reform will not come about because of the wishes of a few, but only through traction from the floor in the General Assembly. It will not happen because India wants it, but because there must be real equitable representation.

We have already seen in the L.69 statement delivered by Ambassador Raymond Wolfe of Jamaica a very good example of how such a member-states' driven process can and should function and fully align ourselves with his statement.

Again I must state that we have been subjected now for months on end to talk about the so-called 'intermediate' and 'interim' model, but have never found out what it actually is. I invite those who espouse this model to spell out what it means. In this regard, I ask myself, which is easier-take the approach of the so-called 'transitional' model or the steps that will lead to expansion in both categories of membership. I ask why expend the same energy for a lesser result.

For the record, let me also reiterate that the overwhelming majority of UN member-states have expressed their clear preference for expansion of the Council in both permanent and non-permanent categories.

There is convergence regarding expanding the Security Council to 25/26. This must include an expansion in the permanent category from the present 5 to 11, with the addition by name of two new permanent seats from Africa, two new permanent seats from Asia, one new permanent seat from the Latin American and Caribbean region and one new permanent seat from the WEOG countries. The non-permanent category must be expanded from the present 10 to 14/15 with the addition of one new non-permanent seat each for the Asian, East European, GRULAC states and one/two non-permanent seats for the African states taking into account the need to ensure representation from developing countries, including small island developing states, wherein participation shall be on the basis of the concept of rotating seats.

Mr. Chairman,

There has been a lot of discussion on what kind of new permanent members should be allowed. If the *a priori* starting point is that new permanent members cannot have the same rights and obligations as the existing ones, then I am afraid, such a proposition is not saleable. However, if some of the new permanent members decide not to enforce their veto –and here I use my words carefully again because the Charter as far as I know talks only about ‘responsibilities and duties’ and not about ‘rights’- till such a time as a comprehensive review is undertaken, they should be allowed to do so. This would of course be without prejudice to the proportionate changes in the minimum numbers needed to take decisions on matters other than the procedural ones in the reformed Council. This also does not however preclude from the immediacy of the task at hand, namely for restricting or limiting the use of the veto under certain circumstances such as: genocide, crimes against humanity and serious violations of international humanitarian law; war crimes, ethnic cleansing and terrorism.

We need to address these issues in a comprehensive manner. We must also take into account the fact that there is extreme reluctance today on the use of the veto.

Mr. Chairman,

India associates itself with the growing clamour for early reform of working methods of the Council.

India calls for the General Assembly and the Security Council as two principal organs of the UN to respect each other’s distinct roles, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter, so as to secure the effective functioning of the UN as a whole.

And finally, there must be a comprehensive review after a period of fifteen years during which the entire structure of the Security Council would need to be revisited. Not to agree to a comprehensive review will lead to a demand, sooner rather than later, for

changing the present structure. Any attempt to freeze the structure will only lead to a losing battle against the tides of change.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, we are both ready and willing to reach out to other countries and to work in close cooperation with them towards the goal of achieving urgent reform of the Council in keeping with the changing realities of the current times.

Let me assure you and through you our other colleagues and member-states of our willingness to remain constructive and reasonably flexible on all issues on the table in the months to come and urge other delegations to do likewise.

Thank you.

BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS