United Nations A/65/PV.50

General Assembly

Sixty-fifth session

Official Records

50th plenary meeting
Friday, 12 November 2010, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Deiss . . . . . (Switzerland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda items 29 and 119 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/65/2)

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

Mr. Khalfallah (Tunisia): At the outset, allow me to convey to you, Mr. President, my delegation's appreciation for including the item pertaining to the reform of the Security Council on your list of priorities during the current session of the General Assembly. Rest assured that my delegation will spare no effort to help move forward any action aimed at securing a positive outcome to that process. Tunisia also aligns itself with the statements made yesterday on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group.

First of all, with regard to the report of the Security Council (A/65/2), I would like to thank His Excellency the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland for presenting this year's Council report. For the majority of Member States, in particular those that are not members of the Council, the review of that document by the General Assembly is the only occasion to assess the Council's activities in depth and to identify measures worth taking to improve its methods of work.

My delegation is of the view that there are indeed improvements that could be agreed upon regarding the preparation of the report and that it is high time we gave up the practice of establishing a compilation of adopted decisions and resolutions, along with the rather factual description of the Council's work. That will undoubtedly move us closer to the recommendations made by Member States in favour of a more analytical report. In the same vein, the General Assembly still expects to see special thematic reports, to be submitted to it periodically by the Security Council, mainly on issues of international interest.

My delegation recognizes the sizeable workload undertaken by the Security Council during the period of time covered by the report, particularly as regards regions facing tensions and instability, whether in Africa or in other parts of the world. We also take note of the field visits by members of the Security Council, which give them a first-hand assessment of situations that affect international peace and security and need urgent action by the Council. The report clearly shows that the Council acted with determination in dealing with a large number of conflicts around the world. That will certainly confirm the Council's authority in maintaining international peace and security.

However, the Council's efforts continue to fall short of our expectations when it comes to the situation in the Middle East. The frustration caused by the inability of the Council to get further involved in solving the Palestinian issue and honouring its responsibility in that regard does not help to remove that threat, which looms over the region and damages the authority of the Council itself.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

We are convinced that there remains a long way to go to make the Council's work more transparent, which would ensure all delegations a wider access to information, particularly those delegations that have national items inscribed on the Council's agenda.

With regard to the reform of the Security Council, my delegation commends the new stage in the process of intergovernmental negotiations based on Member States' proposals, which is organized in an open, inclusive and transparent manner and the aim of which is to identify an outcome that enjoys the widest political agreement among Member States. I would like to express my delegation's appreciation and thanks to His Excellency the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan for so ably conducting the negotiations and for the documents that he and his team have submitted to us.

My delegation believes that the Council must reflect the political and economic reality of today's world. The Council must be equipped with the necessary legitimacy in order to act on behalf of the international community as a whole, while fulfilling its mandate in conformity with the United Nations Charter. Also, my delegation believes that the final aim of any reform should be to strengthen equitable representation within the Council, and, hence, its credibility and efficiency. Those objectives can only be achieved through the Council's enlargement, notably, in favour of developing countries.

In that context, Tunisia firmly supports the African Union's common position, as expressed in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. We are convinced that it is high time for the current situation to be corrected, as the African continent has been prevented from occupying a well-deserved seat in the Council. We will support any proposal that gives developing countries, particularly from Africa, the place in the Security Council that is theirs.

In conclusion, we believe that for the Security Council to continue enjoying the trust of all Member States and world public opinion, it has to demonstrate its efficiency in tackling the most difficult issues and has, equally, to become more representative of the international community.

Mr. Kit (Malaysia): Allow me at the outset to align my delegation with the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, of which Malaysia is a member.

Malaysia takes this opportunity to extend its appreciation to the Security Council for convening a special meeting of the Council simply to discuss, and subsequently adopt, the draft report of the Council to the General Assembly, which we now have before us as document A/65/2. We note, however, that the number of meetings that the Security Council held in this past reporting period has decreased to 191 meetings from 228 meetings in the previous year, and that compared to the 205 public meetings in the previous year, only 168 meetings were open this past year to non-Council members. In terms of statistics, that represents a 2 per cent drop in the ratio of public meetings to total meetings held by the Council, meaning that, this past year, the Council held more closed meetings than it did in the previous year.

As we well know, the Council will take decisions regardless of whether an open meeting or a closed meeting has been held. However, for those Member States who are not on the Council, an open debate allows our views also to be aired and heard and hopefully taken into account in the decision-making process that follows. Thus, for the sake of inclusiveness, if not transparency, more public meetings should be held by the 15-member Council.

Malaysia would also like to express its appreciation to the past presidencies for the Council that have held briefings for interested Member States on the programme of work of the Council. Those briefings have been insightful and very much welcomed, as they allow other Member States the opportunity to obtain clarification regarding the preoccupations of the Council for that particular month. We hope that such briefings will be a permanent fixture in the working methods of the Council, rather than just a practice carried out at the discretion of the President of the Council.

On 22 April 2010, under the presidency of Japan, the Security Council held an open debate on the implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council contained in document S/2006/507, in which Malaysia participated (see S/PV.6300). We requested then that the transcripts of the closed-door briefings by the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General to the Council be made available to Member States in the interest of disseminating information. Today, we renew that call, and hope that, in time, the briefings by the Secretariat to the Council will become more transparent to Member States

outside the Council. After all, Article 24 empowers the Council to act on Member States' behalf, and it logically follows therefore that the principal actors for whom the agent acts must be kept within the information loop.

Malaysia remembers a time when the Secretariat provided daily briefings to Council members to update the Council on what was happening around the world in terms of international peace and security. We understand that that practice has now been largely discontinued. Even though the advent of information technology means that members of the Council can easily find out for themselves what the threats to international peace and security of the day are, alerts provided by the Secretariat could still prove to be invaluable in drawing the attention of the Council to potential problem hotspots. Therefore, Malaysia would suggest that the morning briefings and the discussions that used to follow them be reinstated.

When Member States agreed, at the end of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, to establish intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, Malaysia was one of the countries that rejoiced about this progressive step forward. The discussions and deliberations on Security Council reform were moved a step up, from 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 to the informal plenary of the General Assembly. It seemed, at the time, that we were getting somewhere in the 14-year discourse.

Today, after two years of negotiating in the intergovernmental negotiations, we seem to have reached an impasse. We thank the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Joseph Deiss, for his initiative in convening an informal meeting of the General Assembly to discuss the way forward in the negotiations on Security Council reform. We also thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin for keeping at the process, displaying infinite patience with the way the process has been moving and maintaining a certain level of calmness even under the most intense of pressures.

This past year, Member States have been involved in discussing the composite text, which is essentially a compilation of all the various viewpoints regarding Security Council enlargement and modalities. We have not been negotiating the text, we have simply been reiterating the same positions over and over again. This is the United Nations, where resolutions are negotiated all the time. Why should the reform of the Council be any different from the normal negotiation process, where elimination and compromise are key? The United Nations Charter is a man-made document. We should therefore be able to come to an agreement to change it for the better when it threatens to make the Organization irrelevant and expendable.

Enough is enough. We need to stop this game of rhetoric that we have been drawn into in negotiating the question of equitable geographical representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. The last time that we enlarged the Security Council, in 1965, there were 117 members of the United Nations. Today, we are looking at a family of 192, representing a 64 per cent increase in the total membership from 45 years ago, and yet the Security Council has not undergone the same transformation as the General Assembly.

The African continent, which counts 53 nations within its regional grouping, remains unrepresented within the permanent membership of the Security Council. The United Nations was meant to correct injustice, not propagate it. If that is so, then the steps towards ensuring justice must begin at home, here at United Nations Headquarters, by enlarging the Council to reflect the realities of the day, rather than the glory of history. Democracy must begin with us, which means that no nation should be able to gainsay the express will of the majority. There should be a practice of one country, one vote, the way democracy was meant to be.

As we turn the page into the second decade of this new millennium, we need to display more political will and strength to ensure that the United Nations can change with the times. We need to be more proactive, and we need to be more inclusive. My delegation remains committed to following any road that will lead us to progress in this fight for equality and justice. We know we are not alone in this endeavour.

Ms. Nyamudeza (Zimbabwe): We welcome the opportunity to participate in this joint debate. My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group and of the

representatives of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

In the recent past, the Security Council has witnessed a substantial increase in the range of issues brought before it for its consideration. My delegation welcomes the role of the Council in the resolution of conflicts in the world, particularly in Africa. In that regard, we support the efforts of the Council to enhance its partnership with the African Union. Regional organizations, including the African Union, are increasingly becoming essential building blocks in global security systems. We share the view that regional organizations are better placed to deal with peace and security challenges in their respective regions and should therefore be supported and not undermined. That should be translated into practice and not simply remain easy prose.

The Charter of the United Nations places a significant responsibility on the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. That responsibility gives the Council a far-reaching impact on the lives of many people all over the world. The ability of the Council to act fairly, effectively and responsibly will provide important reassurance for the international community that its concerns in the area of peace and security are being adequately addressed. We share the view that the Council needs to ensure that its decisions largely reflect the concerns and aspirations of the general membership. In that regard, we call for democratization of the existing order, increased transparency in action and the co-option of different ideas, interests and sensitivities.

My delegation views with concern the tendency of the Council to make decisions on issues that impinge on the wider membership of the United Nations without taking into account the views of the States concerned. In that regard, we are also concerned about the Council's increased resort to Chapter VII resolutions and enforcement actions, even on matters that are better resolved through multilateral cooperation. We call on the Council to ensure adequate opportunity for the views of the wider membership to be heard. While we welcome the Council's efforts to improve its openness to non-members of the Council, we urge it to increase transparency and communication. We reiterate that true effectiveness on the part of the Council, as well as respect for its decisions, can be achieved only if the larger membership believes that body represents their interests. Attempts by some to recover lost imperial glory through abuse of the Council are repugnant to many Members.

The overwhelming majority of Member States have expressed their clear preference for comprehensive reform of the Security Council. That the Council as it is does not represent the current realities of the twenty-first century is no longer debatable. This debate therefore offers us a timely opportunity not only to take stock of and monitor our progress, but also to state and exchange viewpoints that may well facilitate greater understanding of various positions in our collective efforts to move the process of reforming the Security Council forward. Zimbabwe's position is guided by the common African position laid out in the Ezulwini Consensus.

My delegation is greatly encouraged by the growing acceptance of and agreement on the need for expansion of both the permanent and the non-permanent categories of the Council's membership. An expanded Council will enjoy fresh perspectives in its deliberations and broader alliances in its decision-making, which is, after all, the purpose of our exercise — to make the Council more representative, legitimate and credible. Going forward, Zimbabwe is of the view that expanding both categories is essential in order to meet the needs and accommodate the views of the majority of Member States. It is also essential to maintain a balanced ratio between the two categories of the Council's membership.

