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General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

44th plenary meeting
Thursday, 12 November 2009, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki . . . . . (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Hackett (Bahamas), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 9 and 119 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/64/2)

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I should like to begin by thanking the President for having convened this important debate, the first debate in which I am participating as the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom. I should also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Austria — in his capacity as President of the Security Council during the month of November — for his comments on the report of the Security Council (A/64/2), on behalf of all members of the Council. And my thanks go also to the Permanent Representative and mission of Uganda for leading the work, with the Secretariat, to produce this report.

While the Security Council report remains the responsibility of the Council, we support efforts to ensure a transparent process. We welcome the initiative taken by Viet Nam last year and continued by Uganda this year to convene an informal, interactive meeting with Member States to discuss the report. We hope that more Member States will take advantage of such opportunities in the future.

More broadly, we note that positive trends towards greater transparency in the Security Council continue. The last year saw a further increase in the number of open meetings. We will continue to work to ensure that the Security Council, like all United Nations organs, works both effectively and transparently.

Turning now to Security Council reform, I am pleased to have the opportunity to reiterate our commitment to making progress. We continue to support permanent membership for Brazil, Germany, India and Japan, as well as permanent representation from Africa.

It has been an eventful year. The start of intergovernmental negotiations in February was a clear indication of our collective desire to achieve concrete progress. Our focus this session should be on maintaining the momentum. We fully support Ambassador Tanin's efforts to move the process forward. The session on the intermediate model in the last round of intergovernmental negotiations was especially welcome. A range of views were expressed, including on what this might mean for the future. The United Kingdom position, as set out in the British and French declaration of 6 July, notes that such a model could provide for a new category of seats with a longer mandate. On completion of an intermediate period, a review could be undertaken to convert the new seats into permanent ones. For our part, we believe the intermediate model might be considered as a means of ending the deadlock, and might provide a stepping stone towards permanent reform.

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We continue to believe that creative ideas need to be considered, if we are to achieve permanent reform of the Security Council. We should look, in detail, at possible alternative models that might break the deadlock.

We all share a genuine will for reform, but a concerted effort from the membership will be required if we are to make progress. We will also need to show flexibility and a spirit of compromise. We are committed to working with others in this session to make Security Council reform a reality.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Every year, all the Member States of the United Nations have an opportunity to discuss together the results of the work of the Security Council as reflected in its report, which, today, was introduced today by the current President of the Council, Ambassador Mayr-Harting. It is very important to have this very transparent discussion. We should like to thank the delegation of Uganda for its work in preparing this report (A/64/2). We believe that, overall, it does objectively reflect the dynamics of the Council over the past year.

The fact that the Council, as in earlier years, was actively involved in resolving some of the most important issues of our time shows that the international community and the members of the Council recognize and accept the very basic principle that the decisions of the Council, as a cornerstone for settling problems relating to international peace and security, have a unique legitimacy.

We are well aware of the criticism that traditionally accompanies the discussion of this document in the General Assembly, which is essentially that the report is not analytical enough but is only a factual depiction of the work of the Council over the past year. However, we do not agree that that is a matter for concern. We believe that the purpose of the document is to give a complete and factually accurate account of the work of the Council over the past year, and the report does this. With regard to the approaches taken by members of the Council to the various issues on its agenda, Members States have other opportunities to learn about those approaches.

In that connection, I should like to say, and not for the first time, that there has been a positive evolution in the working methods of the Security Council. The Council is broadening its practice of holding open debates and briefings — there is an increasing number of these each year, and the past year was no exception. This can be seen clearly from the statistics cited in the report.

The Security Council must continue to strike a reasonable balance between transparency and effectiveness in the understanding that the main objective must be to enhance the potential of the Council to exercise the powers ascribed to it under the Charter in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security.

We call for greater interaction between the Council and the General Assembly. Here, we should concentrate on those areas where genuine cooperation between these two principal organs is not only possible but necessary. There are quite a number of such areas. For example, we can look at the very relevant issue of how to enhance the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding. There is also scope for joint efforts in dealing with mediation. The Security Council and the General Assembly can make a real contribution here. The main focus should be to ensure that cooperation between the two bodies takes into account their respective powers, and success will depend on our doing that.

Russia, as a permanent member of the Security Council, is in favour of enhancing the effectiveness of the work of the Council by, among other means, making it more representative. However, in pursuing this goal, we should be careful not to adversely affect the operational capacity of the Council. That premise is fundamental to our approach to the question of Security Council reform.

Russia’s position is well known. We are in favour of maintaining a relatively small Security Council and we regard the idea that there could be any infringement on the powers, including the veto, of the current permanent members as counterproductive. Any change in the status quo here could become an insurmountable obstacle to having amendments to the Charter approved by national ratification procedures, primarily in the case of the five permanent members of the Council.

We also fully believe that reform of the Council must enjoy the broadest possible support among the membership. If we are unable to reach a consensus, it will be politically necessary to garner the support of a majority of Member States over and above the legally required two thirds majority of the General Assembly.

Proposed models for reform have not yet gained overwhelming support. An attempt to push these models through by putting them to a vote would inevitably polarize the Assembly. And, even if one of the drafts were to get the required two thirds of votes, the Council would hardly gain in stature in the eyes of the dissenting minority, which, of course, would count many influential States among its number.

We stand ready to consider any sensible option for broadening Security Council membership, including through an interim model, provided that it enjoys the broadest possible support within the United Nations.

Unfortunately, three rounds of intergovernmental negotiations have not done much to narrow the differences between Member States on the ultimate formula for reforming the Security Council, so we see no option other than to continue at this session of the Assembly the painstaking effort of intergovernmental negotiations that we began last February. The work must be done in a calm, transparent and inclusive manner, without imposing any artificial deadlines. It would be counterproductive to narrow the focus prematurely to just one or two options. We have to discuss all of the existing negotiating options.

The President took the Chair.

In conclusion, I would stress that our ability to make progress at the negotiations will depend on the political will of Member States and their readiness to reach a reasonable compromise.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): Mr. President, I would like to thank you for convening this plenary meeting to discuss matters of great importance to the United Nations: the reform of the Security Council and the annual report on the work of the Security Council (A/64/2). I also wish to extend my appreciation to Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting of Austria for introducing the report in his capacity as President of the Council.

Reform of the Security Council is long overdue. The current composition of the Security Council does not reflect the realities of the international community in the twenty-first century. It is thus essential to ensure that today's new realities are fully reflected in a substantial change in the status quo of the Council.

At the World Summit in September 2005, the leaders of all Member States affirmed unanimously that early reform of the Security Council is an essential element in the overall effort to reform the United Nations. And they agreed that it is necessary to make the Security Council more broadly representative and to further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions. All Member States are bound by their leaders' commitment and their promise to realize early reform of the Security Council.

Moving on from the 15-year-long consultations of the Open-ended Working Group, we entered into the negotiation stage, and the intergovernmental negotiations commenced in the informal plenary of the General Assembly last February. After three rounds of negotiations, on 14 September 2009, the General Assembly adopted decision 63/565 to commence the negotiations immediately, building on the progress achieved during the sixty-third session as well as on the positions of and proposals made by Member States.

Thus, the task before us now is not to question the need and purpose of reform, but to act and deliver on the unanimous commitment in the form of concrete solutions at the earliest possible date.

We are therefore grateful to you, Mr. President, for the high priority you have assigned to the early realization of Security Council reform, in accordance with the General Assembly decision. At the opening session, Sir, you stressed that realizing reform of the Security Council is of the utmost importance in the sixty-fourth session.

Following the general debate, Mr. President, you informed us in your letters that it is imperative that we continue during the current session to build on previous positive developments, as we work to achieve reform at the earliest opportunity. And you have reappointed Ambassador Zahir Tanin to chair the intergovernmental negotiations on your behalf. We thank Ambassador Tanin for his important contributions to moving the negotiation process forward during the previous session. Mr. President, we hope that you and Ambassador Tanin will together exercise strong leadership in guiding us towards achieving a concrete outcome during this session.

It is Japan's firm belief that reform should entail expansion of both the permanent and the non-permanent membership categories in order to reflect today's global political reality. An enlarged Security Council should include on a permanent basis those Member States that have well demonstrated the

readiness, capacity and resources to carry through implementation of Security Council decisions.

In the general debate at the end of September (see A/64/PV.5), in this Hall, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama confirmed this goal by stating that Japan would continue to engage actively in the intergovernmental negotiations, pursuing the expansion of both permanent and non-permanent membership categories as well as Japan's permanent membership in the Council.

In our view, only through expansion of both categories can the Council sufficiently enhance its effectiveness and legitimacy in the implementation of its decisions. I believe that that is why the overwhelming majority of Member States, including the African, Caribbean and Pacific Island States, continue to support the option of expanding both categories in the negotiations during the last session as well as in this morning's meeting.

The momentum for reform has sustained itself. Intergovernmental negotiations have begun and the positions of Member States are well defined. It is now high time to seek a solution that will garner the broadest possible support and achieve a tangible result. That is going to be our urgent task in the current session. Further delay in achieving a concrete outcome will only exacerbate the disappointment with the United Nations on the part of many Governments and result in questioning the ability of the membership to rejuvenate and reform from within.

We should not permit ourselves at this session to engage in procedural debates or repeat what transpired in the sixty-third session. We should build upon the progress made so far and advance to the next stage of the negotiations from the point reached at the end of the sixty-third session. The positions of all Member States have become much more clearly defined now. Therefore, in order to realize early reform, we should begin substantive negotiations based on the positions of Member States.

How do we start this next phase of substantive negotiations and try to narrow our differences as much as possible? It is essential to have a brief option paper that can serve as a basis for negotiations. Such a paper could summarize options and positions presented by Member States that are likely to garner the broadest possible support among Member States.

In our view, as in the case of past negotiations in the United Nations, the Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations is in the best position to prepare such a paper, in consultation with the President of the General Assembly. We urge that the Chairman be entrusted with that task at the earliest possible time. However, if, for whatever reason, he is not in a position to formulate such a paper for the negotiations, we should find other, Member State-driven ways to produce it.

My delegation, together with other Member States, is determined to engage constructively and with a sense of urgency in the substantive negotiations, with a view to attaining a concrete outcome during the current session.

Whatever the extent to which the Council is expanded, its membership will comprise no more than a fraction of the total number of Member States. Therefore, it is essential that the Council continue to make its decision-making process more transparent and accountable to all Member States. It is also essential to provide assurances to all Member States that the Security Council is acting on behalf of all of them, so that the entire membership continues to accept its decisions, in accordance with Article 25 of the Charter.

For the Council to maintain its legitimacy, all Member States must be convinced that decisions of the Council are outcomes that fully reflect the diverse positions, perspectives and concerns of the entire membership. Therefore, communication between the Security Council and the General Assembly needs to be continually improved. The annual report of the Security Council is one of the important tools needed to ensure this accountability.

Japan therefore welcomes that the annual reports of the Security Council have developed in line with the recommendations contained in presidential note S/2006/507, which was adopted under Japan's presidency. I commend the efforts made by Uganda in drafting and coordinating this year's report aimed at making it a comprehensive account of the main work by the Security Council for the past 12 months. Japan will join in effort to further improve its quality, taking into consideration the comments made by the general membership in today's debate as well as in the informal consultation organized jointly by Uganda, Austria and Viet Nam. The Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, which

I am chairing, will also reflect those comments in its future work.

