

Statement by

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Permanent Representative**

At

An informal meeting 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

United Nations General Assembly

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Madam Co-Chairperson,

It is a pleasure to see you back in the steering seat of the Inter-Governmental Negotiations Process. I also welcome the distinguished Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, as he joins you in the important task of Co-Chairing this process. We wish both of you success in your efforts to facilitate these essential reforms to make the UN fit for purpose for the 21st century.

Co-Chairs,

2. I align myself with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representative of St Vincent and Grenadines on behalf of the L 69 and

Permanent Representative of Brazil on behalf of the G 4. I would like to make few additional points in my national capacity.

Co-Chairs,

3. Reform, we all know, at the UN is a process rather than an event. However, there is no process known to us here that has traversed winding pathways in the manner as this process of the Reform of the Security Council. In terms of length, it is unparalleled. In terms of inertia too, it has no peer.

4. Whichever way you look at this, it has been an arduous journey.

- It is more than 10 years since the start of the IGN process in 2008;
- It is more than 25 years since the passage of A/RES/48/26 in 1993 to establish an Open-Ended Working Group on Security Council Reform;
- It is more than 40 years since inscription of the item on the agenda of the GA in 1979 – A/34/246.

5. The process we have pursued has left the young who follow it, marvelling at the ingenuity of the not so young to endlessly circumambulate. As for those like me, who are now only young at heart, we now can circumambulate on this topic, even while sleepwalking with a sense of Déjà vu.

6. While the world is not what it was when we began the process, the objections to moving forward remain the same. While the global challenges of the 21st century have multiplied, we remain divided even about the process to adopt in order to move forward.

7. However, as Alexander Pope put it, “*Hope springs eternal in the human breast*”, and hence we are back to take another stab at the reform process this year. I, therefore, venture to share a few thoughts on the way forward.

Co-Chairs,

8. The President of the 72nd UNGA, while speaking on the day of the roll over decision about the outcome, said, 'It is different to former documents; we did not start from scratch in drafting it'.

9. This year too we can follow the past practice and need not start from scratch.

10. We can move ahead from the point we stopped in June last year. We, therefore, expect the new discussions to build on the past, not supplant the past.

11. We can renew focus on what could not be pursued due to the abrupt end to our discussions last year, even as we were gaining momentum.

12. The articulated quest of the overwhelming majority last year was to respect all positions by reflecting them accurately in the document we were working on.

13. Nothing can be more in tune with a process being “member driven” than acceding to the call of delegations to reflect their proposals. We vociferously support the call for the reflection of the Common African Position, as specified in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration, in any document under consideration. It is a call to address a long-standing injustice. Africa’s voice cannot be excluded. Similarly, the desire of SIDS

for a non-permanent seat on account of their situation should not be ignored.

14. Everyone has a right to put forth an option and lend their name to a model of their choice. This enhances transparency, adds specificity and engenders respect for every position. No voices should be muffled.

Co-Chairs,

15. While we build on our work of last year, our hope is that we engage in discussions in a spirit of transparency and openness. This process should respect the sentiment expressed openly and the evolution of the document under consideration should only be those discussions.

Co-Chairs,

16. Finally, we would also request you to allow us as much time as is necessary to continue our discussions and not be constrained by any arbitrary timelines.

17. Only if we show mutual respect and promote better understanding by providing time and space for deliberations, can we lend credibility to the process we are involved in. We do hope that the discussions this year will, under your able stewardship, help in moving ahead in our common quest for reform.

18. What we require are not the insurmountable “No” as a response to every suggestion. We need to look at creative pathways to forge ahead.

19. However, if despite our best efforts, credible progress evades us once again, then we should not shy away from reviewing how we engage on this very important issue.

Co-Chairs,

20. Eventually, inevitably, even the best-managed situation comes to an end. Today, the context in which the institutions of global governance were set up has changed in important ways. The institutions that were set up have come up short, while addressing the challenges we now face, especially in the area of peace and security. As President **Julius Maada Bio** of Sierra Leone, who heads the C-10, put it in an evocative article, “although the world has moved on, the United Nations’ governance has not. It is time that changed.” I would urge that all of us pay heed to his conclusion, “In two years, when the United Nations will celebrate its 75th anniversary, let us all hope the occasion marks the start of the organization’s rebirth and not its demise.”

21. For that hope to bear fruit, all of us need to listen, engage and support initiatives to move ahead, pursuing the goal of a reformed multilateral order to preserve peace and promote security. For our part, India stands ready to do so.

Thank you, Co-Chairs.