In that connection, Zimbabwe, like many other Member States, has consistently advocated for comprehensive reform of the Security Council. We have underscored time and again the need for the Council to reflect current political realities, with special emphasis on granting developing countries, particularly those on the African continent, their long overdue and deserved representation in both membership categories of the Council. In that regard, I wish to reiterate my country's support for Africa's continuing demand for two permanent seats on an expanded Council, with the same powers and prerogatives as those of current members, and five non-permanent seats. We feel those are reasonable demands, based on the principle of democratic representation allotted proportionally among the regions. Such an arrangement would also go some way towards redressing the historic abuse to which Africa has been subjected.

It is our firm view that reform of the United Nations without Security Council reform is incomplete. Reforming only the Council's working methods is also not enough, and structural reforms are therefore needed to complete the process. A less skewed and more balanced structure of the Council, coupled with more democratic global governance institutions, is what the international community needs to be able to deliver in the important areas of security, economic and social development.

It is important that the interests of all countries and regions related to that sensitive issue be seriously taken into account. In that regard, transparency and consensus must be the guideposts for our mutual trust and confidence with regard to the issue. For its part, Zimbabwe is ready to work with other Members in order to achieve comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

Ms. Shoman (Jordan): Jordan associates itself with the statements of the group of five small nations and the Non-Aligned Movement. We reaffirm the importance of interactive dialogue between the Security Council and the General Assembly, and hope that this year will pave the way for fruitful discussions promoting a mandate of Security Council reform, particularly with regard to wider membership in the Council.

Jordan attaches great importance to Council reform and believes that a comprehensive, transparent, inclusive, balanced mechanism can meet and reflect the needs of United Nations Members, especially developing countries, and would render transparent an important part of the international architecture.

The Council has made noteworthy commitments and begun to put them into action in order to maintain international peace and security in the most effective manner possible and in cooperation with its partners. That can be seen in the numerous statements that have been made on the Security Council's report (A/65/2). In that regard, Jordan would like to thank the current presidency of the Council and to commend the improvements proposed by the United Kingdom, which have brought deeper understanding to the discussion and made it more of an exchange of views.

Jordan supports transparent and full discussions between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries during preparation of the Council's annual report, and stresses the importance of intergovernmental negotiations. We also call on the Council to prioritize and strengthen consultations and dialogue with those countries as part of its efforts to achieve peace, stability and security.

Mr. Bodini (San Marino): I would like to thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Sir Mark Lyall Grant, for his introduction to the report of the Security Council (A/65/2), and the Nigerian mission for its work in preparing the document.

I share your opinion, Mr. President, that we have reached a point where we must accelerate the process of reforming the Security Council. It is time to reconcile our differences. Under the leadership of the President and Ambassador Tanin, we must relaunch the intergovernmental negotiations, whose outcome must be reached through consensus or quasi-consensus in order to be successful. Security Council reform arrived at by a fractured General Assembly would be doomed from its inception. It would not have the legitimacy that our countries are looking for. I agree with many of our colleagues that the only possible solution is one of a compromise that can form the greatest common denominator among our aspirations.

To reach such a goal, we must agree on interim reform. Such reform would provide for a reasonable enlargement of the Council, in which half of the new seats would be allocated to the two-year non-permanent category, and half to a new, longer-term non-permanent category. In that way we could give greater representation to small and medium-sized States, as well as to countries that are significant contributors to world peace through financial aid, democratic leadership, growing economies and peacekeeping forces. Those countries rightfully deserve to represent us for longer periods in the Council. They would be elected by the General Assembly and could seek re-election at the end of their terms.

I believe that the States that would like to run for the longer term could, if elected, greatly enhance the work of the Security Council. I have no doubt that we will re-elect those countries that contribute effectively during their tenures to the peace process.

With that kind of reform, we will obtain a substantial enlargement, we will have a more democratic and representative Security Council, we will create more transparency, we will enhance the

Council's relationship with the General Assembly and we will obtain a more equitable representation among different geographical areas.

Finally, we must move on from the inexcusable 15-year impasse that underlines our inability to reform our Security Council.

Mr. Borg (Malta): The report of the Security Council for the past 12 months (A/65/2), which we are considering today, indicates in no uncertain terms the diverse and complex issues and situations as well as the challenges that our Organization is facing. The report also shows that much more has to be done in order to alleviate the often dire situations faced by the populations in those countries where conflicts seem to perpetuate the already unacceptable living conditions, tension and turmoil compounded by hunger, malnutrition and disease. Indeed, it is a recognized fact that those conditions and situations are not only obstructing the economic and social development of those countries, but also continue to displace large populations and increase poverty, refugees and political instability.

Compared to the same period last year, the report shows that the Security Council has held fewer formal meetings, fewer public meetings, fewer consultations and adopted fewer presidential statements, while issuing more statements to the press. Moreover, the Security Council adopted fewer resolutions than the year before. Whether all those actions reflect on the real urgency with which the Security Council attempted to deal effectively with the growing preoccupations of the international community with regard to the various situations that are still unresolved in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Europe and Central America is a matter that perhaps raises some concern among the United Nations Member States and therefore requires further in-depth analysis and examination.

My delegation notes that, again this year, no fewer than 12 countries in Africa have been the focus of attention of and action by the Security Council. Twenty-five resolutions were adopted and 12 presidential statements prepared and/or issued, all relating to Africa. My delegation believes that a more concerted effort and enhanced action should be undertaken by the Security Council in addressing the conflicts and situations that still exist in those countries. In that regard, it is important that the Security Council continues to be assisted by all Governments and parties concerned in order to ensure that the action taken by the Security Council finds a positive response on the ground.

The role of regional organizations in Africa and especially the enhancement of the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union are to be commended and supported.

Among the important activities undertaken by the Security Council that my delegation wishes to highlight are those relating to the missions carried out by the members of the Council to conflict areas, which have provided its members as well as the Governments of the countries concerned the opportunity to interact and possibly helped generate the political backing for important decisions by all interlocutors. In that regard, we believe that the members of the Security Council should review the scope and reach of those missions so that visits to other places of conflict could be undertaken, especially in those situations of which the United Nations Security Council has been seized for many years and where no end to such conflicts is in sight.

One of the issues where the Security Council has made a contribution relates to the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The fact that the Security Council considers the issue on a monthly basis shows in itself that the international community has still not found the much sought after solution. Despite the unstinting efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and the Quartet, a renewed effort and a reinvigorated approach is required in the search for a political and durable solution to the question of Palestine and the Middle East conflict. In that regard, Security Council members must continue to enhance their role and their valid contribution by assisting both the Israelis and the Palestinians, especially at a time when direct negotiations, which had ushered in new hopes and expectations some weeks ago, are being severely tested daily, if not threatened. My delegation believes that the Security Council has a primordial role in the Middle East process and can and should contribute to a resolution of the question and bring peace and security to a region, which for over 60 years has been a theatre of conflict, tensions and upheavals. It is important that the Security Council, backed by this General Assembly, strengthen its endeavours to resume the peace negotiations, which would lead to an independent,

democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security with Israel.

Another activity referred to in the report and which my delegation would like to endorse is the holding of meetings of the Council on thematic, general and other issues focusing on the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as the briefings by the Chairmen of subsidiary bodies of the Security Council. Malta believes that the participation of the United Nations Member States in those open debates enhances transparency and universality in the access and involvement on the part of all Member States in the consideration of important issues relating to the maintenance of international peace and security.

My delegation also welcomes the consideration by the Security Council of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. In that regard, we welcome the Council's expression of its intention to consider further steps to promote closer and more operational cooperation between the United Nations and those organizations in the fields of conflict early warning, prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding with a view to ensuring coherence, synergy and collective effectiveness in their efforts.

Malta, as a member of the European Union and of the United Nations, notes with satisfaction the participation of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union, Ms. Catherine Ashton, who briefed the Council on the commitment of the European Union to the active promotion of peace, security, justice and human rights, as well as to the protection of the vulnerable and helping people to live in safety and dignity. Indeed, the Treaty of Lisbon has enhanced the collaboration between the European Union and the Security Council and United Nations membership as a whole, as stated in the report.

The Security Council endorsed the European Union's support for the efforts of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security, since the two organizations shared common goals and principles, such as the promotion of human rights, the rule of law and development. My delegation welcomed the opportunity to participate in the open debate held last April on the working methods of the Security Council (see S/PV.6300). It is a recognized fact that the issues before the Council are not the sole responsibility of Council members and that the increasing threats of today are becoming more global and transnational in nature. No boundaries exist for such threats. Hence, the matters that are brought to the attention of the Council are matters that call for greater involvement and engagement by and with the non-members of the Council.

While much more has to be done to reach an optimum level of transparency, Malta believes that the monthly briefings by the new Council Presidents on the programme of work, as well as the increase in detail of the Council's annual report presented to the General Assembly, have enhanced the relationship between the members of the Council and the wider United Nations membership.

Malta encourages Council members to continue exploring ways to improve the Council's working methods by ensuring enhanced transparency, effectiveness and interaction with non-members. It is important that all Member States not only feel that they own the United Nations reform process, including that of the Security Council, but also continue to assume the guardianship of the Organization, of which the Security Council is one of the principal organs.

Malta actively and consistently participates in the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council. Throughout that process Malta has projected, in an objective and transparent manner, the views and aspirations of a small State as a Member of the United Nations.

It is the view of my delegation that any agreements reached in the intergovernmental negotiations must form part of a whole package for a sound, sustainable and long-term reform of the Security Council, in particular with the underlying principle that all five key issues identified in decision 62/557 are inextricably linked and must be considered as forming part of one package. Any consideration of any one of those issues must ensure a coherent and cohesive progression on the other key issues.

My delegation wishes to reiterate its strong support for the Uniting for Consensus group platform, which provides for regular non-permanent seats, including for small and medium-sized States, as well as longer-term seats. That represents a step forward and a major compromise from the group's original 2005 position.

The Uniting for Consensus platform is the only proposal on the table so far which would fulfil the aspirations of small States with a population below one million by specifically proposing one non-permanent seat to be allocated to small States in an enlarged Security Council. That, in the view of my delegation, would represent justice for over 40 small Member States that are calling for a better response and full recognition of their legitimate stand in the intergovernmental negotiations.

We therefore feel that that proposal should be endorsed by all small States participating in the intergovernmental negotiations so as not to continue being marginalized or ignored, as well as to secure better opportunities in their legitimate right to serve on the Security Council, irrespective of their geographic location or their level of development.