Improving the working methods of the Security Council is important to increase the Council's efficiency and transparency and to revitalize its effectiveness. Japan has been making contributions to improve interaction between the Council and the general membership. I would like to reiterate Japan's readiness to continue its efforts to improve the working methods of the Security Council.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): There is a strong substantive connection between the two agenda items under consideration today. We thus welcome the joint debate and hope that it will offer guidance to you, Sir, and your team in shaping the future course of action in the Assembly.

The report of the Security Council (A/64/2) is a central channel of communication between the Council and the rest of the membership, on whose behalf the Council carries out its work. Like many others, we therefore take a particular interest in this report, compounded by our ongoing engagement in the area of working methods as a member of the group of five small nations (S-5). Together with others, we have long held the view that the report in its traditional format does not serve the purpose of accountability, but we also believe that the ritualistic complaints in the annual debate on the report about its lack of analysis are little productive.

We are happy to acknowledge, first of all, the efforts made in producing this year's report, in particular by the delegation of Uganda during its presidency in the month of July. We also appreciated the opportunity given to us at the end of October to engage in an informal exchange on the report. But most importantly, we are grateful that the members of the Security Council were willing to discuss with the S-5 the format of the report and the difficulties encountered in its drafting, and to exchange ideas on how the process could be improved. We were also most appreciative for your presence in this discussion, Sir, given the particular role of your Office in the consideration of the report.

We look forward to continuing our work as the S-5 and together with Council members and other States on concrete measures to improve this report and to better use the opportunity to exchange views on it. We are under no illusion as to the feasibility of a report containing a fully fledged political analysis of the work of the Security Council. That is indeed not a realistic demand, but certainly there is ample room for improvement. Linkages between topics — in particular between country situations and thematic issues — can be illustrated, and the report could also deal with cross-cutting issues, for example the discussions on the relationship between peace and justice that took place in the Council over the past year. And we can certainly find better ways to engage each other on the contents of the report.

One aspect of the report that is of particular interest to us naturally is the way it deals with the issue of working methods. The view is often advanced, and has been expressed here today, that the Council is the master of its own procedures and therefore of all matters related to its working methods. If that is so, what better place than the annual report of the Council to inform on developments in the area of working methods and what better opportunity to update on progress made in the implementation of presidential note S/2006/507?

Meanwhile, the report provides no information on actual developments in the area of working methods, even though some have occurred. There is a largely technical reference to the open debate of the Council on the matter in August 2008 and an equally meagre summary of the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, which, incidentally, seems to be the only working group of the Security Council that does not produce its own annual report.

The interest of the larger membership in the issue of working methods is well known and has been documented extensively during the discussions on Security Council reform. We hope that this interest will be met by the Council in future reports and that the consideration of the annual report can also offer an opportunity for an exchange on working methods.

The S-5 continues to work on two tracks to improve the working methods of the Council, first in the General Assembly in the overall framework of the work on Security Council reform, and secondly, through direct engagement with Council members on a number of issues in which we take particular interest, some of which will be mentioned by other S-5 members in this debate. We encourage the participation of other States that share the same interests, such as in

the case of the efforts to promote fair and clear sanctions procedures. Last year a formal proposal was submitted on that issue by some from within the S-5 and other Member States.

The progress on working methods is not conditioned on or linked to a decision in the area of enlargement, given the different nature of the two processes. At the same time, a comprehensive solution that encompasses decisive steps in both areas remains our ideal goal.

With respect to the enlargement discussion, we want to first thank Ambassador Tanin and his team for their tireless efforts and the skilful manner in which they guided the process at the sixty-third session. They are the last ones to blame for the lack of progress. At the same time, this lack of progress has only strengthened our conviction that the way to an early solution — if that is what we want, and to which we all committed in 2005 — is the intermediate approach. It offers a solution that is ratifiable, sustainable and yet flexible. We also see, of course, that flexibility and willingness to compromise are still minimal at best. It appears that the political momentum necessary for enlargement can be created only through challenges to the role and legitimacy of the Council that are not yet fully felt.

For our part, we will continue to give our support to Ambassador Tanin and his team in their future efforts.

Mr. Davide (Philippines): Forthwith, the Philippines commends you, Sir, for convening this plenary meeting for a joint debate on agenda item 9, on the report of the Security Council, and agenda item 119, on Security Council reform. As to the latter, the Philippines praises you, Sir, for the great importance you place on Security Council reform. The Philippines remains encouraged and inspired by the views expressed in your acceptance speech on 10 June 2009 (see A/63/PV.86) and the assurance you made in your first address at the opening of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly on 15 September 2009 (see A/64/PV.1) that reform of the Security Council must continue to be one of our priorities and that we should make every effort to achieve it as soon as possible.

The Philippines thanks Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting of Austria for introducing the annual report of the Security Council (A/64/2) and congratulates the Austrian presidency on its able and dynamic stewardship of the Council for the month of November 2009. The Philippines also thanks Uganda for preparing the report under its presidency in July 2009, and places on record its gratitude to Viet Nam for initiating efforts during its presidency of the Council in July 2008 to improve the manner of preparing the report by seeking the views of Member States during its drafting stage.

The Philippines also takes this opportunity to pay special tribute to the efforts of Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, for finally starting during his watch the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform mandated in General Assembly decision 62/557. Of course, commendations are also in order for Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for his work as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations and for his reappointment as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations during the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. His reappointment is not only a recognition of his integrity, skills and capabilities; it will also ensure that work will continue from where we left off in September 2009. His reappointment is a blessing because he cannot afford to fail.

We are again at a time of the year when the General Assembly engages in the ritual of a joint debate on the report of the Security Council and on Security Council reform. In past years, we have seen the same thing over and over again — almost identical formats or presentations of Security Council reports and a continuing standstill in Security Council reform efforts. The Philippines wishes to state nonetheless that this year is a little different, although the report of the Security Council seems to appear as a rerun despite the sincere attempts of the Security Council, since Viet Nam's presidency in July 2008, to make the report more relevant, insightful, comprehensive, informative and analytical. Despite these efforts, the report has remained more or less the same.

The Philippines maintains its view that the Security Council should consider changes to the report, including its format, to make it more of a genuine report rather than a mere compendium as it is now. It is always pointed out that the format of the report corresponds to relevant provisions of the notes by the President contained in documents S/2006/507 and S/2007/749, which are the outcomes of the work of the Security Council Informal Working Group on

Documentation and Other Procedural Questions. The Philippines recommends that the Working Group consider this matter once again and, accordingly, make the appropriate recommendations, proposals and suggestions to the members of the Council. Once again, the Philippines reiterates its view that the Council should take note of how the repertoire of the practice of the Security Council presents information and consider combining or merging the annual report and the repertoire.

In the long, discouraging, frustrating, exasperating and even painful history of Security Council reform, the sixty-third session of the General Assembly may yet be remembered as a session of encouraging transition and great promise. In that session, the general membership finally resolved by specific action — and even expressed that resolve in body language — to be more dynamic and bold and to exercise some political will to pursue the mandate of General Assembly decision 62/557 to commence intergovernmental negotiations. After two decades of embarrassing sojourn within the confines of the Open-Ended Working Group and of repeating the same old arguments day in and day out, the gates are now open for negotiations that will, we hope, bring forth a harvest of agreements on Security Council reform.

Of course, the Philippines notes the difficulty of cutting the umbilical cord of the Open-ended Working Group, as seen in paragraph 17 (c) of its report contained in document A/63/47, which states that the General Assembly can convene the Open-ended Working Group "if Member States so decide". The Philippines hopes the General Assembly will not so decide, for if it does it will, sadly, be brought back to where it started. With vim, vigour, vitality and political will, it must concentrate on intergovernmental negotiations.

We have already crossed the Rubicon, so to speak. When Member States began intergovernmental negotiations, they put an end, for all intents and purposes, to the Open-ended Working Group. We are now on the other side of the Rubicon and, like Julius Caesar, we can now declare "*alea iacta est*" — the die is cast. The general membership now has no choice but to go forward with abiding good faith and work on Security Council reform. The Philippines commends Ambassador Tanin for his work in chairing the intergovernmental negotiations during the sixty-third session.

The several rounds of negotiations convened by him, broken down into a series of exchanges, have allowed the many stakeholders to put forward, explain and debate their proposals. The Philippines submitted its own specific Security Council reform proposals in its note verbale dated 14 February 2009, sent to the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session and the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group, and in its note verbale dated 16 February 2009, sent to the Permanent Representatives to the United Nations. The Philippines reiterated, amplified and supplemented all these proposals during the long discussions in the rounds and exchanges.

In its statement at the 24th informal meeting of the plenary on intergovernmental negotiations held on 22 June 2009, the Philippines even submitted draft resolutions to implement various reform proposals. There is no need to further elaborate on them, since they are already well known to all delegations. What is needed now is action, action, action. There should be no turning back.

The Philippines respectfully submits that delegations should now work on draft documents or papers so that discussions can be more focused. The draft can come from the Chairman or be the product of the general membership itself. It is of paramount importance that all of the proposals on the key issues be reflected in the draft.

At this juncture, the Philippines maintains its position that what can be adopted now must be approved now. It cannot subscribe to the concept that "nothing is agreed unless everything is agreed". Such a concept is undemocratic, divisive, irrational, unjust and oppressive. Yielding to it would spell disaster for all efforts towards reform of the United Nations. In this regard, the Philippines calls on the Security Council itself to act now on reforming its working methods to make them truly democratic, transparent, accountable and genuinely observant of the requirements of the rule of law and due process. It should not place itself in the embarrassing situation where it could be prodded again, for instance, to simply delete the word "provisional" in the title of its provisional rules of procedure.

My delegation hopes and prays that the General Assembly, through our determined, sustained and unceasing efforts, will be able to muster the necessary political will and come up with a positive outcome on

Security Council reform by the end of the sixty-fourth session. The Philippines will do its part towards achieving this outcome. The outcome could be momentous, if we desire and will it. It is all up to Member States. As the Latin maxim goes, *velle est posse* — where there is a will, there is a way.

Mr. Sial (Pakistan): I would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Austria, President of the Security Council for this month, for presenting the Council's annual report (A/64/2) to the General Assembly. The report of the Security Council under review is a comprehensive compendium of its meetings and decisions. It can be appreciated for its procedural accuracies and reference value. However, a certain level of analytical depth would certainly add to its value.

The Security Council is the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. It acts on behalf of the entire membership of the United Nations. Today's meeting provides an opportunity for the entire membership to review the work of the Security Council and to assess our collective efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform of that body.

Our brief review of the work of the Security Council will focus on two dimensions: first, its effectiveness in maintaining international peace and security, and secondly, its ability to reflect the views and interests of the widest possible membership. In terms of the Council's effectiveness, the annual report details significant achievements in addressing the areas of violent conflict and peacekeeping. Peacekeeping has been utilized to good effect in several complex crises in Africa. Elsewhere, in Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe, peacekeeping activities have accomplished the significant task of disengaging parties to violent conflict. In the areas of civilian support programmes and peacebuilding, important accomplishments can also be noted. The Council deserves our appreciation for its invaluable work in those areas.

The Council, however, needs to recalibrate its efforts in conflict prevention and relapse, particularly in the context of the resolution of outstanding disputes between Member States. Major unresolved issues, including in our own region, remain asleep on the agenda of the Security Council. Even in the case of some important issues on the active agenda, particularly the Middle East, the Council seems to have abdicated its role. The Council needs to address that perception.

