

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

29 May 2019

Co-Chairs,

I align myself with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representative of St Vincent and Grenadines, on behalf of L-69, and the Permanent Representative of Japan, on behalf of G-4. I would like to focus on a few issues in my national capacity.

Co-Chairs,

2. We are grateful that after a seemingly interminable delay, you did not allow us to meet the fate of the characters of Samuel Beckett's seminal play, "Waiting for Godot". We, therefore, thank you for providing us with this much-awaited document, which we have sought from you at every opportunity. To paraphrase the memorable words of Beckett's character Estragon, "Thank you for finding something to give us the impression that we exist".

3. Having waited for so long, you would understand that we have gone through your offering in some detail.

4. We notice that it has the exact same title as the outcome document that we adopted last year at the end of our work at the 72nd session - "Revised Elements of Commonality and Issues for Further Consideration".

5. Rare are such occasions when documents in consecutive years are provided the same title, unless it is an acceptance that it is based essentially on the earlier outcome with the same moniker.

6. More interestingly, we notice that it has every element from not only last year's outcome document, but also every element from the outcome documents from the 70th session, as well as the 71st session, and of course some more.

7. We, therefore, need to transparently acknowledge that the document that we are working on now subsumes all elements addressed in the outcomes of the last three sessions. Our submission is that this factual situation requires to be acknowledged and reflected in the text of the current document, so that it sets at rest the fallacy that we need to also refer to those other documents of the last three years as the basis for going forward.

Co-Chairs,

8. We often hear that the IGN is a member-driven process. Yet, in this paper, what was not requested has been undertaken and what has been requested has been left out.

There are a treasure trove of such instances. I will highlight just a couple of examples:

1. No one sought deletion of reference to the Framework document that has been referred to in all outcome documents since it was initiated in 2015. Yet, no reference to the Framework now remains, in any form.
2. On the other hand, there is the widest possible acceptance for accurate reflection of the Common African position, as provided in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte declaration. The African group, supported by an overwhelming majority, desired that it be reflected in order that there is no confusion about what it means. Yet, we don't see it adequately reflected even in the Issues for Further Consideration.

Co-Chairs,

9. If we are to follow an inclusive approach, then requests with broad support should all be reflected. Alternatively, if we are to adopt an exclusionary approach, then any new suggestions opposed by anyone should be left out, for lack of consensus. We can adopt either of these methodologies, but we can't adopt one methodology for a set of suggestions and another for another set of suggestions. As the saying goes, "*what is good for the goose is good for the gander.*"

Co-Chairs,

10. We have just heard the G-4 and the L-69 list a whole host of suggestions they have made, but which have not been included. This may be, perhaps, on account of objections from some, although those suggestions had wide support. It would, therefore, appear that you have followed an exclusionary approach. If that is so, we too join all the others who have expressed their objections to a series of new issues that have been inserted, without any clarification of whether they enjoy broad support or not and no attribution about who sought their insertion in this iteration of the "Revised Elements of Commonality and Issues for Further Consideration".

11. Similarly, we notice footnotes provided at the end of page 7 and page 8 to clarify the source of specific references. This is welcome. Why then are requests to cross reference A/72/510/Rev.1 and resolution 53/30 not provided as footnotes, as requested by several delegations.

Co-Chairs,

12. The lack of clarity of the methodology used in this iteration makes me suggest that what was a commonality in the past is now no longer the case. I refer here to the Commonalities Section I h on page 3. Given what we have seen of the process this year, my delegation cannot agree that "Member States are driving the IGN process forward together in accordance with the usual practice and procedures of the General Assembly". Neither do we agree that member states are "driving the process forward", nor do we subscribe to the thinking that the process

followed here is in accordance with usual practices and procedures of the General Assembly. The adoption of opaque methodologies, non-attribution of assertions and obfuscation of references is the antithesis of usual practices and procedures of the General Assembly. This Co-Chairs, I am afraid, my delegation cannot sanctify as normal.

Co-Chairs,

13. If one were to apply data analytics, we would come to the conclusion that more than a third of the total lines in this paper have at least one change from its similarly titled predecessor. How then are we to take ownership of this document, without going through it in detail and either agree or disagree with what you will make of our current submissions? Also, some of what was accepted as agreed in the past, can no longer be done so now, as the basis of those agreements in the past, no longer now exists. In short, there just is not enough time in this one meeting to engage thoroughly on every change you have made and to conclude whether your response to our suggestions is indeed acceptable or not.

Co-Chairs,

14. The need for additional time is now a necessity. It will ensure addressing the myriad issues that have emerged in your one effort at updating. Or else, as the saying goes, “we will in future be blaming our shoes, for the faults of our feet”. In fact, additional time is an essential means of providing opportunities to address serious misgivings that have been raised. As the wise say, “a stitch in time saves nine”. You Co-chairs, are chosen on account of your wisdom and sagacity to steer this process. We hope you will wisely steer us towards a satisfactory conclusion.

I thank you Co-Chairs.