Malta hopes that other groups and countries will be able to show the same spirit of flexibility and to come forward with positions that can bridge differing views. We should all embark on a process that should be conducted in an open, transparent and inclusive manner and that would lead towards a solution that could garner the widest possible acceptance of Member States.

For a number of reasons my delegation continues to have difficulty with the arguments put forward for expanding both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership in the Security Council. My delegation also disagrees with the claims by a number of delegations that the expansion in both categories enjoys the support of a so-called majority of the membership.

This is a process led by Member States and belongs to Member States, and therefore Malta reiterates its conviction that the General Assembly, as the principal United Nations organ with universal membership, is the only legitimate and appropriate forum to discuss and decide upon the reform of the Security Council.

My delegation looks forward to receiving a programme of work on how and when the forthcoming negotiations will be held. We wish to convey our support and cooperation to you, Mr. President, and to Ambassador Zahir Tanin, for a successful continuation of our negotiations.

Mr. Elshareef (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation has carefully studied the report of the Security Council before us today (A/65/2) under items 29 and 119, “Report of the Security Council” and “Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters”.

My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered at the 48th meeting by the representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group, and by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

My country wishes to reiterate Africa’s established position for the allocation of two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats on the Security Council to Africa, based on the importance of the continent, which has 53 Member States.

We wish to express our appreciation for your efforts, Mr. President, in giving this item the importance it deserves by including it on the agenda of the current session. We also wish to commend the efforts of your predecessor, Mr. Treki, who made considerable contributions in the area of Security Council reform.

Regarding the working methods of the Security Council and its decision-making process, we join the position expressed by the NAM, which calls for a more democratic and transparent approach and for the involvement of all Member States, especially those whose issues are under consideration, so that the process may become more objective and just.

In that respect, my delegation calls for the abolition of the right of the veto, which, in our view, runs contrary to the noble principles and purposes of the United Nations, which seek equality among States and respect for sovereignty.

My delegation believes that the Security Council should give more importance to cooperation with the General Assembly, which is the most inclusive and representative body of the United Nations. The Council should consult with the Assembly and take into consideration its views regarding its treatment of the international issues that are under consideration.

We also believe that it is important that the Security Council should not take decisions regarding issues that do not pose any threat to international peace and security as defined in Chapter VII of the Charter.

My delegation considers it important that the Security Council cooperate with all Member States in a manner that guarantees their rights, in keeping with the provisions of the Charter, rather than favouring entities that do not enjoy membership in this international Organization, at times even being equated with Member States, which is a flagrant violation of the Charter.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to state that reform of the Security Council is one of the most vital issues for our international Organization, and it is indeed high time that its membership be increased and its working methods and decision-making processes be improved, so that the Council truly reflects and expresses the positions of all Members of the United Nations, instead of being exploited, as it sometimes is, by the major Powers to promote their own political agendas at the expense of the developing nations.

Ms. Kok Li Peng (Singapore): My delegation joins the debate today slightly encouraged by what we have seen in the latest annual report of the Security Council (A/65/2). It provides a good overview of the scope and volume of issues tackled by the Council this past year and a few other improvements, in particular the incorporation of material that reflects the substance of the Council's work. As a member of the group of five small nations (S-5), Singapore also appreciates the addition of a section on working methods under thematic considerations, as opposed to parking the issue under the "Other matters" section as in previous reports. We hope that arrangement will hold for future reports.

We applaud the Council's evolving practice of consulting Member States before the drafting of its report, which was introduced by Viet Nam, subsequently adopted by Uganda and continued by Nigeria. Such best practices inspire confidence in the Council and build trust between the Council and the General Assembly.

The next logical step in that process would be for the author of the annual report to hold an informal session with Member States once the report has been completed to discuss, inter alia, issues, challenges and questions that came up in the preparation of the report. As Singapore has said before, the intention is not to find fault, but to let Member States gain a deeper understanding of the workings of the Council and to engender buy-in for the Council's actions.

More interaction between the Council and the Member States can also help to clarify the type of analysis that Member States have repeatedly called for in each year's report. Given the tremendous level of resources channelled to the Council, whether by fiat or by choice, there is insufficient reciprocity by its members in terms of transparency and effectiveness. It is not enough for the Council presidency of each month to share its reflections on the year's efforts. Concrete procedures must be installed for the Council to account for its discharge of the solemn responsibilities entrusted to it under the Charter.

As Singapore believes that interaction promotes effectiveness in Council work, we would like to commend the efforts of the United Kingdom to promote forward-looking and interactive discussions in the Council, such as its horizon-scanning event with the Department of Political Affairs. The regular monthly open debates are also valuable opportunities for candid discussions between Council members and Member States.

However, we should be mindful of the particular character of Council work, which is crisis-plagued and bound by strict deadlines. To have really useful exchanges, we can do no better than to heed George Washington, who said: "Let your discourse with men of business be short and comprehensive." Hence, we should set aside beloved but lengthy rituals of prepared speeches and establish proceedings favouring greater spontaneity and interactivity, because genuine discussions of good quality can enrich the Council's deliberations and outcomes.

On the broader issue of the Council's working methods, we have seen some progress in recent years, though clearly more can be done. For instance, Singapore, along with others of the S-5, was pleased to see the recent updating of presidential note 507 (S/2010/507). However, we remain concerned about the lack of a follow-up implementation mechanism. We would like to reiterate the suggestions outlined in the earlier statement by the S-5 on improving the comprehensiveness and implementation of presidential note 507 (see A/65/PV.48). It would also be helpful to expand the annual report's section on note 507 to

include some assessment of progress on its implementation.

I recall my delegation lamenting in 2008 that we were dancing around the same spot on Council reform. Fortunately, there has been a little progress since then. We will soon embark on the sixth round of intergovernmental negotiations, with a compilation text in hand. However, little headway has been made in streamlining the text, let alone embarking on substantive text-based negotiations. As we resume the negotiations, we hope that Member States will demonstrate greater willingness to find common ground. In that connection, we offer our full support to Ambassador Zahir Tanin in his continued facilitation of that process.

The election of India, Germany and South Africa has generated great anticipation about how the Council will perform next year. Many of us will be looking to see how the Council acts to bring about greater efficiency in the way it works, how it will further enhance its interactions with Member States and how it will discharge its Charter responsibilities. Some optimistic delegations also harbour hope for the stalemate on Council reform to be eased. What is important, both in terms of efforts to improve the Council's effectiveness and Member States' efforts in the intergovernmental negotiations, is to nurse the momentum so painstakingly generated and find the political will to take the reforms forward. To paraphrase the words of a wise man, Mahatma Gandhi, we should be the change that we want to see in the world.

Mr. Park In-Kook (Republic of Korea): Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this joint debate. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my delegation's firm conviction that your presidency will be successful.

I would like to thank the current President of the Security Council, His Excellency Ambassador Lyall Grant of the United Kingdom, for his introduction of the report of the Security Council (A/65/2).

I wish now to address agenda item 119, on the question of equitable geographical representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

I am pleased to note that significant achievements have been made during the past year. Most notably, under the stewardship of Ambassador Tanin, we now have an inclusive negotiation text, which we hope will serve as a guide for the next phase of negotiation.

However, we would like to emphasize that any attempts to modify the current text should be thoroughly debated and fully agreed by all parties concerned. Moreover, the single most important guideline should be the principle of general agreement referred to in resolution 48/26, of 3 December 1993. Efforts to reform the Security Council should not lead to divisiveness among Member States, but rather must make a contribution to a more cohesive and cooperative United Nations for all.

In that regard, I would like to point out that while all other groups have remained stagnant in their positions, the Uniting for Consensus group has exercised a great deal of flexibility. I truly hope that other parties will become more willing to move forward in a spirit of compromise, so that tangible progress can be made in the near future.

Through the five rounds of intergovernmental negotiations held thus far, all of us have become more than well aware of the basic positions of the major groups. Through deliberations, we collectively identified the key elements and issues to be incorporated in the Security Council reform process. Also, we came to the realization that all the key issues are intrinsically intertwined. Therefore, we would like to emphasize that a comprehensive approach, concluded through a single undertaking, is indispensable.

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly reiterate my Government's position on the five key issues.

First, on the issue of categories of membership, the unswerving basic philosophy of my delegation is that a more democratic manner of representation will spur greater accountability and transparency. We firmly believe that that can be secured only through the periodic election of Security Council members. Periodic elections will provide Member States with more opportunities to become Council members, ensuring more equitable representation. Moreover, through elections, the merits and demerits of a Council member can be judged in a fair manner, thus

facilitating a more transparent member selection process.

On the other hand, reform of membership categories that merely promotes one election in which a handful of winners will remain in the Council indefinitely contradicts not only democratic principles, but also disregards the incessantly evolving dynamics of our changing world. Indeed, during the past few years we have witnessed various global challenges that entailed concerted efforts of diverse new players. These times, which are characterized by globalization, interdependence and multifaceted challenges, call for a so-called new multilateralism. Against that backdrop, the rigid fixture of permanent membership would undermine the agility that will be required for the Council to rise to the occasion and meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Secondly, with regard to the question of the veto, we all know that that peculiar mechanism was put into place in the aftermath of the Second World War to get this institution off and running. In the modern context, if the continued existence of the veto is deemed necessary as a result of the realities of power politics, then at the very least that action must be exercised with utmost restraint, along with timely and adequate explanation of the reasons why it is being invoked.

Thirdly, regional representation, while achieving equitable geographical distribution among regional groups, is an important shared objective of the larger membership and an integral part of the Security Council reform process. Therefore the substantial underrepresentation of certain regions — namely, Africa, Asia and Latin America — needs to be rectified as a priority. While we concede that representation has to do with more than just ratios, it certainly can be one clear indicator of where a region stands in terms of establishing its presence on the Security Council.

Fourthly, on the issue of size, my delegation recognizes that there is wide agreement that expansion in the size of the Council must be sufficient to improve the overall representation of the current membership. We are flexible, however, on what constitutes a reasonable scale of enlargement and will not insist on specific numbers. Instead, the final outcome must depend on what is a reasonable size for a new Council, one that is not only representative but can also operate with functional efficiency.

Finally, with regard to the working methods, there have been continual calls for the Council to improve its transparency, effectiveness and inclusiveness. We are well aware of the underlying limitations imposed by the ever-increasing workload of the Council members and the deluge of new and daunting tasks that consume much of their time and attention. Nonetheless, we believe that consistent and structured efforts must be made to enhance the overall transparency, accountability and inclusiveness of the Council. That is necessary for reaching any comprehensive reform.