The second dimension of the Security Council's assessment is the matter of its openness and transparency. Unfortunately, in this area, the annual report fails to offer sufficient information or analysis, particularly with regard to the Council's decision-making process. It is widely noted here that decisions are developed mostly in closed-door meetings, if not behind the scenes, by a few key States. The decisions, accordingly, lack transparency and inclusiveness.

Rectifying this trend is part of our general debate on the Council's reform and restructuring. In the short term, this concern can be addressed by improving the Council's institutional interaction with the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council through regular briefings by the Security Council presidency to the President of the General Assembly.

That brings me to the other aspect of our debate today, that is, the reform of the Security Council. Pakistan is committed to achieving the comprehensive reform of the Security Council that will make it more representative, transparent, accountable and effective, thus enhancing its legitimacy and credibility. The question before the Member States is how to achieve this objective. Our delegation firmly believes that the answer lies not in enlarging the coterie of the powerful few but in strengthening the democratic representation, role and influence of the general membership of the United Nations in the Security Council. We believe that important work was done in the intergovernmental negotiations during the previous session. It is, however, clear that we are far from achieving a solution that can garner the widest possible support of the Member States.

We can outline three areas of convergence among the Member States on the general principles of the reform process. First, the reform has to be comprehensive and based on the principle of addressing all five key issues of reform: size, working methods, categories, the power of veto and geographical representation. The tendency to identify reform only with the expansion of membership must be checked. Secondly, the reform must make the Security Council diverse and plural in the context of geographical representation. Therefore, the reform must entail rectifying the underrepresentation of Africa

and small States. Thirdly, the reform must not be imposed by a few but enjoy the widest possible support of the membership. The sense of ownership by the Member States of the United Nations system demands that the reform process should aim at a win-win solution for all. Only an inclusive process can address this challenge.

Pakistan believes that, in order to achieve real progress on Security Council reform, a modicum of flexibility and compromise is needed. We can say with confidence that the position of the Uniting for Consensus group is flexible and realistic. It allows variable arrangements and different possibilities and options, including rotation and longer-term presence through re-election, and provides a greater relevance to geographical representation. In this regard, the proposal submitted by Italy and Colombia in April 2009 can provide a solid platform from which to achieve a workable formula. Accordingly, we can work on the creation of long-term seats based on geographical representation, with the principles of rotation, realistic approaches to reform of the veto and workable measures to improve not only working methods but also relations between the Council and the General Assembly.

We believe that such a formula reflects complex current realities. These current realities consist of a few large Powers, a number of medium-sized States, a majority of smaller States and the emergence of regional organizations, which are playing important roles in international and regional peace and security. It also takes into account the concept of equitable geographical distribution, as envisaged in Article 23 of the Charter.

The concept of equitable geographical distribution would make little sense if a seat allocated to a region were to be occupied permanently by one country. That is why we respect and understand Africa's position. Africa's demand for permanent seats is for the entire region and is therefore different from other proposals that seek permanent membership for individual States. As we understand it, of the two empowered Council seats which are sought by Africa, two or, through rotation, a larger number of African States could be represented, under arrangements to be made by Africa itself. Africa would thus retain the power to ensure accountability on the part of those States that would represent it and act on its behalf on the Council.

In conclusion, Mr. President, my delegation believes that your role as President of the General Assembly is very important in steering the reform process forward. In this regard, we will encourage your close supervision and leadership during the intergovernmental negotiations. We will also take this opportunity to urge all Member States to approach the issue with flexibility and compromise, in the spirit of mutual good will, to achieve effective and enduring reform of the Security Council.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): May I begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for organizing this joint debate, in which Member States have the opportunity to discuss not only the content of the annual report of the Security Council (A/64/2), of which Mexico has been an elected member since January, but also Security Council reform, a subject my country considers to be particularly important. I would also like to thank the President of the Security Council, our colleague the Permanent Representative of Austria, for his introduction of the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly.

Allow me to begin with the issue of Security Council reform. I will not restate here Mexico's position on every aspect of reform, since it is well known to all and we have expressed it fully during the negotiations. More usefully, I will discuss the negotiation process and its prospects over the forthcoming rounds of talks.

Since the Assembly's adoption of decision 62/557 and the start of intergovernmental negotiations, Security Council reform has acquired particular relevance. We have embarked on an open and enriching process that, given the necessary flexibility, will lead us to comprehensive reform of the Security Council. In keeping with decision 62/557, Security Council reform consists of five main aspects, which we have addressed both separately and jointly during the three rounds of negotiations. This exercise served to confirm that the five aspects are so closely interlinked that it is impossible to deal with one without taking the rest into account, as you rightly pointed out this morning, Mr. President.

Besides familiarizing ourselves with the traditional positions of the Member States, during the intergovernmental negotiations we made significant progress and were able to discuss and analyse innovative proposals that confirmed the commitment of

all Member States to comprehensive Security Council reform. We were also able to establish that some delegations are willing to show the flexibility necessary to achieving reform acceptable to every Member State.

Mexico was particularly pleased with the debate that took place for the very first time at the initiative of the Uniting for Consensus movement, on what is known as the intermediate position. We believe we should intensify these discussions in order to gauge the full scope of this position, which, seen as it is as a compromise solution between the most extreme positions, would allow us to reconcile everyone's wishes and achieve genuine, comprehensive reform of the Security Council. We must, however, be aware that this cannot be achieved if we continue to insist on traditional positions or to attempt unilateral initiatives that seek partial reform out of self-interest. Such proposals will only divide Members and lead us ever further from our common goal.

My delegation is ready and willing to pursue the intergovernmental negotiations process at this session, in the context of the General Assembly's informal meetings. We do so in the constructive spirit of cooperation and flexibility we have consistently maintained, in order to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Council enjoying the broadest possible support of Member States. Security Council reform is urgent and essential. We feel certain that through your leadership and active participation, Mr. President — as we heard this morning — and with the support of the facilitator, Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan, whom we congratulate on his re-election, that we will achieve concrete progress in the intergovernmental negotiation process on comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

As an elected member of the Security Council, Mexico was an active and constructive participant in drafting the report submitted this year to the General Assembly, seeking to ensure that the information contained in the document is as objective and substantive as possible, and that it faithfully records the activities of the Council during the reporting period, particularly the month of April, when Mexico held the presidency of the Council. This exercise in transparency and analysis is especially apparent in the introduction to the annual report. In this regard, we acknowledge the initiative of the Permanent Representative of Uganda, who held informal consultations with the General Assembly in order to keep members informed about the process of preparing the report and get feedback from them before it was finalized, following the example of the delegation of Viet Nam in 2008. These initiatives enhance the Council's transparency and give the report a more analytical and substantive quality. We also feel that it strengthens relations and dialogue between the Council and the General Assembly.

In short, the Security Council's annual report is an important reference document that covers every meeting, statement and communication of the Council during the past year, while its introduction presents an analysis of the Council's activities concerning the various items on its agenda. While this analysis has improved considerably in recent years, we are aware that the annual report should continue to be refined and that the General Assembly's involvement in its preparation should be increased.

We acknowledge that we have not achieved the levels of transparency that the United Nations community is calling for, but we have made significant progress in the sense that a large part of the Council's meetings are now public. That was what we sought to achieve during our presidency in April, when we convened a series of thematic debates of interest to the general membership and held a considerable number of open meetings. During this period, Mexico promoted, within the Council, open debates on the situation in Haiti, the strengthening of the mediation process, and children in armed conflict. Mexico will continue to actively pursue this course during its membership of the Security Council.

In 2009, as an elected member of the Council, Mexico has sought to promote and adopt decisions that foster respect for international humanitarian law, the rule of law, disarmament and non-proliferation, mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes, the protection of children in armed conflict, and actions to promote stability and post-conflict reconstruction.

This year, the Security Council's agenda has been quite substantive, as we can see in the annual report. Nonetheless, it is clear that we must continue to make progress to ensure that the Council deals with conflicts in a holistic manner, from the point of view of peace and security, to include matters relating to promoting cooperation, to supporting development and strategies to prevent conflict and undertake post-conflict

reconstruction, to promoting good management in public affairs and to strengthening the rule of law. Mexico will continue to emphasize those concepts as a complement to the traditional perception of collective security.

Mr. Viinanen (Finland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In conclusion, I would like to talk about some activities that Mexico will seek to pursue during the remainder of our mandate that will enhance the Council's effectiveness and transparency.

First, we will continue to encourage transparency in the Security Council's working methods and to promote public meetings, open debates and participation of other, regional bodies in meetings in which their contribution is of relevance. We believe that it would be productive to reintroduce the practice of wrap-up meetings at the end of each monthly presidency of the Council, which could be undertaken in public, to benefit Council members, to strengthen our Organization and to benefit States Members of the United Nations. That practice already exists in some of the regional groups — for example, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States — and could be extended to the entire membership.

Secondly, we will pursue our efforts to enhance international crisis prevention relating to mass violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and to ensure accountability when such violations occur.

Thirdly, we will seek to increase the attention that the Council devotes to prevention conflicts and not just to managing them, incorporating in its resolutions mandates to link security to the strengthening of official development and humanitarian assistance.

Fourthly, we will continue to strengthen the rule of law in the Council's decisions.

Through our participation in the Security Council, we restate our commitment to maintaining international peace and security and to preserving the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. As a permanent member of the General Assembly, we will also continue to actively participate in the negotiation process for the comprehensive Security Council reform in order to bring it into line with the realities of our time.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): My delegation is grateful for the opportunity to make some remarks on these important topics related to the Security Council.

The central role that the Security Council plays in the ordering of international society makes it imperative that this principal deliberative organ — the General Assembly — given its universal membership, carefully consider the report of the Security Council (A/64/2). In considering the report, my delegation remains ever mindful of the urgent need to reform that very important body.

The Charter of the United Nations confers on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In executing its authority, the Council is endowed with far-reaching powers to adopt legally binding decisions that take precedence over any other obligations of Member States. In the light of the immense power exercised by the Council, both in terms of the impact of its decisions and its wide discretion, it is therefore important that the Council be fundamentally reformed in order to render it more democratic, legitimate, representative, responsive and transparent in its working methods and its decision-making processes.

An important element for ensuring transparency is open debates, open meetings and open briefings in the Council. We believe that such meetings allow for greater participation by the general membership of the United Nations, especially the affected parties, to put their views across. We therefore consider it a step in the right direction to see the increased number of open meetings and open debates during the reporting period. Continuing and improving upon that path will enhance the Council's transparency.

My delegation is also convinced that the Security Council cannot effectively carry out its mandate while detached from those communities affected by situations on its agenda. We have noted and we welcome the Council's engagement with those affected directly on the ground through, for example, mission visits, including to Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Afghanistan.

We continue to argue that another way that the Council can facilitate the involvement of those most closely affected by its work is through improving cooperation and coordination with regional organizations, as contemplated in Chapter VIII of the Charter. Given the fact that by far the largest

percentage of situations on the agenda of the Council is in Africa, we believe that there needs to be a concerted effort towards closer cooperation and coordination with the African Union (AU) on peace and security matters.

As an important step in that direction, we welcome the Council's 16 May 2009 visit to the African Union Peace and Security Council in Addis Ababa. While we heard of disturbing attempts to undermine that important initiative, we hope that confidence in its importance will be restored. We look forward to further improvement of the strategic partnership between the AU and the United Nations in this regard.

In line with our desire to strengthen the African Union-United Nations partnership on peace and security, and consistent with the spirit of resolution 1809 (2008), we continue to believe that United Nations-assessed contributions will greatly assist the African Union peacekeeping operations in securing predictable, sustainable and flexible financing.

