

Intervention by H.E. Mr. M. S. Puri, Ambassador / Acting PR of India during negotiations on "Size of an enlarged Council and working methods of the Security Council" on 7 April 2009

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor, and for recognizing that this is my first intervention during these negotiations. Also, permit me to congratulate you on your role as Chair of this process and to commend your skillful handling of this process.

We must be cognizant that the principal objectives in enlarging the council are to make it reflect contemporary geopolitical realities, improve its representativity, especially representation of developing countries which comprise the vast majority of UN membership, and reform its working methods, and thereby enhance its legitimacy and effectiveness.

The G-4 framework resolution proposes an enlarged council of 25 seats, with 11 permanent members and 14 non-permanent members. We believe this is the most optimal size of an enlarged council. The proposal for 25 seats would add 6 permanent members (Africa-2, Asia-2, LAC-1, West Europe and Other Group-1) and 4 new non-permanent members (Africa-1, Asia-1, EE-1, LAC-1). In terms of regional representation, size of population and consideration of representation, the proposed expansion would ensure that the realities of today's world are incorporated into the Security Council.

Even with 25 members, the ratio of UNSC members to that of the UNGA will be lower than what the ratio was in 1945.

Naturally any reform process should make any institution more effective and efficient. We should not see a casual link between size and efficiency in an institution's working methods and its established rules of procedure. Therefore, whatever may be the size of an organization, unless the working methods are efficient, it is clear that the Council will not function in a better manner. In every sense, therefore, the question of size is relative to the Charter responsibilities

and appropriate representativeness in that optimal size which, as we mentioned, the G-4 Framework Resolution contains.

We are conscious that an enlarged Council must be effective and efficient. However, arbitrary or artificial limits to size will not assist us in finding a solution that will achieve our principal objectives.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me now turn to the issue of working methods.

Some delegations feel that issue of working methods should be left to the UNSC itself. Certainly, the UNSC should work towards improving its working methods, and we are happy that some steps have been taken - like the issue of UNSC Note No. S/2006/507 of July 19, 2006.

However, Article 24.1 stipulates that UNSC acts on behalf of the larger membership in discharging its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Hence, the UNGA has a legitimate role in deliberating upon the working methods of the Council.

There must be greater transparency in the UNSC's work. Access to documentation and information is an issue of particular concern. The tendency of the UNSC holding closed meetings should also be curbed.

Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter must be fully implemented, by consulting with non-Security Council members on a regular basis, especially members with a special interest in the substantive matter under consideration by the Council.

Non-members must be given systematic access to subordinate organs of the UNSC, including the right to participate.

Participation of Troop Contributing Countries in decision making of peacekeeping operations must be ensured, instead of mere proforma consultation. This should cover the establishment, conduct, review and termination of peacekeeping operations, including the extension and change of mandates, as well as for specific operational issues. Charter mandates in this regard remain unfulfilled.

Mr. Chairman,

Genuine reform in the working methods cannot be achieved without a comprehensive reform in the membership of the Council, with expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories.

In this context, I should like to recall that one delegation this morning advised us to “put aside” expansion in permanent membership. In doing so, it became clear that the objective of that intervention was to press for **expansion** of the Council’s membership – not a **genuine reform** of the Security Council. And this afternoon, a couple of distinguished delegates have also suggested expansion only in the elected category, i.e. non-permanent membership, once again shying away from real reform of the Council, while finding strange satisfaction in the current state of affairs in the UNSC, including in its working methods, leaving major regions without any effective voice and participation in the UNSC.

Let us recall that an expansion in only the non-permanent category was tried in 1965. And, it is clear that this did not even achieve reform of working methods.

This was not for want of serious effort by the many who have served as non-permanent members over the years, seeking to discharge their fundamental responsibilities, but because, as is public knowledge, non-permanent members are not in the core of decision making in the UNSC. They also face difficulty in adjusting to the Council’s working methods.

Real change and reform in the Security Council, the call for which is heard in an overwhelming manner at the UN, cannot come from merely expanding the number of non-permanent members.

Only new permanent members, held accountable to the wider membership through review, would be truly effective. They also provide the necessary institutional memory to follow through and implement far reaching changes. New permanent members would also provide the necessary peer pressure through example.

It is, therefore, imperative that for real reform, also of work methods, there be a change in the composition of the Security Council by expansion in both

permanent and non-permanent categories.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)