Before bringing my remarks to a close, I would like to mention that Security Council reform should be a member-driven process, as stipulated in General Assembly decision 62/557. In that connection I would like to echo the remarks made by some other colleagues in requesting the presidency to provide Member States with a road map on the future course of action. That will help us to better prepare ourselves and have more engaged and productive meetings.

Now is the time for all of us to break the deadlock and take tangible steps towards a feasible solution, rather than reiterating rigid positions. In that regard, my delegation believes that the intermediary approach, with the establishment of longer-term seats in addition to the regular two-year seats, seems to be the most practical compromise at the current juncture. My delegation is ready to participate actively in earnest discussions on that viable solution, and we hope that other delegations will be willing to move forward as well in the coming months.

Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia): We welcome today's joint debate on the report of the Security Council (A/65/2) and on the question of equitable geographical representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters, given the important substantive connection between the two.

I would like to express my gratitude to the current President of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for his introduction of the annual report of the Security Council, covering the period from 1 August 2009 to 31 July 2010.

The Security Council's annual report is one of the central channels in the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly and provides the rest of the membership with a valuable account of the

work of the body that has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. This year's report demonstrates yet again that the complexity, variety and volume of the Council's workload continue to grow.

We appreciate the efforts made in producing the report before us, especially those by the delegation of Nigeria as the President of the Security Council for the month of July, and we also welcome a number of qualitative improvements that have been made in past years in the preparation of these annual reports.

The relevance of the report goes well beyond the description of its activities. We therefore encourage Security Council members to continue to strive for reports that are more analytical and to continue with the established practice and engage with Member States in an interactive exchange of views on the report in its preparatory process.

We welcome the improvements in the area of the Council's working methods. Better working methods and more transparency towards the wider membership can improve the Council's efficiency, enhance its legitimacy and strengthen its role as the body that the Charter entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security.

For many years now, Member States have been confronted with an ever-increasing number of Council decisions with notable security, legal and financial implications for each Member State. The implementation of such decisions without participation in the decision-making requires greater transparency, inclusiveness and engagement with non-member States on a more regular and frequent basis. We appreciate and support the initiatives of the Small Five group in that regard.

We also support an intensified and more systematic consultation process that involves the Security Council, troop and police contributors and the Secretariat on peacekeeping mandates and operations, facilitated in large part by the active engagement of the Council's working group. We welcome such efforts directed towards encouraging transparent and inclusive dialogue on United Nations peacekeeping, leading to mobilizing and maintaining the political and operational support of all stakeholders throughout the life cycle of a mission.

Your decision, Mr. President, to choose the theme "Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance" for this year's general debate was a timely one, and reform of the Security Council is one of the crucial elements for strengthening the key role of the United Nations in global governance. Slovenia firmly believes that the reform of the Security Council is long overdue and necessary. It remains our compelling task, and it is widely accepted that no United Nations reform will be complete without the reform of the Security Council.

Reform needs to address both enlargement of the membership and improvement of the working methods. Slovenia has been active in addressing both issues.

While presiding over the Security Council during our first membership in the Council, in 1998 and 1999, Slovenia decided to make the provisional monthly programme of work available on the Internet for the first time. That indeed was a small but important step in making the work of the Council more transparent. We are also pleased that the practice of inviting all newly elected members of the Council to observe informal consultations during the month before their term has become a reality.

Regarding the enlargement of the Security Council, Slovenia's position is clear: it is not only a matter of fairness but also a necessity. A reformed Council needs to better reflect geopolitical realities and must be more representative, with its authority and legitimacy strengthened.

Slovenia remains convinced that the Council should be expanded in the categories of both permanent and non-permanent members. Particular attention should be paid to the representation of countries from Africa. The enlargement of the Council should also increase the possibility for small and medium-sized States, which account for the vast majority of the United Nations membership, to serve in the Council.

Progress was made in the last few rounds of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform in the Assembly's sixty-fourth session, in particular with the presentation of the compilation text by the Chairman of the negotiations. Many proposals and models for the Council's expansion have been suggested, including one by Slovenia, and all of them are well captured in the compilation text.

Here, I would like to commend the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, for his tremendous efforts and impartial leadership over the past two years, which gave the Council reform negotiations the boost they so urgently needed. We welcome his reappointment as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Council reform during the sixty-fifth session and assure him of our full support as he continues to assist Member States to navigate the way through this complex issue in the months ahead.

We all have a stake in this intergovernmental process. We should try to further consolidate the compilation text, maintain the momentum generated and move forward the process of negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

We appreciate your presence during this discussion, Mr. President, and in particular the importance you and your Office attach to the issues discussed today. We are convinced that your leadership, experience, guidance and wisdom, coupled with the necessary political will, good faith and flexibility among Member States, will bring us to a successful conclusion of the prolonged debate on the issue of Security Council reform.

Mr. Gutiérrez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to express my gratitude to you, Mr. President, for considering the process of Security Council reform a priority matter to be addressed during the Assembly's sixty-fifth session. Likewise, I am pleased that our colleague, the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, will continue to chair the intergovernmental negotiations in informal plenary of the Assembly on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. I would also like to thank Ambassador Sir Mark Lyall Grant, current President of the Council, for his presentation of the annual report of that body (A/65/2) at the 48th meeting.

The annual report of the Security Council, in my delegation's view, could be supplemented and improved. More substantial content is needed, in particular with respect to the decisions taken, the process that precedes decisions being taken, and their implementation.

Likewise, it is important that the report contain information on its working methods. That would allow us to have a more comprehensive view of the issues addressed, would avoid a report limited to being merely referential or descriptive and, above all, would provide us with the proper perspective from which to observe the tasks before the Council. Also, self-evaluation by the Council is a crucial step, which should be carried out to determine what kind of new measures should be implemented to enhance its legitimacy and the efficiency and effectiveness of its work.

It is also of crucial importance to make progress towards concrete reform of the Council's working methods in order to make them more transparent and efficient. To that end, we believe that there should be more open meetings and more meetings to update Members on the issues under consideration and that those meetings should be of a substantive nature and be carried out in a timely fashion. It is also of the highest importance to consolidate the practice of having the Security Council consult with troop-contributing countries before Council deliberations on the pertinent subject, as well as that of carrying out regular self-assessments and reviews of the implementation of the Council's decisions.

My delegation believes that the open consultations held in connection with Security Council reports prior to their preparation are beneficial. That practice favours transparency and better coordination with the General Assembly, as well as the Council's responsibility to be accountable when listening to and respecting the opinions expressed by Member States. In that context, we ask that this become a regular practice.

The Secretary-General's reports, as well as the practice of holding open debates on the topics the Council deals with — for example, debates on the situation in the Middle East, the reports of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflicts, and the role of women in peacebuilding — are all initiatives we commend. For that to have real and added value, it should not be just a formal part of the proceedings immediately preceding the issuance of presidential statements, or, worse, where the Council's conclusions are known even before the proceedings are over. Inasmuch as debates should reflect the opinion of the Members of the Organization when it comes to issues falling under

their competence, it is vital that the Council consider all the positions expressed, including the possibility that Council members listen to non-member countries first. All of this will demonstrate the Council's desire for openness and inclusiveness, features we believe are essential to the work of such an important body.

With regard to the process of Security Council reform, as my delegation indicated at the meeting convened by the presidency this past October, we believe that the last five rounds of the negotiating process have produced positive progress, thanks to a high level of participation by the entire membership. In this regard, we reiterate our opinion that we are seeing some important momentum that we should take advantage of in order to arrive at a renewed and reformed Security Council, with the goal of transforming it into a more democratic and representative body that is also more effective and efficient.

In spite of the progress made with the methodology used up to now, we run the risk of becoming mired in the thematic compilation of the various positions expressed. We need to give fresh impetus to the negotiations and move towards an informally structured drafting exercise that will lead us to a negotiating text with clear alternatives that can rely on the support and, above all, the political commitment of the membership.

In that regard, my delegation reiterates its request that the Chair of the negotiations process or the Office of the President provide — in the light of what the membership has expressed so far — a new basic negotiating text that goes beyond the consolidation of positions and identifies and analyses the options before us so as to allow us to move on to negotiations aimed at producing tangible, balanced and representative results — always on the basis of the principle that this must be an inclusive and transparent process aimed at swift reform of the Security Council.

Peru reiterates its conviction that, in order to adapt the Council to new realities, we must add new members, both permanent and non-permanent, while promoting just and fair regional representation that alters the current status quo.

With regard to the question of the veto, Peru has always held to a position of principle whose ultimate goal is the veto's elimination. However, in the spirit of being constructive and in order not to paralyse the negotiating process, my delegation believes that a commitment should be made to assess, as a first step, limitations on the use of the veto, via an existing concept of the rule established in paragraph 3, Article 27, of the Charter. Additionally, Peru believes that it is important to reach a consensus that makes it possible to set precise limits on the use of the veto, eliminating the possibility of exercising it in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity and repeated flagrant violations of human rights.

There is a need for us to expeditiously embark upon a real process of negotiation. The constant repetition of our national positions will not get us anywhere. In a word, if we wish to reform the Council, as we say unanimously here, we must turn that desire into concrete commitments.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on a point of order.

Mr. Moreno Zapata (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We have asked to speak on a point of order because we noted that when the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela spoke during yesterday morning's meeting, the interpretation from Spanish into English did not match what Mr. Jorge Valero was saying. In that regard, the Mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations wishes to lodge a formal complaint against the Interpretation Service. I request that our complaint be entered into the record of this meeting.

Mr. Sial (Pakistan): Thank you for convening today's important meeting, Mr. President. I would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, President of the Security Council for this month, for presenting the Council's report (A/65/2) to the General Assembly. We did, however, note that in his statement, the Jammu and Kashmir dispute was not mentioned in the context of unresolved ongoing situations. We understand that this was an inadvertent omission, as Jammu and Kashmir is one of the oldest disputes on the Council's agenda.

The report of the Security Council is an annual compendium of its work, meetings, correspondence and decisions. Its basic merit is in its procedural accuracies and its reference value. These attributes could be reinforced with a certain level of analytical

explanation on the work of the Council and its decision-making processes.

The Security Council acts on behalf of the entire membership of the United Nations in discharging its duties as the principal organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. By presenting its report to the General Assembly, the Security Council offers up its work to be reviewed by the entire membership vis-à-vis how efficiently duties have been discharged on members' behalf. In reviewing the work of the Council, we will focus on two dimensions: first, the effectiveness of the Council in maintaining international peace and security and, secondly, the Council's ability to reflect the views and interests of the widest possible part of the membership.