Much has been said and done by the Council in response to the concerns of Member States in relation to transparency, but much more still needs to be done. For one thing, my delegation remains concerned that the Council still functions on the basis of provisional rules, which does not allow for predictability.

We unfortunately continue to lament the fact that the Security Council has not been successful in resolving some conflict situations and has failed dismally to intervene in others. The most serious threat to the Council's credibility remains its inability to resolve protracted conflicts such as those in the Middle East and in Western Sahara. It is our hope that the Council will stem the erosion of its credibility by transcending its divisions and the national interests of its members and by uniformly discharging its Charter-based mandate to maintain international peace and security.

I turn my attention now to the question of the reform of the Security Council. I wish to thank the President of the General Assembly for his expressed commitment to advance the process of negotiation to an early conclusion. That commitment was exemplified by the prompt reappointment of His Excellency Ambassador Tanin, the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, to continue to facilitate the intergovernmental negotiations mandated by the General Assembly decision 62/557. We shall place on record our appreciation for the sterling work done by Ambassador Tanin during the sixty-third session under difficult circumstances and reiterate our support for him. We were particularly encouraged by the conclusion in his letter of 16 July 2009 that the model with an expansion in both categories commanded the most support, which is a conclusion which we share.

We now want to answer the question as to what is to be done to advance those negotiations and bring them to an early and successful conclusion. In doing so, there are a number of issues we would like to outline.

First, perhaps the most important issue that we would like to stress is that we need to progress to real negotiations. The time for restating our positions ad nauseum has come and long gone. The positions of different Members States and groups of States are well known and have been canvassed in the course of the negotiations. We must therefore avoid regurgitating the same positions over and over again, lest we slip into the never-ending mode of the Open-ended Working Group.

Secondly, my delegation believes that in order to build on the progress made during the sixty-third session, we should all provide the facilitator with a clear mandate to produce a text for negotiations, based on positions communicated over time by Member States. We are convinced that without such a negotiating text, delegations are likely to restate their positions. Such a text is imperative to move the process towards real negotiations.

Thirdly, and as we have already said, such a paper — the negotiating text — should attempt to narrow down the options, focusing on those that are likely to garner the widest required and necessary support. Narrowing the options should be based on what was achieved in the last session, as clearly captured in the facilitator's letter, which I have just quoted, that is, that the model with an expansion in both categories commanded the most support.

However, we encourage the facilitator to continue to consult widely with the general membership of the United Nations and be bold enough to allow the process of reform not to be held hostage by a few. Member States that seek genuine and fundamental reform of the United Nations in general and the Security Council in particular should openly and widely mobilize for that cause and see that the moral

obligation for reform rests heavily on those who are content with the status quo. We should engage in that course of action for the sake of the very ideals the Organization holds dear.

Fourthly, in order not to lose the momentum we have already gained, we request that Ambassador Tanin announce within the next few days the resumption of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. That announcement should also provide delegations with a clear schedule of meetings, demonstrating a sense of urgency.

Allow us to turn to the substance of negotiations. Many delegations have emphasized the need for a give-and-take, compromise-based approach. My delegation fully shares that view. We believe, however, that such an approach can take place only in the course of real negotiations and not in the course of merely repeating the same statements.

The contours of the desired outcome have already been laid out for us in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, in which our leaders agreed that the Council has to be reformed in order to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent in a way that would further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy and implementation of its decisions.

Using the above as our guide for the reform negotiations, my delegation believes that the complete non-representation of Africa in the permanent category and the underrepresentation of developing countries in the Council in general must be addressed. We will continue to approach those negotiations on the basis of the Common African Position as elaborated in the Ezulwini Consensus. Whatever compromises are reached must ensure effective representation of Africa in the permanent category of the Council and greater representation of developing countries.

For us, that means the expansion of the Security Council in both categories. It is self-evident that an expansion in only the non-permanent category cannot meet the requirements laid out for us by our leaders. The question can be asked, however, whether the intermediary approach — whatever it may mean — meets those requirements and accommodates the legitimate aspirations of Africa for permanent representation. We are yet to be convinced of that, for if it does not address those concerns, then it would be no more than an attempt to avoid addressing the injustices of the current configuration of the Council.

The road before us is going to be hard, but rest assured that my delegation intends to walk it to its conclusion, offering our assistance to the President and to Ambassador Tanin in whatever way we can.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba recognizes that some efforts have been made to improve the quality of the Security Council's annual report (A/64/2). Nonetheless, there is still much to be done. The report remains basically a descriptive document, very useful as a reference for libraries but lacking the analytical approach the Member States need to assess the Council's work.

We insist that the Council should submit annual reports to the General Assembly that are truly analytical and substantive, as well as special reports that the Charter stipulates in Articles 15 and 24, which so far are regrettably conspicuous by their absence. Cuba underlines the Council's responsibility to render due account to the General Assembly since, in conformity with the Charter, we have entrusted that body, of limited membership, with the prime responsibility to act on our behalf in maintaining international peace and security.

The Security Council needs urgent and deep reform. There cannot be true reform of the United Nations until the Council is reformed. Such reform cannot remain continuously postponed and relegated. The complaint of the majority cannot continue to be ignored.

Cuba has engaged actively in the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. Regrettably, no clear progress in the process has been seen. Our greater challenge is to prevent, at all costs, the negotiation process from becoming a repetition of the deliberations that for more than 15 years took place in the General Assembly's Open-ended Working Group and led nowhere. We must move to a stage of real negotiation as soon as possible.

Cuba favours an immediate increase in the membership of the Security Council, of both permanent and non-permanent members. The main purpose cannot be to increase for the sake of increase, but to rectify the unjustifiable underrepresentation of developing countries in the Council. Cuba will not support any partial or selective broadening of the membership or of the composition of the members of the Council that works to the detriment of developing countries.

Increasing only the number of non-permanent seats would further widen the existing huge gap between permanent and non-permanent members. Increasing only the number of permanent seats would make the Council a body even less representative and, hence, less legitimate and effective.

There cannot be equitable representation in the Council if developing countries, including entire regions, remain totally underrepresented in the category of permanent members. How can one justify the fact that, while over half of the items on the Council's agenda refer to problems of Africa, that region still does not have a permanent seat on the Council? That is why Cuba fully supports the just demand of African countries for such a seat. Other entire regions do not have permanent representation either, like Latin America and the Caribbean.

The new seats to be established, including in the category of permanent members, must have exactly the same prerogatives and rights enjoyed by the current seats, without being subject to selective or discriminatory criteria.

The position of Cuba has been and continues to be clear regarding the veto. The veto is an anachronistic and antidemocratic privilege that must be eliminated as soon as possible. However, as long as the veto does exist, at the very least a suitable proportion of developing countries must also be able to exercise it. That would be the only way for developing countries to be able to make a real impact on the work of the Security Council. To admit new permanent members without the right to the veto would be to create a new category of Council members, which Cuba does not support. There is no justification for developing countries entering as new permanent members with a lesser status than that of the current ones.

Most of the new permanent and non-permanent members must be developing countries. Permanent membership must be granted to at least two countries in Africa, two developing countries in Asia and two countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

As to the size of the Security Council, Cuba believes that an expanded Council should have no fewer than 26 members. Thus the ratio between the number of Council members and the membership of the Organization would be at least a little closer to the ratio that existed when the Organization was founded.

Reform of the Council must also necessarily include a thorough overhaul of its working methods. Although some modest changes have been made in recent years, most of them have been more formal than substantive. The fact is that at present the Security Council is not transparent, democratic or efficient.

We advocate a Security Council in which closed-door consultations are the exception. We aspire to a Council that addresses the matters within its mandate and does not encroach on or meddle in those within the mandates of other organs. We want a Council that truly takes into account the views of the Organization's membership before taking decisions and that ensures a degree of genuine access for States that are not members of that body.

Finally, I wish to comment on a procedural matter that we consider important. Cuba believes that in future we must seriously consider whether we should continue to have joint debates on agenda items 9 and 119 in the General Assembly. There is a close link between those two items that by no means should be ignored. At the same time, when delegations have to address two highly relevant and comprehensive items in a single statement, they must omit many important remarks, and the in-depth consideration that we so much need is not achieved. We believe that the annual report of the Security Council and Council reform are items that, because of their importance and their implications, should be considered separately in the General Assembly.

Mr. Gutiérrez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Clearly, the process of Security Council reform is a matter of priority to be addressed at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. In that connection, I would like to welcome the fact that the President has confirmed our colleague Mr. Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations in the informal plenary on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. We are confident that with the President's support and Ambassador Tanin's assistance, substantive progress can be made on this important issue. I also wish to thank Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, current President of the Security Council, for introducing the annual report of that organ (A/64/2).

In addition to associating itself with the statement made by the delegation of Egypt on behalf of the

Non-Aligned Movement (see A/64/PV.43), my delegation would like to make a number of observations that we regard as relevant to the issues before us today.

First, with regard to the annual report of the Security Council, my delegation draws particular attention to the introduction, which serves as a basis for reflection on and analysis of the broad range of topics considered by the Council. However, we believe that the report's descriptive content could be complemented by more substantive information about the matters addressed, and especially about the decisions taken. By knowing more about the Council's work, we could gain a more comprehensive perspective on such matters, and the report would not be limited to lists of activities.

Peru firmly believes in multilateralism and collective security as essential mechanisms for the maintenance of international peace and security, which is the primary responsibility of the Security Council. In that connection, it is indispensable that the Council continue its efforts to enhance the transparency and openness of its work. An urgent task is the self-evaluation that must be undertaken to determine what types of new actions should be carried out to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of that work.

My delegation also wishes to refer to an issue to which we attach particular importance: the process of Security Council reform. At the previous session of the General Assembly, we engaged in three rounds of intergovernmental negotiations, which enabled us to clearly identify the positions expressed by a significant number of delegations of Member States.

We need a more efficient, transparent, democratic and representative Security Council that reflects current international realities. That is why, following the three rounds of negotiations, my delegation believes that we should begin to work on the outlines of a general proposal aimed at the great objective of Council reform. It is vital that the negotiation process begin to focus on more substantive points and that we design a negotiation format that goes beyond the expression of each Member State's position on this issue.

Peru reiterates once again its conviction that, in order to adapt the Security Council to new realities, it is essential to admit new members, permanent and non-permanent. That would promote just and equitable regional representation, which would project a stronger image of Council legitimacy. In addition, as my delegation has stated, it is time to develop a constructive proposal for change to increase the number of new permanent members, which is imperative if we are to effectively develop a Council reform process that alters the status quo.

Furthermore, with regard to the veto, Peru has consistently maintained a position of principle aimed at its ultimate elimination. However, in the same constructive spirit, and so as not to deadlock the negotiation process, my delegation has stated that a commitment should be made to evaluate, at an initial stage, a restriction on the use of the veto, following a rule already established in Article 27, paragraph 3, of the Charter. In addition, Peru believes it is important to arrive at a consensus that would make it possible to establish precise limits for the use of the veto, thus preventing it from being applied in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity and repeated acts in flagrant violation of human rights.

We face the urgent challenge of making substantive progress on this issue, which is of vital importance both to the Organization and to all Member States. That is why Peru reiterates that the next rounds of intergovernmental negotiations should take place with the idea of beginning a phase in which we can draft a text that compiles the concrete elements pertaining to all aspects of this process, so as to develop more effective and concrete negotiations that will allow us to achieve the expected tangible results. Peru is prepared to participate in that process.

