

STATEMENT BY MR. MANISH TEWARI, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, DURING THE JOINT DEBATE ON AGENDA ITEMS 9 - REPORT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL; AND 119 – EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND OTHER RELATED MATTERS AT THE 64TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON NOVEMBER 12, 2009



Mr. President,

I am honoured to address the General Assembly on behalf of my country on the Report of the Security Council and the Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

Let me commence by congratulating Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Nigeria and Lebanon for having been elected to non-permanent seats in the Council for the period 2010 to 2011. India looks forward to working with these countries in a constructive and positive manner.

We thank the delegation of Austria for introducing the annual report of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009.

In our view, the report of the Security Council is an important means for facilitating interaction between the most representative organ of the United Nations and its most empowered brethren. The UN Charter itself bestows on the report a profound gravitas as is evident from the fact that there exists a separate provision mandating such a report, rather than clubbing it with the provision for reports from other UN bodies.

It is, therefore, imperative that the annual report of the Security Council inform, highlight and analyze the measures that it has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security during the reporting period.

The membership of the General Assembly has repeatedly requested that this report be more analytical and incisive than becoming a mere narration of events. It is important the General Assembly be aware not only of what decisions were taken, but also the rationale, efficacy and impact of the Council's decisions, in terms of crystallized take-aways for the membership of the General Assembly.

Mr. President,

We must recognize that the lacunae in the report are a manifestation of the underlying problems of representation and working methods of the Council, which remain opaque and non-inclusive. The report, this year too, continues to be a statistical compilation of events, a bland summary and listing of meetings and outcome documents, as some of the eminent previous speakers also highlighted.

There is no other option but to recognize that the real solution not only for a more credible, legitimate and representative Council, but even for a more thorough report lies in the comprehensive reform of the Council, including expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories, and its working methods.

In this context, it is important to note that an overwhelming majority of member states have clearly expressed their preference for such a reform during the three rounds of intergovernmental negotiations held so far on the issue of reform of the Council.

Mr. President,

Let us recall that since the General Assembly deliberated on this agenda item last year, intergovernmental negotiations have finally commenced after years of going around in circles in the Open-Ended Working Group.

This is a significant development, and the General Assembly must strongly support expediting the negotiations towards an early reform.

The most obvious way to achieve such a result is to immediately convene the negotiations and build on the progress achieved during the negotiations thus far. This, in-fact, is precisely what the Assembly has unanimously agreed to do vide its decision on September 14, 2009.

It would also be useful to recall that the preference of Member States for a Council reform involving expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent membership category was clearly reflected in the summaries issued by the Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership and wisdom in reappointing Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan as the Chair of the negotiations during the 64th session. The need for continuity to ensure success can hardly be overemphasized.

My delegation would also like to congratulate Ambassador Tanin on his appointment and we wish him all success in his continued efforts. He can be assured of my delegation's full support in this very important role.

With a view to focusing the negotiations and moving in a result-oriented manner, a text from the Chair would be a critical enabler.

Mr. President,

It is imperative that we make genuine and rapid progress on the issue of UNSC reform, without which the whole process of UN reform would be incomplete. Our institutions of global governance cannot remain chained to the balance of power that existed in 1945.

The economic meltdown of 2008 highlighted as to how urgent is the need for international institutions to reflect contemporary global reality. This strongly underscores the imperative of a reform of the Council once again.

Some, though barely a handful amongst us, argue unconvincingly that an expansion in only the non-permanent category would fulfill these objectives. Unfortunately, this has not been borne out by history and the expansion of 1965 is but a testimony to this.

Among areas that require critical attention are proper implementation of Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter that deal with participation of non-members in the UNSC's deliberations, enhancing participation of Troop Contributing Countries in decision making on peacekeeping mandates, and increasing the transparency of the Council's work.

We have also heard proposals for interim or intermediate solutions. However, such ideas raise more questions rather than provide answers. Let us be clear, pushing this decision into the future does not solve the problem, it merely enhances an erosion of the credibility and legitimacy of the Council. The luxury of no action or inaction is not an option available to the collective will of humanity represented in this august assembly.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me reiterate the imperative for intergovernmental negotiations to resume immediately and make genuine progress by focusing on expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent membership categories of the Council.

Thank you.

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