In the context of effectiveness, our delegation acknowledges the role of the Security Council in the area of addressing violent conflicts by efficiently laying down peacekeeping mandates and ensuring that they are backed up with logistical support. Such work by the Council has been facilitated by troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat. With the growing realization of the importance of peacebuilding efforts and the gradual but solid consolidation of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, the Council is now better equipped to discharge the mandate of preventing a relapse into conflict. The Council deserves our appreciation for its important work in handling conflicts through the pragmatic use of peacekeeping mandates and peacebuilding strategies.

However, the Council needs to recalibrate its efforts in conflict prevention and more often take recourse in the pacific settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter. That is particularly important in the case of inter-State conflicts. Major unresolved issues on the Council's agenda, including Jammu and Kashmir, have awaited settlement for a long time. Even in the case of issues that are routinely discussed, such as the question of Palestine, the Council seems to have abdicated its role to individual countries or informal groupings. It needs to redress that to efficiently discharge its responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

The second dimension is the assessment of the Security Council's work and transparency. Unfortunately, in that area the annual report provides little information or analysis, particularly with regard to its decision-making processes. It is a widely held view that decisions emanate from a few major players in closed-door meetings, if not behind the scenes. Accordingly, such decisions lack transparency and inclusiveness. Similarly, the Council should fulfil the Charter requirement of submitting a special report to the General Assembly.

To a large extent, the openness and transparency of the Security Council is related to an improvement in its working methods. Improving the working methods of the Council and enhancing its transparency and accountability are the basic underlying objectives of the ongoing reform process. That brings me to the second agenda item of our debate today, that is, the reform of the Security Council.

In that context, the Prime Minister of Pakistan made a statement today in Parliament on the subject of Security Council reform.

> "All Member States, regions and groups of States have vital interests in the reform of the Security Council. Achieving a comprehensive and equitable reform of the Security Council is a shared objective of the entire membership.
>
> "We believe that an effective and feasible reform of the Security Council can only be achieved through negotiations leading to a consensus decision endorsed by the United Nations membership. In this regard, Pakistan remains constructively engaged in the negotiation process at the United Nations in New York.
>
> "Our efforts for reform of the Security Council are structured around the following four pillars. One, the reform should be comprehensive. Two, it should be based on the principle of sovereign equality. Three, it should enhance accountability of the Security Council to the general membership. And four, reform should result in a more united and strengthened United Nations."

During the recent round of intergovernmental negotiations on 21 October, which the President chaired, Member States put forth ideas on the way forward. Pakistan believes that real progress in the reform process can be achieved with flexibility and compromise. In that context, the Uniting for Consensus group has already shown flexibility by moving from its position of 2005 to endorsement of the Italy/Colombia paper.

The Uniting for Consensus proposal allows for variable arrangements and different possibilities and options, thereby giving prominence to regional representation as well as the representation of small States. That formula reflects a complex global political configuration, which essentially implies the presence of a few large States, a number of medium-sized States and a majority of smaller States, and the emergence of regional organizations, which play an important role in international and regional peace and security.

Our proposal 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, as reflected in the Ezulwini Consensus. Africa's just demand for a permanent presence in the Council is for the entire region. It is therefore different from those that seek a seat for themselves. Similarly, we support the position of the Organization of the Islamic Conference demanding adequate representation of the Muslim Ummah in the Security Council.

I will conclude by acknowledging your role as President of the Assembly, Sir, in steering forward the process of Security Council reform. We value your presence here today and during the intergovernmental negotiations on 21 October 2010. We are certain that your close engagement will ensure the Assembly's oversight of the work of the Security Council, as well as its ownership of the reform process.

Mr. Koterec (Slovakia): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this highly relevant joint annual debate on two critically important items, namely, the report (A/65/2) of the Security Council and the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

Discussing those two mutually interrelated items together is essential to strengthening the much desired cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council, as it provides the general membership with a unique, once-a-year opportunity to review the hard work of the Council over the past 12 months, appreciate its accomplishments and assess areas where changes would contribute to greater efficiency and relevance. I believe that, after today's exhaustive discussion, we will come to an even better understanding of each other's views and an even stronger determination to strengthen our concerted effort to bring our positions closer if we seriously want to move forward towards a truly effective, credible and reliable Security Council.

As for the report before us, I would like first of all to thank the President of the Security Council for the month of November, Ambassador Mark Lyall Grant, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, for his informative presentation of the report. I would also like to commend the whole Security Council for the thorough and improved assessment of its work. We welcome the inclusion of thematic debates in the report in past years. The increasing number of meetings being opened to the wider membership is particularly noteworthy since it gives non-members a much appreciated opportunity to follow the urgent issues on the Security Council agenda more closely. Equally, we value the new interactive informal talks with Member States during the preparatory stages of the report.

We commend the Security Council for providing us with a highly informative and comprehensive report, albeit mainly from a statistical point of view. Having first-hand experience of serving on the Security Council recently, my delegation understands that it is not feasible for the Council to compile a thorough political analysis of its proceedings, and we would in no way want to see its independence threatened.

However, there are few areas where we would appreciate getting more out of the report. For instance, the Council could elaborate more comprehensively on cross-cutting issues and link thematic topics to specific country situations, especially in those areas where the Security Council encounters the greatest hardship. For example, it would be truly helpful to the wider membership to understand the rationale behind Security Council decisions and to see in the report the Council's own assessment of its successes and shortcomings. We appreciate, though, that the report contains information on the working methods and on the implementation of the presidential note S/2006/507.

The issue of the working methods brings me now to the second item before the Assembly today, that is, the pressing question of the reform of the Security Council. Here, I would like first of all to commend His Excellency Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent

Representative of Afghanistan, for his excellent leadership skills, tireless efforts and the manner in which he has guided us through our negotiations over the past two sessions. We welcome the fact that under his able stewardship we have reached a new stage of text-based negotiations. We have recently also witnessed movements in the positions of some countries. My delegation truly believes that, given our hard work over the past years on this issue, the time is ripe to break the stalemate and start showing the world some tangible results.

To achieve that, we appeal to all delegations to show further flexibility and political will and start narrowing down the wide range of proposals on the table. Even though we see merit in all of them, I reiterate our belief that we need to let go of those proposals that enjoy the least support, and concentrate on those that stand a solid chance of garnering the widest possible agreement.

Since the position of my delegation is well known, let me just briefly recap its main elements. First, States capable of assuming global responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security should become eligible for filling the posts of new permanent members of the Security Council, provided that the right of the veto is not further extended. To the contrary, the veto must also be subjected to a serious reform as to the scope and the manner it is being applied.

Secondly, we believe that the intermediate solution merits our serious consideration. At this moment, the concept lacks clarity and seems to mean different things to different delegations. But we hear resounding calls for the notion of a review conference, which would make any new formats temporary.

Thirdly, in order to allow for prospective new permanent members to truly get settled in their new roles and prove their capabilities, it is essential that they carry out their new responsibilities for at least 10 to 15 years. If they stand up to that challenge successfully and earn the trust of the overall United Nations membership, they should go through another democratic election process for a permanent seat.

Fourthly, as for regional representation as such, it is essential to ensure equitable geographical representation of posts within the non-permanent category of the Security Council. We believe that some of the regional groups, including the Group of Eastern European States, need to be allocated at least one additional non-permanent seat.

Fifthly, let me reiterate that in Article 24 of the Charter, we Member States conferred on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and agreed that the Council would act on our behalf. When deciding on the size of the Council, rather than making it ineffectively large for the sake of representation, it is essential that we all bear in mind the need to choose its representatives in such a way that we can fully trust them to act on behalf of us all.

As we have stated on numerous previous occasions, my country's primary goal in this process is to ensure a more effective and efficient Security Council that is truly able to act and deal with the increasing challenges we all face. Slovakia is therefore open to all constructive proposals, and will consider them with the utmost level of open-mindedness and flexibility.

For the sake of protecting the environment, this statement will be circulated to all Permanent Missions via e-mail.

Mrs. Waffa-Ogoo (Gambia): At the outset, allow me to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this joint debate on agenda items 29 and 119, "Report of the Security Council" and "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters". Let me also thank the Council's President for the month of November, Sir Mark Lyall Grant, for introducing the report of the Security Council (A/65/2). Allow me also to commend the members of the Council for their work on the maintenance of international peace and security. I am also grateful to Her Excellency Mrs. Joy Ogwu for preparing the first part of the report in her capacity as President of the Council in the month of July.

It is apparent from the report that conflict situations in Africa continue to dominate the agenda of the Council. In this regard, my delegation would like to note that the continuing engagement of the Council in Africa has helped tremendously in solving many of the conflicts that once raged across the continent. Part of that success is attributable to the increasing engagement of African leaders and institutions with international partners in the search for lasting peace. We therefore encourage the Council to continue to nurture such useful partnerships across Africa.

In the period under review, my delegation has noted that the increasing involvement of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) in partnership with the Economic Community of West African States has helped to tackle a lot of conflict and potential conflict situations across West Africa. We commend the Council for encouraging the work of UNOWA and its regional partners. UNOWA's involvement in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and the Niger are some of the examples whose lessons should be preserved for conflict resolution and mediation, especially in dealing with cross-border issues in West Africa. Preventive diplomacy should remain a core tool of the Council, the Department of Political Affairs, regional organizations and other international partners.

Allow me to commend the Council for its engagement with the authorities of Guinea-Bissau. Guinea-Bissau needs all the support it can garner from the international community in order to address some of its post-conflict development and security challenges. Security sector reform, rule of law support and reconstruction are key areas in which the Council can call on the international community to assist Guinea-Bissau. Effective peacebuilding is a corollary to long-term stability.

In assessing new threats to international peace and security, the twin threats of organized crime and illegal drug trafficking across West Africa should receive the constant attention of the Council. The dividends of the hard-won peace and stability that are now being enjoyed across the continent should not be allowed to dissipate on account of these new threats. The subregion of West Africa needs the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and INTERPOL in assessing these threats and fashioning new tools and information networks to combat them.

The illicit flow of small arms must also be arrested. Regional efforts to take such weapons out of circulation should be supported by the international community. The Council can do more to encourage institutions to tackle these threats to international peace and security.

The thematic debates that the Council frequently holds are an important way of contributing to the dialogue on critical issues that relate to the mandate of the Security Council. Those meetings are useful, but we must move increasingly away from the issuing of presidential statements at the end of debates and towards assessing how effectively they contribute to informing decisions of the Council. On the whole, we believe the Council's report could be more analytical than it is at present.

We have noted the Council's efforts at modernizing its working methods with a view to encouraging greater transparency and efficiency. No doubt, that is a work in progress. It must continue to take place in tandem with addressing the larger question of Security Council reform. Dialogue and interaction with troop- and police-contributing countries is a commendable feature of the Council's work with non-members. The timely sharing of information on new or ongoing missions can help in managing the planning and development processes for contributions.