Mr. Hoang Chi Trung (Viet Nam): First of all, I would like to thank Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, Permanent Representative of Austria and President of the Security Council for the month of November, for presenting the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/64/2).

The Vietnamese delegation wishes to align itself with the statement made by the representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/64/PV.43).

During the period under review, the growing complexity and multidimensionality in international situations have presented the Security Council with further challenging responsibilities in shouldering its noble mission of maintaining international peace and security. My delegation acknowledges the efforts by

the members of the Council to fulfil those tasks, particularly by smoothly managing its hectic programme of work, regularly reviewing and taking appropriate actions with regard to conflict situations in Africa, Europe, the Americas and Asia and consulting with concerned parties to react quickly to terrorist acts and security crises in various regions of the world.

Our delegation also wishes to underscore how much effort and attention the Council devoted to the consideration of thematic, general and other issues — including those of peacekeeping, peacebuilding, mediation, the protection of civilians in armed conflict and women and peace and security — as well as to the work of its subsidiary organs.

The annual report of the Security Council this year reflects improvement in terms of both its format and content. It is a good basis for further substantive discussions in the General Assembly. It is essential that the quality of the report be further consolidated in order to better portray the increased role and involvement of the Council under the current challenging circumstances. To be more specific, it is necessary to find appropriate ways to reflect in the report the concerns of troop- and police- contributing countries, the coordination between the Security Council and other United Nations principal organs, the legitimate interests of the countries in question and the role of regional and subregional organizations in peacekeeping operations.

In cases where the Council was unable to take action, the mechanism for how the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter can be fully utilized for the pacific settlement of disputes also needs to be taken duly into account. To that end, the Vietnamese delegation believes that there is scope to further develop consultations, not only with Council members but also with the United Nations membership at large, in the course of outlining and finalizing the annual report to make it more analytical, balanced and substantive. Given the added value and potential contributions that might result from those interactions and inputs, Viet Nam strongly supports continuing the practice of holding broad consultations with Member States during the preparation of the Council's annual report.

With regard to Security Council reform, we are encouraged by the positive steps during the period under review, both inside and outside the Council, to further move that difficult process along. In the face of an increasing workload, Council members and the Secretariat have made commendable efforts to enhance the Council's transparency and effectiveness. For instance, a number of measures envisaged in the note by the Council President contained in document S/2006/507 have been put into play, producing active responses from members and parties concerned. As a result, as compared to several years ago, the Council now holds more public meetings and consults more frequently with external actors, including troop-contributing countries, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations. More opportunity has also been provided for associated United Nations Members to speak before the Council takes action.

In the General Assembly, under the wise leadership of Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President at the sixty-third session, decision 62/557 went into effect in February with the commencement of intergovernmental negotiations on Council reform. It is encouraging that informal meetings on each reform topic stimulated active participation by Member States at every meeting. A large number of Member States used those opportunities to present their positions and proposals, in an effort to speed up the reform process and find a common voice on issues. We hope that such invaluable ideas and inputs will be taken into consideration in preparing for the next phase of our intergovernmental negotiations.

However, no breakthrough has been made in the reform of the Council. The current membership structure continues to challenge the fundamental United Nations principles of equality and representation and proper reflection of the geopolitical realities of our time.

In order for the upcoming negotiations to succeed, Security Council reform should be addressed in a more comprehensive, transparent and balanced manner. Reforming the Council and its working methods must ensure that the Council's agenda reflects the needs and interests of both developing and developed countries in an objective, rational, non-selective and non-arbitrary manner.

Pending its final elimination, the use of the power of the veto by the permanent members must be restricted. Preventive diplomacy should be further promoted, along with concerted efforts for the peaceful

settlement of conflicts rather than reactive measures that include abusive punitive sanctions.

We would like to avail ourselves of this opportunity to reiterate our firm position that the Security Council should be enlarged in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent, with more representation for developing countries.

It is our strong conviction that the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly is a crucial time. Now is the time for Member States to act together, in a spirit of partnership, compromise and flexibility, to bring our efforts to reform the Security Council to a fruitful outcome.

Against that backdrop, we welcome the President's initiative to designate the reform of the Security Council as one of the main priorities of this session. We very much appreciate his commitment to sparing no effort to make the reform process achievable as soon as possible. We would also like to congratulate Ambassador Zahir Tanin for his continued efforts with regard to the task entrusted to him as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. We wish to assure him of our full support.

Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude for the support and encouragement we have received from a number of Member States regarding our initiative to consult them in the preparation of last year's annual report of the Security Council.

Ms. Ochir (Mongolia): My delegation wishes to confine its remarks to agenda item 119, on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

Since the adoption of the historic decision 62/557, three rounds of intergovernmental negotiations have taken place in the Assembly's informal plenary meeting format under the skilful stewardship of Ambassador Zahir Tanin. We have had an opportunity to hear Member States reiterate their principled positions, as well as some new proposals, on the five key issues of a comprehensive reform of the Security Council. As we are now approaching a new round of intergovernmental negotiations during the current Assembly session, my delegation wishes to strongly echo the position expressed by many previous speakers that, in order to move the process forward, the Chair needs to produce a composite text on the positions of Member States so that we can engage in genuine intergovernmental negotiations on Council reform.

Mongolia's stance on the reform of the Security Council is well known. We have consistently stood for a just and equitable enlargement of the Council by increasing the number of both permanent and non-permanent members while ensuring due representation for developing and developed countries. Our position on enlargement in both categories is guided by, and based on, a legislative and Charter-defined composition, political considerations that reflect the change in the balance of power, and the principles of justice and equality to ensure greater and enhanced representation for developing world.

My delegation shares the view of the majority of Member States that the veto right is anachronistic and needs to be reviewed and limited, with the ultimate objective being its abolition. However, as long as it exists, it must be extended to new permanent members so as not to create a new category of Council membership. We also support the clearly expressed position of aspirants regarding the establishment of a voluntary moratorium on the use of the veto until the proposed review process takes place.

On the issue of regional representation, the solution ought to be fair and just. We attach great importance to the criterion of equitable geographical distribution, with an emphasis on non- and under-represented groups, in particular those of Africa, Asia and Latin American and Caribbean. My delegation also attaches particular importance to ensuring the representation of small States in the Security Council.

Based on its position with regard to categories and regional representation, my delegation would prefer an enlarged Council to comprise 24 or 25 members, with 6 new permanent members and 4 or 5 additional non-permanent members.

We strongly believe that in order to make the necessary breakthrough in our negotiations, we need primarily to decide on the categories of Security Council enlargement. We share the view that the overwhelming majority of Member States have expressed, in no uncertain terms, regarding their preference for increasing the membership in both the current categories. We expect that the composite text of the chair that has been proposed will reflect that reality.

Finally, I would like to welcome the President's decision to make Security Council reform one of his priorities and to express my delegation's sincere hope that with his strong leadership, this session of the General Assembly will make meaningful progress towards early reform of the Council, as all of us were mandated to do by world leaders at 2005 World Summit.

Mr. Laggner (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): We would like to thank the Security Council for its annual report (A/64/2), and we welcome its presentation to the General Assembly. The report is an important element in the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly, and it provides the basis for an institutionalized dialogue between those two organs. We also welcome the informal exchange afforded to non-members of the Security Council by the delegations of Uganda, Viet Nam and Austria and, as has already been mentioned, the constructive and valuable discussion between Council members and the group of five small States (S-5). Having said all that, we regret that, as in previous years, the report falls short of our expectations in terms of both substance and procedural aspects.

With regard to substance, we are still waiting for a report that is more analytical and therefore more pertinent for the whole membership. We are aware of the difficulties involved in producing a report that goes beyond a simple listing of the Council's activities and meetings. Nevertheless, we believe that improvement is possible. For example, the report fails to emphasize the linkages between thematic, regional and country-specific issues. The summaries of debates included in the report are often incomplete and do not accurately reflect the discussions in the Council. In particular, there is no analysis of the challenges that the Council faces, of its assessments and of the rationale for its decisions during the reporting period.

One way to improve the substantive content of the report would be to include analytical summaries from the 12 presidencies. Another option could be to introduce the optimal practical approach — the lessons learned — with regard to specific issues on the Council's agenda, as has been repeatedly called for by the S-5. In that context, Switzerland has commissioned a short paper analyzing the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) as a case study of the Council's interaction with a peacekeeping operation. We shall be pleased to make that study available once it is completed.

With regard to procedural matters, there is a need to involve the general membership in a more interactive way, and at an earlier stage, during the process of drafting the Council's annual report. Informal meetings have been held to provide non-members of the Council an opportunity to express their views. That should be done in a more systematic manner, and well before the finalization of the report. Another option to be considered would be the holding of an open debate in the Council at an early stage in the drafting process.

Why do we need more analysis and transparency? Many Member States are major contributors of troops or financing. All Member States have the obligation to implement coercive measures. Implementing such measures without participation in the decision-making process requires, at least, access to transparent information. We owe that to our citizens and to our national legislatures, for we have to explain to them how tax-payers' money is being spent.

With the beginning of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform under an informal General Assembly plenary meeting format, we have now reached a new stage in the consideration of this issue. Our assessment, however, is rather sober. Although we have a new format for the discussions, we have not yet made substantive progress. Positions on enlargement remain, to a large degree, entrenched. Switzerland is convinced that the intermediate model continues to be the only realistic option for breaking the deadlock. Such an approach does not prejudge the final outcome of the reform effort, but it does allow us to take one step forward. In our view, it is therefore high time to start a serious discussion of the concrete parameters of that model. If we are not capable of more flexibility, we will remain stuck in the current deadlock.

Together with its partners in the group of five small countries, Switzerland will continue to focus as a matter of priority on the issue of reforming the working methods of the Security Council. Improving working methods will have to take place, whatever the scenario and whether or not we can agree on an expansion of the Council. We have repeatedly highlighted that point here, as well as in direct discussions with the members of the Security Council.

In that regard, we very much appreciated the invitation by the Japanese Chair of the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions to a very substantive and frank exchange of views with Council members in July. We would welcome an early follow-up in that regard.

Our ideas for improving working methods are contained in the group of five's concept paper, which was circulated in April. Those ideas focus on transparency and access, efficiency and implementation, the rule of law, the use of the veto, peacekeeping operations and accountability and relations with the General Assembly. We hope that the paper will serve as an inspiration for changes in the Council's practices and that it will contribute to a comprehensive resolution on Security Council reform.

The best way to develop working methods is to assess what has worked in the past and why decisions of the Council are often insufficiently implemented. I have already mentioned the study we have commissioned on the Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. We are also supporting a project that is monitoring how Security Council resolution 1325 (2005) is being incorporated into the Council's overall work.

I would like to conclude by underscoring that further improvements in the Council's working methods are in the interest of Council and non-Council members alike. Not only would they ensure more transparency and better involvement by all Member States in the Council's work, they would also serve the Council's interest by conferring greater authority upon its decisions, thereby contributing to strengthening the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Mr. Balé (Congo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, my delegation would like to associate itself with the statements delivered this morning by the Permanent Representatives of Sierra Leone and Egypt, respectively, on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement. I should also like to say that today's debate on the Security Council, and specifically the consideration of the report of that important organ (A/64/2) and of the issue of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Council and related matters, is of the greatest interest to my country.

My delegation commends the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council for submitting its report (A/63/47). As a result of its considerable work, the Group has provided a basis for the intergovernmental negotiating process.

My delegation takes note of the report of the Security Council. We would like to express our gratitude for the efforts made by that organ to maintain international peace and security. The General Assembly's consideration of the report is aimed at responding to the crucial need for an accountable Security Council imbued with a sense of responsibility to the General Assembly, where the entire membership is represented.

The report provides great detail about events, thus giving us a full accounting of the multiplicity and diverse nature of issues under its consideration during the 12-month period from 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that the report's solely factual approach limits the depth of our understanding of the challenges facing the Council as it carries out the mandate conferred upon it by the Charter. In addition, it seems clear that the Council should further improve its early-warning capacity and focus on preventive diplomacy, rather than finding itself forced to react to events after the fact.

The President did well to focus his presidency on the issues of justice, peace and security, which includes making the reform of the United Nations system one of his priorities, especially that of the Security Council. It is also worth mentioning that Security Council reform is at the heart of the overall reform of the United Nations. It is the keystone of that effort.

Three days ago, celebrations were held in Germany to commemorate the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989, the so-called wall of shame. That unforgettable day ushered in a new order in Europe. People sang songs of freedom, welcomed the advent of democracy and decreed the end of the cold war. New States emerged from that new order, which would later add to the universality of the United Nations when they joined the Organization. In doing so, they followed in the footsteps of many African countries, three decades earlier, when they too brought down another wall of shame. From the ashes of the chaos of war emerged a new world in which justice, peace and security for all was to supposed to prevail. That brought us closer than

ever to the aspirations of men and women who, having regained their humanity, broke down another wall of shame. A new order had emerged from the chaos, and that is how our Organization was founded. From its very beginning it announced a dream that has now come true, a universal Organization. Today almost all States of the world are Members of it.

Those historic high points in the life of our Organization should rightly remind us that we do not live in a petrified world. The Security Council cannot shoulder its responsibilities without recognizing this dynamic, reinforced as it is by the emergence of new forces onto the international political scene and whose rightful place there cannot forever be denied. The decision of our leaders at the 2005 World Summit — that the Security Council must be reformed without delay because it constituted the essential element in modernizing the United Nations — reflected this willingness to take our Organization in this direction.

The United Nations, which we wish to see as a living organism, has been asked to evolve, and in order to do that it must adopt a position of transparency, justice and genuine democracy, based on the equal sovereignty of States, because otherwise it will be doomed to a tragic fate of sclerosis and paralysis.

Thus the Security Council, whose reform is the focus of our debate, must face up to the tragic flaw that now characterizes it. We realize that hope for genuine reform collides with national interests and schism in some positions, as we have seen throughout the intergovernmental negotiations that began on 19 February. We believe that we should not seek a mere makeshift, transitional and interim solution; instead, we must move towards genuine reform of this organ in every way and every area. Member States must, in fact, be possessed of a genuine political will to bring about genuine reform of the Security Council, making it more democratic and representative, and beyond that, increasing its transparency, effectiveness and accountability to the Member States.

My delegation does not despair of the possibility of having a Security Council where all members are on an equal footing. But discussion of the issue of the veto has shown that doing away with that discriminatory, anachronistic power, bestowed on the permanent members, is the keystone of the entire edifice of reform. It is on the basis of that reality that Africa, the only region without any permanent seat in this body, is quite rightly asking for two permanent seats. In this way justice should be done, and Africa's legitimate aspirations met with this category of membership.

The areas of the negotiations on the questions of enlarging the category of members, equitable regional representation, relations between the General Assembly and the Council, the working methods of the Council — all of these give us grounds for believing that consensus on them is possible. After that, all that would remain would be for us to devote ourselves to arriving at an agreement on those questions as quickly as possible.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to recall the fact that decision 62/557 remains the main reference document for conducting the intergovernmental negotiations. We also hope that today's debate will usher in a new day shedding new light on the next rounds of negotiations, giving them a new impetus, so that real progress can be made towards genuine reform of this body, the pivot of the United Nations, which will, eventually, become a Security Council that reflects our era.

Mr. Jomaa (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): May I first of all thank the President very much for including the item on reform of the Security Council as one of his top priorities. I assure him of my delegation's firm support for any action you may take in order to bring this process to completion at this session under his presidency.

While we support the statement made on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement, I would also like to express our views on the two items on today's agenda, the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/64/2) and the "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters", by making the following comments:

First, concerning the annual report of the Security Council, I would like to thank the Ambassador of Austria, President of the Council for the current month, for introducing the Council's annual report to the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. For most Member States, particularly those that are not members of the Security Council, the Assembly's consideration of the Council's annual report is the only opportunity they have for evaluating the work of the Council in depth

and identifying what must be done to improve its working methods.

This year, once again, the report of the Security Council is a compendium of decisions and resolutions adopted and a somewhat factual account of that body's work. We are thus still far from the recommendations made by the Member States, which have asked for an analytical annual report. In the same spirit, I would also recall that the General Assembly had suggested to the Council that it periodically submit special thematic reports on issues of international interest. So far, no such reports have been submitted.

As to how the Council operates, over the past year it has held a significant number of thematic debates in which a larger number of States have participated. In this regard, however, it would still be useful to strengthen the regular consultation mechanisms between the presidencies of the various United Nations bodies, in order to avoid any overlapping or encroachment on the respective competences of those organs when such thematic debates are held.

We acknowledge the considerable amount of work accomplished by the Security Council during the period covered by the report and particularly regarding hotbeds of tension in Africa and other parts of the world. We also take note of visits to the field by Council members in order to better grasp the situations affecting international peace and security and requiring urgent action by the Council. The report shows that the Council has made determined efforts to tackle a large number of conflicts around the world. This naturally enhances its authority and role in maintaining international peace and security.

I would, however, point out that the Council's efforts are far below what we hoped for in the Middle East. Frustration over the Council's inability to become more involved in settling the Palestinian question and in shouldering its responsibilities in this area poses a serious threat to the region and to the authority of the Council itself. We believe strongly that there is still much to be done to get the Council to function in a more transparent manner, ensure access to information for all delegations, particularly those with items on the Council's agenda.

Secondly, may I turn to the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. In dealing with this issue, allow me first to pay tribute to the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, for his contribution to the matter before us today. We also note the launching of intergovernmental negotiations based on proposals by Member States on the question of the equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. These were begun in an open, inclusive and transparent manner in order to arrive at a solution that would garner the widest possible support among Member States.

I would like to warmly thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin for the manner in which he has conducted the intergovernmental negotiations, and I assure him of our full cooperation in that process. Pending the resumption of the negotiations, I would like to offer the following comments.

The Security Council should reflect the political and economic realities of the world of today. It should have the legitimacy it needs to act on behalf of the international community in discharging the mandate assigned it by the Charter. My delegation believes that the purpose of any reform of the Council should be to strengthen equitable representation within that organ, its credibility and its effectiveness. Those goals are attainable only if the Council is enlarged, particularly to include developing countries. Likewise, the size of a restructured Council should reflect all the sensibilities of the international community.

In that context, Tunisia still strongly supports the position of the African Union, as reflected in the African consensus on the reform of the Security Council. We believe it is time to rectify the fact Africa has never had any permanent presence in the Council. We will support any formula that gives developing countries in general and Africa in particular their rightful place in the Council.

We think that the Security Council, if it is to continue enjoying the trust of States and world public opinion, must show that it is able to effectively tackle the most difficult issues, and it must also become more representative of the international community as a whole and reflect the realities of the world today.

Mr. Dos Santos (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by extending the thanks of the delegation of Paraguay to Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, Permanent Representative of Austria, for his introduction of the annual report of the Security Council (A/64/2) in his capacity as the President of the Security Council. We commend the Council's goodwill

in intending to present a report that responds to the demands of the great majority of the Members of our Organization, making it a useful and substantive document that benefits us all.

On the subject of agenda item 119, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Father Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, for his work in connection with the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. Our thanks also go to Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for his excellent work in overseeing the meetings.

The Government of Paraguay is of the view that the reform the Security Council is an essential element in strengthening the Organization. For this reason, we support prompt reform and pledge our efforts and cooperation to fulfil the mandate of the 2005 World Summit.

In establishing, in resolution 48/26, an open-ended working group to consider the aspects of the question of increasing the membership of the Security Council and other, related matters and then in adopting decision 62/557, the Member States took an important step that committed them to continuing their endeavours to achieve a Council that is more equitable, more democratic and more fully consistent with current international realities.

The Republic of Paraguay reaffirms its unshakable commitment to multilateralism, which is based on the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter. We know that concentration saps the collective effort that all members of the Organization are committed to. That is why we continue to believe that the maintenance of international peace and security should be founded on collective well-being and not on individual and transitory interests. We also cannot believe that international security is divorced from the issues of development and respect for human rights. We declare those issues to be interdependent, and it is on their positive interaction that the harmonious coexistence and material and cultural progress of our peoples will depend.

We are following with interest the negotiation process for the expansion of the Security Council. We believe expansion should be accompanied by reform of the Council's working methods and that the Council should have permanent rules of procedure instead of the provisional rules that it has had since its creation. The legitimacy of the Council's decisions will be a function of the degree of its democracy, representativeness and participatory nature.

Paraguay reiterates, as is stated in the Charter, that that the primary function of the Council is the maintenance of international peace and security. We also wish to express concern regarding the growing extension of the competencies of the Security Council to other topics that have their own natural forums and that may in some way undermine the authority of the General Assembly and of other bodies in the Organization.

The increase in the number of members of the Security Council should be consistent with the geographical and equitable distribution among its members, primarily the sovereign equality of States, as laid out on Article 23 of the Charter.

With regard to the veto, Paraguay supports its gradual elimination and the gradual restriction of its application to Chapter VII.

We believe that there must be effective communication between the Security Council and the General Assembly. The Assembly is the most representative and democratic body of the United Nations system. We therefore believe that is necessary to fully carry out meetings between the President of the Assembly and the President of the Council. We must achieve a democratic and transparent body.

We would like to see the Council, of which we have been a member only in 1967 and 1968, become more representative, inclusive and democratic. We are confident that the Council will adapt to the new needs of our century and to the current number of Member States in order to ensure that it is more representative, efficient and legitimate and that its decisions are implemented.

Mr. Nhleko (Swaziland): At the outset, my delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Sierra Leone, as Chair of the Committee of Ten, on behalf of the African Group and the statement by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/64/PV.43).

I have the honour to address the plenary of the General Assembly on agenda item 119, "Question of the equitable representation on and increase in the

membership of the Security Council and related matters", and to reflect on the report of the Chairperson of the Working Group as contained in document A/63/47.

I thank the Chairperson for his report. My delegation appreciates the activism of Member States in the intergovernmental negotiations throughout the sixty-third session. The informal discussions under the stewardship of His Excellency Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan have been thought-provoking and forthright. I also thank Ambassador Tanin for his relentlessness and vision in guiding the proceedings with the utmost dedication and impartiality.

The negotiations on Security Council reform have already taken 15 years, and the Open-ended Working Group established at the very beginning has convened meeting after meeting with few textual results. That indicates a laggard commitment to the progress that our people yearn to see. Whether or not that has been by design or default remains to be seen. It is discernible to many that the events and actions following 1945 were compatible with and necessary for that era. Today, as the world has evolved, the demands and realities of the modern-day United Nations, representing a holistic citizenry, need to be taken into account. The persistent calls for the reform of the Security Council are therefore not misplaced. My delegation has a duty to add its voice to this call, with unfailing resolve.