Another aspect of the Council's practice that we consider very useful is its visiting the countries on its agenda. We believe this can contribute immensely to increasing the awareness of members as to the realities on the ground and help the Council to arrive at informed decisions. On many occasions, members are far removed from the theatre of conflict and depend largely on secondary sources of information to arrive at decisions. This is a practice that should continue.

Under agenda item 119, allow me now to address issues pertaining to the reform of the Security Council. My delegation would like to align itself with the statements made by the Ambassadors of Sierra Leone and Egypt on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively. Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan must be commended for the wonderful work that he is doing in facilitating the intergovernmental negotiations and for the text that he compiled this year. We believe that it is a good starting point for our negotiations, as all the elements and positions have been spelled out. It is our hope that, now that we have a text to work with, negotiations will soon start in earnest. As a way forward, we need a timeline and a workplan to embark on negotiations, with a view to concluding them by the end of this session. Various positions and viewpoints are very well known. What we need now is sincerity and flexibility as guiding elements to take us forward.

The reform of the Security Council was part of the package of reforms agreed in 2000. At that time, the Secretary-General reminded us that no reform of the United Nations would be complete without the

reform of the Security Council. Looking at the Council's agenda, the bulk of countries with situations under consideration are in Africa. Africa still continues to be underrepresented in the permanent category of membership, if not unrepresented at all.

The Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration clearly spelled out that our position and demands were just and legitimate. In the next round of negotiations, we will relentlessly pursue our fair representation in the Council. Piecemeal reform of the working methods and the establishment of ad hoc arrangements cannot be called true reform.

It is critical that Africa be a part of the decision-making processes that affect it. This historical imbalance needs to be corrected once and for all. We cannot embark on endless half-hearted negotiations year in and year out and expect reform. It is for this reason that my delegation believes that a definite timeline is of the essence.

Mr. Errázuriz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for his presentation of the report of the Security Council (A/65/2), which details the intense activities undertaken by the Council between 1 August 2009 and 31 July 2010 and which we have read attentively and taken due note of.

Chile has supported a comprehensive reform of the United Nations that, while reaffirming the principles and values of the Charter, serves to increase the credibility and legitimacy of the Organization. That is particularly pertinent given the main theme chosen by the President of the Assembly for this session, namely, "Reaffirming the central role of the United Nations in global governance". That is essentially about supporting inclusive multilateralism that is capable of addressing the multiple challenges we face today, all the while recognizing that development, international security, democracy and human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

The reform of the Security Council constitutes a central element in these efforts. The body responsible for international peace and security must be representative and democratic in order to adequately reflect the international reality of the twenty-first century. Chile supports a Security Council reform that will make it more representative, transparent and efficient. In order to achieve that, we must move forward both in increasing its membership with an eye to balancing appropriate participation for the developing world — as illustrated by the example of the underrepresented regions of Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean — and in reforming its working methods to make them increasingly transparent and inclusive. Fortunately, we are seeing some progress on the latter.

Chile supports the expansion of the Council in both its permanent and non-permanent categories of membership, recognizing that there are countries that can and should contribute as permanent members to the tasks that the Council is called on to undertake. The bilateral support Chile has extended to countries seeking new permanent seats is well known. Moreover, allow me to reaffirm once again our historic position against the veto, which we have held since the creation of the Organization and which stems from the fundamental value we attach to the principle of the equality of States and the democratization of international organizations.

There is no doubt that, under the wise guidance of facilitator Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan, whom we commend, we are moving in the right direction. We must persevere in these efforts while exploring options and alternatives in a process of constructive and pragmatic negotiations aimed at achieving results that will allow us to move closer to the desired reform.

Mr. Ould Hadrami (Mauritania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate my country's willingness to continue collaborating in building the consensus that will allow the achievement of the necessary reform of the Security Council, thereby contributing to strengthening the Organization.

Mr. Abay (Ethiopia): My delegation would like to contribute to today's joint debate by emphasizing the reform of the Security Council in particular, which is obviously of paramount importance both to the African continent and my country. Thus, let me first of all express my delegation's appreciation to the President of the Assembly for designating the reform of the Security Council as one of his priorities during his presidency. Let me also take this opportunity to welcome the appointment of His Excellency Ambassador Zahir Tanin to chair the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council. We

are confident that, under the President's guidance and Ambassador Tanin's continued effort and leadership, this Assembly will be able to move the reform process forward towards tangible results during this session.

Ethiopia aligns itself fully with the statements delivered by the Permanent Representatives of Sierra Leone and Egypt on behalf of the Group of African States and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively.

Ethiopia has always accorded great importance to the reform of the Security Council, as it is central to the overall reform of the United Nations system. There is no doubt that our efforts and dedication to make the Security Council a more democratic, representative, inclusive and transparent organ of our Organization will only be successful if there is demonstrable political commitment by all Member States.

It is our belief that the text-based intergovernmental negotiations, which were launched during the previous session, should be instrumental in concretizing and narrowing down our long-held positions and proposals on the key issues, which are well known to us. In that regard, my delegation is of the view that a more streamlined and shorter text would help us make substantial progress in the reform process, if all of us engage in the negotiations with a sense of responsibility, fairness and genuine commitment. We are confident that our negotiations can lead us to real progress by identifying and dwelling on areas of convergence and avoiding overlapping options.

Africa's common position on how the Security Council should be reformed, including all the key issues, is unambiguous and remains unchanged. The Ezulwini Consensus clearly stated that the Security Council needs to be enlarged in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories and calls for no fewer than two permanent seats with all the prerogatives and, of course, responsibilities of permanent membership, including the right of veto, as well as five non-permanent seats.

Even though Africa is opposed in principle to the right of veto, we Africans strongly believe that, as long as it exists and as a matter of justice, it should be extended to the new permanent members of the Security Council. It should, however, be noted that the African Union is responsible for the selection and the criteria for Africa's representatives in the Security Council, taking into consideration the representative nature and capacity of those chosen.

As has been stated on numerous occasions, the reform of the Security Council is of paramount significance for African countries. That is clearly the case, in that, since the adoption of decision 62/557 by the General Assembly, Africa has been engaging genuinely in intergovernmental negotiations. We strongly believe that due consideration should be given to the aspirations of our continent, as no African State has ever been represented in the permanent membership category of the Council. That is not mere rhetoric but rather a well reasoned and pragmatic argument that should be seen principally from a historical perspective as well as from the perspective of the nature of the Council's agenda items.

It is to be recalled that, during our previous negotiations, the call for the expansion of the Security Council in the permanent and non-permanent categories has garnered broad support from the majority of Member States. In that regard, other options advanced by some Member States, particularly the enlargement of the Security Council only in the category of non-permanent seats and the creation of a new cluster of non-permanent membership, seem to be identical in terms of the minimal contributions those members could make in the maintenance of international peace and security. Hence, my delegation is of the view that those approaches not only fall short of bringing about meaningful reform of the Security Council, but also do not guarantee real expansion in the permanent category, thus not responding to Africa's rightful demands.

In short, Ethiopia feels that, while negotiating on the reform of the Security Council, there will be no need to restate or reiterate well-known positions. It should be unambiguously clear that Africa expects to be taken seriously with regard to its position on the reform of the Council. The intermediary solution cannot in any way substitute for the long overdue fundamental reform of the Security Council.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank the President of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Mark Lyall Grant, for presenting the Security Council's annual report (A/65/2). My thanks go also to the other members of the Council for their important contributions to the

preparation of the report. I would also like to mention in particular the Nigerian delegation, which went to especially great lengths in that regard. My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States.

The theme of the present session of the General Assembly highlights the importance of the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council in defining global governance. My delegation would like to note that in the Security Council's report the issues concerning peace and security in Africa continue to dominate the majority of the Security Council's work. In that respect, we note the importance of enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in terms of peace and security to give the African Union the appropriate capacities, allowing it to successfully conduct missions established on the basis of Security Council mandates.

In addition, Algeria would like to welcome measures taken by the Security Council during the period covered by the report aimed at bolstering the framework for the struggle against the financing of terrorism through the adoption of resolution 1904 (2009), which clearly stipulates that the payment of ransoms to terrorist groups constitutes a form of financing terrorism, which is covered under the sanctions regime. Moreover, Algeria welcomes the establishment, under resolution 1904 (2009) of the Office of the Ombudsperson for the Al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee, which is an independent mechanism responsible for improving the regular procedure for the inclusion on the Consolidated List by reviewing inclusions on the List for their compliance with the Committee's rules and procedures. The creation of that Office strengthened the principle of the rule of law within the United Nations.

Algeria reiterates its commitment to Africa's aspirations, expressed in the common African position with regard to Security Council reform, as set forth in the Ezulwini Consensus, for the attribution of no less than two permanent seats, with all the accompanying privileges and rights of that category, including the right of veto, as well as five additional non-permanent seats. The two categories of membership are those stipulated currently by the Charter. A modification to any of the characteristics of one of those categories would, in fact, lead to the creation of a separate, third category, which should only be created if the Member States so decide.

Moreover, my delegation notes here its complete willingness to work to promote substantial headway in the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform currently under way, within the context of a process that must continue to be transparent and inclusive and seek the broadest possible political accord. It is also important to note the comprehensive nature of Security Council reform and the close link that exists among the various themes and elements of the reform.

Algeria remains willing to examine with openness the negotiation text drawn up by the facilitator, the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Tanin, whose perseverance I commend, while bearing in mind decisions 62/557 and 63/565 of the General Assembly.

In that connection, I would like to say that it is important for Member States to work to define the guiding principles underpinning reform before considering the merger of positions or proposals, which can only be done with the consent of the States concerned, as agreed.

Mr. Onemola (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the President for convening this plenary joint debate on agenda item 29 on the report of the Security Council (A/65/2) and on agenda item 119 on Security Council reform. We are also grateful to the United Kingdom as President of the Security Council for introducing the report.

It is evident from the report before us that the Security Council had a busy and productive session during the period under review. However, the focus of my delegation's statement during this joint debate will not be on the activities of the Security Council, but on its reform.

Nigeria attaches the utmost importance to the reform of the Security Council and welcomes the efforts, especially over the past two years, geared towards moving the process forward. Those efforts have been further reinforced by General Assembly decision 64/564 of 13 September, which urged Member States to continue intergovernmental negotiations on the reform immediately during the sixty-fifth session.

In that regard, we would like to express our appreciation to the President for having reappointed Ambassador Zahir Tanin as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. We also thank Ambassador Tanin for transmitting the second negotiation text and for the meeting that he convened on 21 October this year to continue the negotiations.