The plight of Africa does not need to be repeated. As the only continent without a seat in the permanent category, the frustration felt from the Cape to Cairo is well founded. What is more, a substantial part of the Council's agenda is focused on Africa. The Kingdom of Swaziland is convinced that Africa has valuable insight into the peace and security landscape of the continent. The ad hoc approach taken to engaging with Africa on its own problems is like allowing the tail to wag the dog. It is not an issue of control, but of factual discourse, and employing cooperative efforts based on an informed point of view would considerably improve the outputs that we seek to accomplish.

The Ezulwini Consensus is succinct in its call for at least two permanent seats for Africa. Whether or not they come with the veto power is a point for further reflection, depending on the willingness or unwillingness of negotiating partners to yield on the veto. The Kingdom of Swaziland therefore advocates the curtailment of the veto, irrespective of whether it is extended to new members.

My delegation laments the direction that the intergovernmental negotiations are taking. The chair of the negotiations, Ambassador Tanin, stressed the need for flexibility from all parties. Regrettably, as we convene today there is no indication of a possible trade-off. Even though there is a near convergence of views among some parties in the intergovernmental negotiations on issues that touch on working methods and the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, there is no initiative and methodology to synchronize those views and work on a concrete trade-off that will quickly move the process to a more advanced level.

My delegation does not see those matters as problem areas, considering the gravity of other negotiating points such as the categories of membership. As a matter of principle, my delegation is not trying to give certain clusters preferred consideration ahead of others, but rather to underscore the importance of working expeditiously and moving swiftly. It does not serve the interests of Africa to procrastinate.

During the latter stage of the intergovernmental negotiations, the intermediary approach arose as a preferred option with respect to categories of membership. My delegation rejected it, as we would again even today. We also militated against its undue advancement by the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations for the simple reason that it does not a reflect what the entire membership wants the negotiations to narrow down to. That is beside the point that it prejudices the well-known position of Africa, a 53-member collective.

It is our hope that all positions will be given complete scrutiny on a case-by-case basis. My delegation has always supported the piecemeal approach that was first advanced by the delegation of Zambia. However, the intermediary approach has been generally rejected, not because it cannot be viable but only because of its unknown content. It has developed a negative complex whereby delegations, including mine, view it as a tool to bamboozle the membership and derail discussion of real reform. That is compounded by the broad unwillingness to explain the approach further. It is well known that the fragmented nature of the intermediary approach is a sticky area

that makes us grow even more apprehensive. My delegation does not want to dwell on an approach that seeks to perpetuate the very injustice we all desire to subdue.

The issue of regional representation has caused many delegations to make assertions on unfounded formulations. Some feel it unjustly advances the notion of a collective or regional seat and consequently violates the Charter of the United Nations. As regional representation is pivotally essential to the African position, we want to remind delegations about the essence of reform. Reform entails amendment and creation. What is being amended and created is an issue of discussion among Members. We wish to make it clear that Africa does not want a regional seat. On the contrary, a seat is purely national and sovereign, but the only difference is that Africa would have the say in the determination to elect the nation to occupy such a seat. How that seat is used to effectively solve pertinent problems that affect Africa and the rest of the world is an African affair. The understanding that Africa wants to rule en masse in the Security Council is misguided and should be discouraged.

We encourage other African delegations to make efforts to explain what regional representation means for Africa in order to paint an accurate picture. Naysayers will have little or no option to disparage an honestly motivated position that responds to the core of many injustices created by the course of history. My delegation is perturbed by the consistent misjudgement by the very partners who are instrumental in the progress of the negotiation process. We want a process whereby a pound of flesh must be given where and when it is due, without further impediment. I should like to appeal to the membership to carry the process forward and negotiate robustly so that we can have closure on this issue.

Institutions constantly undergo changes; they are constructed and reconstructed, with adaptation strategies modelled on the changing times, geopolitical realities and changes in the mindsets that govern the world. Those multifarious approaches to governance demand a newly imagined international discourse that takes into account the assortment of ideas that can offer alternatives to static ascendancy. It is high time that that value be learned. We are no longer in the world of the Middle Ages. The Kingdom of Swaziland wishes to encourage the Assembly President to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor and pursue this matter with vigour.

Mrs. Waffa-Ogoo (Gambia): The Gambia aligns itself with the statements made by His Excellency Mr. Shekou M. Touray, Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone and Coordinator of the Committee of Ten, and by His Excellency Mr. Maged A. Abdelaziz, Permanent Representative of Egypt, on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively. My delegation welcomes the opportunity to take part in this joint debate on agenda item 9, “Report of the Security Council”, and agenda item 119, “Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters”.

It is no secret that the Council has had many regional situations on its agenda, the bulk of which relate to Africa. We have also witnessed greater engagement of the United Nations Security Council and the African Union (AU), especially in the expeditious implementation of the United Nations-AU ten-year capacity-building programme. We would like to see more meaningful cooperation between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, as they both grapple with finding lasting solutions to conflicts in Africa. African efforts in the maintenance of international peace and security ought to be supported, especially in those situations where individual African countries have already contributed to such efforts or are willing to do so.

My delegation is aware of the fact that the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, is a perennial item on the agenda of the Council. We appreciate the attention that this item receives from Council members every month. What is worrying, however, is that despite all the attention given to that item over many decades, the conflict in the Middle East continues to defy solution. For the Palestinians, the unending settlement activity by Israel and the attendant land grabbing through fencing constitutes the greatest threat to the viability of a two-State solution. What is equally worrying is the Council’s failure to insist on respect for its numerous resolutions on the situation. We urge the Council, therefore, to see to the implementation of its longstanding resolutions on the Palestinian question.

In the protracted debate on the reform of the Security Council, among the issues that enjoy general

agreement among most Member States are the relations between the Security Council and the General Assembly and the improvement of the Council's working methods. There are, however, a few among us who subscribe to the school of thought that reforming the Council's working methods is best left to the Council itself.

The whole question of improvement of the working methods of the Council is tied in with the broader question of Security Council reform. In addition to the plethora of proposals advanced so far in that regard, the Council itself should continue to engage in further introspection, with a view to finding more innovative ways to engage the larger membership of the United Nations. Apart from making the Council's decision-making process more transparent, it would also enhance the legitimacy of its decisions.

In the continuum of reforms to be undertaken by the United Nations, that of the Security Council still remains elusive. In Africa, our position on agenda item 119 on equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, is well known. In fact, before the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration, the 1997 Harare Declaration on the reform of the Security Council flagged, among other issues, the need to periodically review the structure and functioning of the Security Council in order to make it more responsive to the challenges of a dynamic international community, particularly in the domain of peace and security.

However, we continue to find the delay in reaching a final solution untenable. My delegation would like to see a resumption of the intergovernmental negotiations in the informal plenary of the General Assembly leading to intergovernmental negotiations based on concrete proposals without undue delay. It is our hope that the issues discussed in the last round of negotiations will be tackled in such a way as to lead to the adoption of a satisfactory decision during this session.

Let me conclude by extending my delegation's gratitude to the President at the sixty-third session, His Excellency Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, for the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council, in document A/63/47, pursuant to resolution 62/557.

We also commend the President of the current session, His Excellency Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, for making reform of the Security Council one of the priorities of his presidency. As we look forward to the resumption of the intergovernmental negotiations, my delegation wishes to pledge its continued cooperation and support to Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan, who has once again graciously agreed to chair the negotiations on behalf of the President of the General Assembly.

Mr. AlSanad (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of my country's delegation, I wish to convey our thanks and appreciation to the President of the Security Council for this month, His Excellency Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Permanent Representative of Austria, for presenting the Council's report to the General Assembly. We thank him for the report and take note of its assertion that the previous year has witnessed significant activity in terms of the volume of the Council's work.

We support the statement of the representative of Egypt on behalf of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement. We also congratulate the newly elected non-permanent members of the Council for the period 2010-2011: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Lebanon and Nigeria.

The agenda item on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters is considered one of the most important items on the agenda of the General Assembly. However, the question of the reform of the Security Council is stuck in its tracks, despite the fact that more than 15 years have elapsed since the General Assembly adopted a resolution establishing an open-ended working group to consider the issue of equitable representation on and increase in the Council's membership. Despite the agreement of Member States on the basis for effecting change and reform, the Working Group has not, however, been able to reach an agreement until now, on the substance of the required change.

However, we cannot ignore the fact that progress has been made in the negotiations of the Working Group, particularly concerning the working methods of the Council. Now, there is almost a general consensus on many of the measures and proposals to be introduced. We cannot but commend this improvement. In this regard, we welcome the overall agreement to

commence intergovernmental negotiations in an informal plenary meeting of the General Assembly during the sixty-third session and this current session, with the aim of realizing many of the ideas that have been the subject of numerous discussions over the years. We congratulate Ambassador Zahir Tanin, the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, for presiding over the informal consultations during the sixty-third and sixty-fourth sessions of the General Assembly. We hope that consensus can be reached in order to strengthen the role of the Security Council and its effectiveness. We also convey our thanks to the Italian Government for hosting the special ministerial meeting to consider the matter of the reform of the Security Council last February in Rome. The meeting laid out broad outlines, which led to the convening of the third round of informal intergovernmental consultations, which lasted from 1 to 3 September 2009, at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

There is no doubt that an agreement on any of the issues related to the matter of expanding and reforming the Security Council — whether that agreement comes during the phase of consultations or negotiations between Governments — must be a general agreement that ensures real reform of the Council and that wins wide approval, thus facilitating its implementation. Reform measures should stress the need for transparency and good will and the avoidance of individual manoeuvres that seek to promote narrow self interests. The purpose of membership in the Security Council is to serve international peace and security, and membership carries burdens and responsibilities on an international scale. Members of the Security Council must not seek to achieve political gains or give privileges to specific countries or geographical groupings. The purpose of the Security Council is much higher and nobler than that; it is to spread peace, stability and security all over the world.

The position of the State of Kuwait vis-à-vis the issue of reform of the Security Council emanates from the following principled positions. The State of Kuwait strongly supports the reform and reinvigoration of all of the United Nations bodies and organs, especially the Security Council, to enable it to carry out its function as mandated by the Charter, which is the maintenance of international peace and security. Any change in the composition of the Council must not reduce its capability and effectiveness in taking decisions to confront international threats and dangers but rather must lend more legitimacy and credibility to the Council's resolutions.

Concerning the reform and improvement of the Council's working methods and its relations with other United Nations bodies, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, we support all the proposals aiming to lend more transparency and clarity to the work of the Council, including the easy flow of information to and from the Member States of the United Nations. We also support the need to totally respect the functions and the competence of the other main bodies, especially the General Assembly, and to define the role of the Council in considering the issues that threaten international peace and security.

We stress the importance of codifying the measures taken by the Security Council to improve its working methods without waiting for agreement on other issues such as the size and composition of the Council and the decision-making process, especially since the codification of those measures will not necessarily lead to any amendments to the Charter. We also believe that the time has come for the Council to adopt a permanent list of working methods, to improve and codify its measures and working methods.

We also support the maintenance of the mechanism of electing the non-permanent members of the Council in accordance with Article 23, paragraph 2, of the United Nations Charter. This allows a better chance to small States like ours to become members of the Council and participate in its work, especially in light of the fact that six and a half decades after the establishment of the United Nations almost one fourth of the membership has not attained membership in the Council.

As concerns the question of the power of veto, there must be checks and controls for the use of the veto. It should be restricted to matters that fall under Chapter VII of the Charter. If we increase the number of non-permanent seats, they should be distributed to regional groups, taking into account the great increase in the number of Asian countries.

Finally, we reaffirm our support for all efforts leading to consolidating the performance of the Security Council, and we hope that an agreement on a formulation, satisfactory to all sides, will be reached, ensuring that the Council will carry out its functions as provided by the Charter, without any obstacles.

Mr. Park In-kook (Republic of Korea): I would like to begin by thanking the President of the Assembly for organizing this joint debate. My special appreciation also extends to the current President of the Security Council, Ambassador Mayr-Harting of Austria, for introducing the report of the Security Council (A/64/2). My delegation is grateful for the hard work that went into compiling this report, especially by Uganda, President of the Security Council for the month of July. The Council had a particularly heavy workload during the period covered by the report, and we greatly appreciate the work carried out by the Council to deal with a wide variety of multifaceted challenges in all corners of the globe.

I would like to address agenda item 119, which we believe to be of critical significance in strengthening the overall legitimacy of the Council so that it can continue to discharge its duties effectively. During the past year, some important milestones were erected in the ongoing discussion to reform the Council. Most notably, the historic launch of intergovernmental negotiations in February of this year kick-started three rounds of negotiations, which gave Member States ample opportunity to examine all aspects of the reform process and to exchange views under the committed leadership of Ambassador Tanin, the Chair of the negotiations.

Through the three rounds of negotiations, Member States looked closely at the five key issues laid out in General Assembly decision 62/557, namely, category, the veto power, regional representation, size and working methods, as well as the Council's relationship with the General Assembly. From those intense and sometimes heated discussions there emerged an understanding that all of those issues are closely interconnected and that it would be virtually impossible to take them apart arbitrarily, no matter how badly all Member States wanted to conclude a reform agreement. Hence, the requirement of comprehensiveness of any reform package became abundantly clear.

With regard to the quality of exchanges that took place within the three rounds, my delegation was pleased with the insights shared by many delegations, and we feel that they have contributed to the discussions in a meaningful and positive manner. A frank exchange of views occurred, and each delegation made constructive use of the meetings over the course of the year to state their positions. We are, however, compelled to express our disappointment that too little substantive progress was actually made in terms of the positions of major groups.

The increasing interest in and willingness to consider the intermediary solution as a realistic compromise to the deadlock was, however, certainly encouraging. That trend was especially notable toward the end of the second and third rounds, when a separate session was devoted to the exploration of intermediary approaches, in response to requests by Member States who felt that that option deserved a more focused scrutiny. We certainly hope that that avenue will be further explored in the next stage of our negotiations.

My delegation continues to believe that in pursuing the reform of the Council we should above all strive to strengthen the democratic underpinnings of the Council and enhance its larger accountability to the membership. In that connection, we support periodic elections, precisely because they offer the best way to ensure accountability. Indeed, the entire United Nations system is built upon a system of accountability, as we can witness in the myriad of elections that take place within the various organs of the United Nations on a regular basis. The Security Council should not and cannot be an exception to that overarching principle. The prospect of having their performance scrutinized and validated by the membership through a periodic election is naturally the most important incentive for the members of the Council to continually improve the quality of their work. Furthermore, it is the entire membership that will benefit from this approach.

Flexibility and adaptability are also crucial requirements for a Security Council that we envisage to remain relevant and sustainable in the decades to come. Just as it would be impossible to capture all eternity in a mere snapshot, it would be a mistake to assume that a rapidly changing world will be served by a rigidly structured Security Council where those lucky enough to make it through the entryway once will remain there perpetually. Again, a system like that would go against the very values enshrined in the Charter.

In this regard, my delegation contends that an increase in the number of elected seats will help us to meet the goal of granting equitable access to all qualified Member States, large or small, that wish to serve on the Council. The right to contribute to the

maintenance of peace and security should not be a privilege of the chosen few. We believe that every Member State has something to offer to enrich the work of the Council, and the opportunity to do so should not be limited outright by a static structure that the world continues to revolve around.

Promoting balanced representation among the regional groups on the Council, especially those historically underrepresented, is another important objective of the reform process. This balance would be best achieved by freeing up as many elected seats as practicable for the regional groups to occupy in an equitable and democratic manner.

We also need to be mindful that an integral part of reforming the Security Council is improving its working methods. To that end, we welcome the initiatives that have been put forward to enhance the transparency, accountability, efficiency and inclusiveness of the Council's work, and believe that the increase in the number of open meetings conducted during the period covered in the report attests to the commitment of the Council in this respect. We continue to support the idea that, wherever possible, we should try to implement the improvements in working methods as an early harvest, not to be held hostage by the lag in the entire reform process.

As we look back on the progress achieved thus far, we face the daunting task of charting a forward-looking course for the future of reform. Therefore, we look to the President of the General Assembly, as well as to the guidance of the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, Ambassador Tanin, in this respect. We have the utmost confidence that the President can steer us down a path that is both equitable and progress-oriented.

At the same time, we stress the importance of modalities that will unite rather than divide the membership and allow the political will of the Member States to come together for timely reform. If any reform is to be successful, it simply must have the support of an overwhelming majority of the membership.

I would like to conclude by reassuring the President and the Chair of my delegation's full support and commitment to working with them for progress as we embark on a new phase of work on this significant issue.

Mrs. Miculescu (Romania): At the outset, I would like to express my delegation's appreciation for the convening of this meeting. I would also like to express our gratitude to Ambassador Mayr-Harting for energetically introducing the report of the Security Council (A/64/2); to Ambassador Rugunda for his hard work in putting together the report, with the instrumental help of the Secretariat; and to all of the members of the Security Council, whose intense daily activities are described in this valuable document. It is commendable that last year's initiative of Viet Nam to convene an informal meeting with the Member States to exchange views on the report was also implemented this year. We hope to see it turned into a tradition.

As a general assessment of the yearly report, Romania wholeheartedly welcomes the trend in increasing the openness and transparency of the Security Council and its work by multiplying the number of open debates and briefings held. Such events give all the States Members of the United Nations to come together more closely and even to contribute political and intellectual inputs on issues of utmost importance with respect to what the Charter ranks as the first among the Organization's purposes — the maintenance of international peace and security. We commend and encourage this trend, for it is beneficial to the entire membership.

In discharging its mandate entrusted by the Charter, the Security Council coped with a very busy agenda in this reporting period, which included field missions to Afghanistan, Africa and Haiti, as well as a strong engagement in a plethora of demanding situations around the world, including the Middle East, Iraq, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Nepal, to mention just a few. At the same time, we must not lose sight of the fact that there were instances, such as the situation in Georgia, when the Security Council had difficulties in reacting adequately to dispel the tensions. Although the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia was not extended, the Security Council's attention to the situation that arose after the conflict in August 2008 should not dissipate. It is extremely important that the Council continue to monitor the file and support United Nations involvement in the international discussions on this matter, as the situation clearly still bears relevant consequences for regional and international peace and security.

We praise the close attention paid by the Security Council not only to specific crises, such as the those I mentioned earlier, but also to thematic debates of comprehensive relevance, such as the protection of civilians in armed conflicts, children and armed conflict, women and peace and security, peacebuilding and peacekeeping. With reference to the latter, let me stress our view that peacekeeping is one clear example where multilateralism can achieve success. The British and French non-paper presented earlier this year and the Secretariat's New Horizon document are two valuable documents that stand out as means for strengthening the engagement between troop-contributing countries (TCCs), the Secretariat and the Security Council. We share the conviction that a final document would boost both the effectiveness and the transparency of the triangular cooperation among the Security Council, TCCs and the Secretariat, as well as the operational ability of United Nations peacekeeping troops deployed on the ground.

My delegation is of the view that combating terrorism ranks high on the Security Council's agenda, bearing in mind that this scourge knows no boundaries and needs a global response. In this respect, we commend the swift reaction of the Security Council whenever terrorist attacks have occurred, including in Afghanistan, India, Iraq, Lebanon or Pakistan. Against this background, it is noteworthy to recall the intense activity carried out by the Security Council Committees established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001) and 1540 (2004). My country welcomes the trend towards a more coherent and integrated approach shown by these Committees in fulfilling their mandates.

As a country that, during its term on the Security Council in 2004 and 2005, had a profound interest and invested a great deal of energy in deepening United Nations cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, Romania is pleased to note that, over the reporting period, the Security Council was very active on this matter. We encourage it to continue to be so. Several situations that arose in the past year showcased that regional actors have a valuable, unique contribution to make to security and stability matters pertaining to their region, and the United Nations should certainly capitalize on that.

I would like to make a final point concerning this agenda item. No doubt, the report has provided pundits with a snapshot about the heavy workload carried by the Security Council. Nevertheless, as a public document to which any interested person could gain access, the report falls short of being sufficiently explanatory. If it had been more analytical, it could have given everyone a high-definition picture of the tremendous efforts and energy invested by the Security Council in finding viable solutions to complicated crises. Such a picture is essential if we are to ensure the constant support of public opinion in our countries for the values and goals promoted by the United Nations.

Let me now turn to the second agenda item under consideration today — Security Council reform. I would like to express my delegation's great appreciation for the decision of Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki to include this topic of paramount importance among the priorities of his mandate at the helm of the General Assembly, as well as for his reappointment of Ambassador Zahir Tanin as facilitator of the intergovernmental negotiations. His elegant mastery and efficient stewardship cleared the atmosphere of the fatigue and immobility that had clouded the beginning of those negotiations. I hope that other members share that point of view. We admire the resolve and perseverance that he has constantly displayed, and I want to assure the Assembly that he can certainly count on Romania's support in pushing the Security Council reform process forward.

As we have always stated, Romania is among the supporters of meaningful reform of the Security Council, for that principal United Nations organ should better reflect the political realities of the current international arena. In that respect, we stress the need to improve the Council's working methods, decision-making mechanisms and transparency, in accordance with the strong desire of all Member States, as expressed during today's discussion.

As I have mentioned many times before, in order to be qualitatively meaningful and to have a sound political foundation, reform should be aimed at expanding both existing membership categories. At the same time, we must not lose sight of the fact that only reform based on equitable geographic representation could garner the full confidence of all Member States that they would receive fair treatment from the Organization. That is why we have always believed and continue to believe that the requests for better representation in the Security Council put forward by the Eastern European Group — which is asking for at

least one additional non-permanent seat — as well as by the Latin American and Caribbean, African and Asian groups, are fully legitimate.

We are of the view that the size of the enlargement should not exceed 10 seats. We believe that the future size of the Security Council should be established according to the following parameters: the equitable geographical distribution of seats, the desire to preserve and even strengthen the effectiveness of the Council, and the need of aspiring members to prove that they have the capacity to assist the United Nations in fulfilling its goals and purposes.

The discussion we had during the third round of negotiations revealed the clear interest of many delegations in determining the feasibility of an intermediate or interim formula. My delegation considers that we should continue to explore the merits of such a formula if it could help us to advance reform.

In conclusion, I wish to recall that, at the summit to be held in September 2010, we will have to report on the progress of Security Council reform, since we were given a specific mandate in that regard in 2005 by our heads of State and Government. Therefore, my delegation looks forward to receiving a timetable and, eventually, a document for the next round of negotiations, as we are eager to have them start sooner rather than later. We must capitalize on the undeniable support for Security Council reform that emerged during the heated debates that we had during the first three rounds of negotiations.

Finally, let me express our confidence that, in all these endeavours, no challenge is too great for our nations if we remain united. No danger is strong enough to defeat us if we marshal our wisdom and our capacities.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.