It is the expectation of my delegation that substantial progress will be achieved during the course of the current session. We believe that the time has come for us to achieve concrete results on those elements with regard to which consensus has emerged during the negotiations. Nigeria therefore calls for a shorter text encompassing the positions and proposals already put forward by Member States. Such a text would not only provide clarity on the issues, but also give direction and guidance.

The current underrepresentation of Africa is a clear demonstration of the lack of equity that exists in the Security Council. A region with 53 United Nations Member States remains unrepresented in the permanent category of membership in the Council. It has also not fared any better in the non-permanent seat category, where it has only three seats.

In that regard, we call for that historical injustice to be redressed, so that, of the approximately 26 seats proposed by the majority of Member States for the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent categories, Africa should be given special consideration and afforded at least two representatives in the permanent category and five in the non-permanent category. Other regions such as the Latin American and Caribbean States, Asia and the small island developing States, currently underrepresented in each category, should also be given their due.

Nigeria, therefore, strongly supports the comprehensive reform of the Security Council, and we believe that the current negotiation text contains much that can help us to achieve our objective. As stakeholders, we must strive to bridge the apparent gaps shown by our differing views. The negotiating process should remain open, transparent, and inclusive, as well as be conducted in a spirit of flexibility, so that we can collectively reach a compromise solution. Nigeria stands committed to the swift reform of the Council.

In that context, we would like to reiterate the following salient points, which tally with those of an overwhelming majority of Member States. The preponderance of views and positions expressed by Member States, including my delegation, is for the expansion of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. There is also a strong convergence of positions to the effect that there should be expansion of the membership of the Council from its present 15 members to a range in the mid-20s.

Nigeria supports the reform of the Council's working methods, including measures proposed by the Group of Five Small Nations on transparency and accountability. Nigeria also supports an enhanced relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council in accordance with the Charter provisions.

On the question of the veto, our preference is for the total abolition of the veto. However, if it is not abolished, it should be extended to all permanent members of the Council.

To conclude, let me reassure all Member States that Nigeria will use its presence in the Council to promote and maintain international peace and security. We will carefully protect the mandate given to us and put it in the service, not only of Africa, but of the international community as a whole. Our efforts in the Council will be characterized by solidarity, cooperation, commitment and consultation.

We believe that through forthright determination we can all stand and muster the desired political will that will lead to the achievement of a reformed Security Council in due course.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me, at the outset, to express to the President our appreciation for his wise leadership of the General Assembly, including its relationship with the other bodies of this international Organization, and for the importance he attaches to the issue of Security Council reform. Allow me also to convey our appreciation to Ambassador Mark Lyall Grant, President of the Security Council for this month, for introducing the report of the Council (A/65/2). My delegation also associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The presentation of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly is an important issue and is a direct implementation of the Charter of the United Nations, specifically Article 24, paragraph 3, which states that "the Security Council shall submit annual and, when necessary, special reports to the General Assembly for its consideration".

The fact that the submission of that report is provided for in the Charter signifies that that issue is at the core of the functions and powers of the Security Council and not just a routine procedural matter. It is therefore essential that the Assembly stress the need to upgrade the annual report from a procedural review of the Council's activities and decisions to an analysis and assessment of the Council's activities, covering inter alia the obstacles it faces in carrying out the mandate entrusted to it by the Charter and its responsibility towards the entire United Nations membership.

On the other hand, the symbolic significance of the Security Council submitting at least one annual report to the General Assembly is that the enduring characteristic of this international Organization, regardless of political and practical changes, is that the General Assembly remains the highest and most inclusive body of the Organization. Other bodies should thus coordinate with it in a comprehensive manner, and should not infringe on its powers or mandates.

One of the most important factors for strengthening cooperation and coordination between the General Assembly and the Security Council is the permanent and periodic meetings between the Presidents of those two bodies, which must be maintained, enhanced and be made to include discussions of practical issues.

In terms of Security Council reform, we recognize that the majority of Member States hope for an update of the Council as an integral part of the overall United Nations reform process, which also includes the strengthening and revitalization of the General Assembly. Even with an agreement on the need to update the Council, one notes differences in views regarding the call for structural amendments or adjustments to its working methods. That divergence in positions is logical and not surprising, given that we are dealing here with 192 countries. But while we understand that divergence, it remains necessary not to overlook any of the views expressed by Member States, regional groups or other groupings. It would also be appropriate, in practice, to heed the position of the permanent members of the Council. The constructive role of the President of the General Assembly is to create the appropriate conditions for consensus.

We appreciate how difficult that endeavour might be, but it is only fair to recognize the evolution that has occurred since the beginning of the reform process in the mid-1990s, in particular the fact that the reform process moved from a closed and informal path to an intergovernmental one during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly. In this regard, it would be useful to build on what has been achieved, on the one hand, while, on the other hand, maintaining consensus.

We would therefore like to express our support for the President's reappointment of Ambassador Zahir Tanin as Chairman of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. We would like to express our deep appreciation to him for the tremendous efforts that he has deployed, and we wish him every success.

We stress the need to assign the necessary priority to that issue during the current session of the Assembly as well as in the coming session, in accordance with the outcome of the intergovernmental negotiations at this session.

Mr. Sin Son Ho (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation is very pleased to join with other delegations in debating Security Council reform. In spite of strenuous efforts by Member States to reform the Security Council in conformity with the changed international situation, the debate on reform continues without any tangible result. In particular, there is no progress on the issue of ensuring full representation for developing countries in the Council.

The Security Council continues to be misused by specific countries pursuing their own political purposes and continues to deal with issues beyond its mandate, thus losing its credibility with Member States. Today's realities prove once again the urgency of the need for the international community to reform the Council, which lacks democracy and does not reflect the unanimous will of Member States.

What is imperative in the reform process is to put an end to the misuse of the Security Council by specific countries and to the Council's practice of

making an issue only of situations in developing countries, which is unjustifiable and has even led to the imposition of coercive measures such as sanctions.

In order to ensure non-selectivity and impartiality in the activities of the Security Council, a mechanism must be established to limit the effect of Council resolutions to those cases where they have been endorsed by the General Assembly. The Security Council should also make all its meetings public, abandon its tendency to revert to informal consultations, and ensure impartiality in its discussions by inviting all interested countries and concerned parties, to all its consultation processes.

With regard to the enlargement of the Security Council, it is important to ensure full representation of the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement and other developing countries, which constitute after all an overwhelming majority of the United Nations membership, and enlarge the non-permanent category of membership first, a measure on which it would be easy to agree.

This is what is required by the reality of the situation, as proven by the numerous intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. When the permanent membership is enlarged, a country such as Japan, which continues to avoid admitting to, apologizing for and atoning for its past crimes but resorts instead to resurrecting its old dream of militarism and distorting and beautifying its past history of aggression, should never be allowed to be a permanent member of the Council.

In conclusion, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is confident that, under the able leadership of the President, realistic and innovative proposals aimed at reforming the Security Council will be devised during the current session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Mottaghi Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, let me express my gratitude to the President of the Assembly for convening this joint debate and for paying due attention to Security Council reform within the agenda of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session. My thanks also go to the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Mr. Zahir Tanin, for all his efforts in presiding as the Chair of the informal intergovernmental negotiations in the Assembly on Council reform, and we express our gratitude to him for accepting that responsibility for the year to come.

My delegation associates itself with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement delivered earlier yesterday by the representative of Egypt, but allow me to delve into a few more points as well.

Last September, the General Assembly, at one of the very last meetings of its resumed session (see A/64/PV.121), decided to continue intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform immediately in informal plenary meetings of the Assembly, and His Excellency Mr. Deiss, in a very symbolic gesture, put that decision into practice at the very beginning of the Assembly's work at this session, before the joint debate on the issue actually took place in plenary meetings. That has symbolic importance in the sense that it shows the priority that the President of the Assembly attaches to that issue as an extremely important agenda item.

Each year, the General Assembly receives and considers the annual report of the Security Council and expresses its views and expectations, as an exercise in added value, on the work of the Council. We are here today to consider this year's report of the Security Council (A/65/2) in conjunction with the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. The linkage between the report and the reform process represents the basic objective of a comprehensive reform of the Council, namely, to make a more democratic, inclusive, equitably representative, transparent, effective and accountable Council.

It is expected that the deliberations of the past few years have somehow mirrored, in practical terms, the work of the Security Council and its report. However, it seems that the pace of that movement has been rather sluggish.

That does not, of course, seek to deny the valuable and extensive work done by the delegations and the Secretariat on this compilation of the Security Council's undertakings. What is needed perhaps is to think about the ways and means of departing from mere repetition of the reports of previous years in light of the objectives and key elements of the reform process.

An assessment of the history of United Nations reform reveals the fact that only three amendments have been made to the United Nations Charter in the past six decades, and all of them have dealt only with the number of seats. The term "reform" has been used, despite the fact that the level of change has been far from the necessary real and comprehensive constitutional changes to United Nations policies and procedures.

Today, that story could be changed by exploring deeper levels of reform, where common ground may converge and where we could thus engage in an all-inclusive manner on substantial issues. In planning for the realization of such an objective, there are a few points worth exploring.

First, this represents a comprehensive approach. It is necessary to respond with respect to all aspects of Security Council reform in order to keep all on board, even if there is a lengthy stretch of time between those aspects that can be achieved in the relatively short run and those that can be accomplished only in the longer run. It is thus reasonable to carry out a comprehensive study of the old as well as the possible new elements that would better reflect the realities of the day in response to all of the key issues of Council reform. Needless to say, the underrepresentation of developing countries, including the Muslim world, in the Council needs to be seriously and satisfactorily addressed.

Secondly, on the elimination of the veto power, an issue that has come up repeatedly in the statements of many delegations over the past few years, positive signs have already emerged where we see that Member States are distancing themselves from the veto power. That is observable even among the permanent members of the Security Council. That fact simply demonstrates that there is a strong feeling that the veto, and even more, the fear of veto, is an unjust and unconstructive instrument in the hands of a few Member States that undermines the effectiveness of the Council and keeps it from taking meaningful decisions in many ways. Therefore, the gradual elimination of the veto power is an aspect that forms an ideal for almost all delegations. Thoughts and further deliberations on that important subject could be explored, elaborated and agreed upon at a later stage, commencing this year.

Thirdly, a pattern of cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council is needed. That could be elaborated through a careful and detailed definition of each body's prerogatives, including those that encompass common boundaries, which could be addressed through collaboration between the two bodies and should be tackled thoroughly. That needs to be done in order to avoid the old but continued de facto problem of the encroachment by the Council on the prerogatives of the other main organs of the United Nations. Furthermore, according to Article 13 of the United Nations Charter, the Assembly, as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations, is primarily entrusted with the task of the progressive development and codification of international law. Therefore, norm-setting and law-making by the Council runs counter to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter. That problem could be evaluated through an analytical assessment by the Secretariat in order to enable an appropriate distribution of labour between the Assembly and the Council.

Fourthly, to promote the working methods of the Security Council and honour the responsibility of the Council as regards to the rights of non-Council members, a number of measures have already been taken that could be charted and elaborated as short-term objectives. They include permitting non-Council members to participate in discussions on matters affecting them and their interests; allowing concerned countries the right to brief the Council on their positions on issues having a direct effect on their national interests; providing non-selective notification of Council meetings and convening regular daily briefings; and considering the right of reply for countries against whom allegations are raised during certain formats of the Council's meetings.

According to Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, the Council's decisions should reflect the wishes and views of the general membership. For that reason, the general membership, and particularly the concerned countries, should be informed of the negotiations on resolutions or statements directly affecting them.

On the other hand, the Council's mandate is not unlimited or above the law. It is bound by the Charter, and thus the Council should not act against the spirit and letter of its commitment to exercise its powers in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. It should refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Member States and from making decisions based on unauthentic information, politically

motivated analysis or the narrow national interest priorities of some Member States. Such acts would definitely undermine the Council's credibility and reputation, damage the legitimacy of its decisions and harm the trust of Member States in that important organ of the Organization.

Finally, it is often said that the United Nations is so consumed with getting the process right that it neglects the consequences. Today we need to sum up and streamline the consequences of the working agenda in order to make the whole process of reform meaningful and complete. In fact, no Council reform will be successful unless and until all major issues are appropriately, comprehensively and exclusively addressed. Every effort should be made to render the Security Council more democratic, representative and accountable. Let me assure the President of the full cooperation of my delegation to achieve those short and long-term objectives.

Mr. Šćepanović (Montenegro): At the outset, let me express Montenegro's full support for the President's initiative to make global governance and United Nations reform a central theme of the Assembly's current session. We commend him for his efforts in that respect and also for the timely organization of today's debate on one of the vital issues of the overall reform of the United Nations system. We hope that today's discussion will give fresh impetus to the negotiation process on this important subject, which at its core aims to reinstate the United Nations at the centre of global governance.

I would like to thank the current President of the Security Council, Ambassador Sir Mark Lyall Grant of the United Kingdom, for presenting the report of the Security Council (A/65/2).

Montenegro, the youngest Member of the United Nations, attaches meaningful importance to the issue of United Nations reform, while fully respecting the importance of the reform process to all Members of the Organization. In that context, we consider reform of the Security Council particularly significant, especially in the light of the belief of a large majority that the status quo will be hard to maintain, since new global challenges and realities require new approaches and responses that adequately reflect the current state of world affairs.

Montenegro sees a valid and legitimate foundation for Security Council reform in the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) and in the recommendations of the World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1). We also welcome the Secretary-General's determination and proposals in this regard. Security Council reform can be considered a basic element of the overall efforts for United Nations reform so that it may attain wider and more appropriate representation and increased legitimacy, responsibility, transparency and efficiency. In that regard, my country believes it is encouraging that multilateralism again ranks high among the priorities of lead countries in the world.

Security Council reform is an ongoing process that requires an active role and a flexible approach by all Member States and regional groups. Montenegro supports expanding the membership of the Security Council with the goal of securing equitable representation of all regional groups as an authentic reflection of new global circumstances.

My country highly regards this reality, especially the current constellation of power, with the aim of achieving consensus. Consensus itself must incorporate and recognize the growing role of the immense new actors alongside the traditional Permanent Five, and also the wider emancipation of the larger affiliations of small and medium-sized countries. In particular, the position of Africa must be appropriately addressed in the future reformed Security Council.

Our Eastern European Group has grown from 11 to 23 members. Montenegro points to that new reality, as that Group needs to be more adequately represented in the Council. And that translates into getting another non-permanent seat. Based on its national interests, and expressing solidarity with our regional group, Montenegro stands ready to actively, responsibly and in good faith support, participate in and contribute to the reform process. Our position of accountability can be viewed in the light of our own candidature for the Security Council for the term 2026 and 2027.

My country recognizes the intergovernmental negotiations as a chance for a qualitative deepening of the process, as well as an opportunity for small countries to voice their opinions and articulate their interests. We welcome the negotiation text, which contains all of the proposals made by Member States

since the process to move forward the text-based solution was opened. We take this opportunity to convey our appreciation to Ambassador Tanin for the manner in which he has been steering and conducting the intergovernmental negotiations.

However, my delegation would like to stress that now that all positions have been incorporated into the text, it is time to converge our views and take decisive action, which must have broad legitimacy. It must be foreseen that substantive negotiations will soon be necessary if further and visible progress is to be achieved. Therefore, we must remain engaged and join our efforts in order to find the most suitable modalities to conduct negotiations, which must have overall support so that we will all be in position to benefit. Let me assure the Assembly that Montenegro will certainly be a constructive and reliable partner along that path.

Mr. Vaz Patto (Portugal): I wish to thank the President for convening this joint debate on the agenda items "Report of the Security Council" and "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters". I would also like to express our gratitude to the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Lyall Grant, for his introduction of the annual report of the Security Council (A/65/2).

The meeting called today by the President bears upon a matter that is very important to the United Nations membership. The General Assembly is considering the annual report of the Security Council, the body entrusted by the United Nations Charter with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The exercise we are engaged in is a formal expression of the Council's accountability to the Assembly.

It is the duty of the Security Council to submit an annual report. And it is up to the Assembly — to us — to receive and consider it. The work of the Council is central to the United Nations agenda. The general membership follows its work closely, calling for more transparency, openness and interactivity. It is a recurrent call, which reflects the interest paid to the Council's work and its relevance in international affairs. We must pay tribute to the efforts of many Council members, in particular those non-permanent members who have been pushing this agenda from within the Council as well.

Much has been accomplished, as the Council's more recent practice seems to reflect. And we know how difficult it is to change long-established practices. The work carried out by the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions in recent years is to be commended. In particular, we welcome the work carried out and the results obtained during the period under consideration today. It represents further progress in the right direction, while, as always, the work is far from being completed — if it may ever be.

But the work achieved so far is the reflection of the debate that has been taking place in the General Assembly on the reform of working methods. Many have contributed to this debate here. Let me commend their efforts by mentioning the relevant work of Liechtenstein, Singapore, Costa Rica, Jordan and Switzerland — the group of five small nations — on this concept.

Today, we are addressing accountability. The level of interest of the general membership on that point is clearly reflected by the number of speakers participating in this debate. They reflect the importance attached to the Council's work and the clear assumption of the responsibility that is entrusted to us. While some may say that working methods are a matter for the Council to consider — a view that we do not share — it seems clear that accountability is a duty of the Security Council in which the General Assembly naturally has a central role to play. In that regard, both organs can and should do more.

First of all, accountability should be a constant concern of the Council and its members. It should not be confined to a once-a-year formal exercise such as this. The United Nations Charter even suggests a more active practice, calling for special reports.

Accountability is also a duty of each Member State that serves in the Council, acting on behalf of the general membership as required by the Charter. Here, too, there is room for significant improvements. The role of the President of the Security Council in that regard should be enhanced, giving her or him more leeway to interact with the larger membership. The Presidents' assessments — which Portugal was proud to push forward with others as a new idea that started in 1997 — are still part of the annual report, while they vary in informative contents. They should reflect to a greater extent the substance of the views of each

presidency on the monthly work of the Council, its achievements and shortcomings.

For our part, we are ready to assume the responsibility to further this work in the General Assembly and in the Council and to give, with the contribution of others, a more concrete meaning to accountability.

Let me also express Portugal's sincere thanks to the President for having made reform of the Security Council a priority in the agenda of the General Assembly. I want also to stress the importance of the designation of Ambassador Zahir Tanin to continue his work as facilitator of the intergovernmental negotiations as well as of the early launch of the process in this session. I want to express Portugal's deep appreciation for his work last year and for the results he led us to achieve.

I want also to stress Portugal's full commitment to continuing the work and promptly concluding the long-overdue reform of the Security Council, a reform that will adequately reflect present-day geopolitical realities and the legitimate aspirations of Member States and that will garner the agreement of the international community.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to voice my satisfaction to be able to speak under the presidency of Mr. Deiss.

(*spoke in French*)

I would like to thank the Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Sir Mark Lyall Grant, for his comprehensive presentation of the annual report of the Security Council (A/65/2) to the General Assembly.

My delegation endorses the statement made by the representatives of Egypt and Sierra Leone on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of African States, respectively (see A/65/PV.48).

Today's debate allows us to study two important issues that are intimately linked with one another: the annual report and Security Council reform.

On reform, I would like to thank the Ambassador of Afghanistan, Mr. Zahir Tanin, for his excellent work as facilitator and to say how pleased we are that he has been reappointed to that function by the current President of the General Assembly. It is not at all an easy job.

Security Council reform is dictated by profound changes in international relations and by the need for that important United Nations body to better discharge its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. We believe that more equitable representation of developing countries, from the African continent and from the Arab and Muslim world in particular, has become a need that any reform must integrate and take into consideration. It is certain that a Security Council that is more representative of the various regions and different cultures will have enhanced credibility and stronger moral credibility.

Expansion of the Council should be based, furthermore, on the fundamental principle of equitable geographic representation and on the contribution of potential members to maintaining international peace and security and their ability to take a positive role in preventing conflicts, peacefully settling disputes and maintaining and building peace, as well as in relation to achieving other goals of the United Nations.

We have taken note of the Council's efforts to introduce more effectiveness and transparency into its working methods, as well as into its interactions with Member States that are not members of the Council. We commend the serious work carried out to that end by the delegation of Japan, Chair of the Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

I now turn to the report of the Security Council. The report gives us an outline of the various activities conducted and decisions taken by the Council in discharging its mandate. We must note that threats to international peace and security — limited in the past primarily to inter-State disputes — have for a number of years now assumed multiple and complex forms. In light of that, the Council must continue to seek innovative responses to non-traditional threats that affect societies at their very core.

With regard to peacekeeping — the Council's principal instrument for discharging its mandate — it is certain that the complexity of current peace missions involves both the establishment or maintenance of peace and post-conflict peacebuilding. It requires an integrated approach that combines the adoption of clear and workable mandates, deployment of sufficient military and civil resources and the granting of adequate financing. The drawing up of strategies for each mission is a prerequisite for its success.

During the reporting period, the Council has continued to address the situation in the Middle East, particularly the question of Palestine. We followed with hope and encouragement the efforts of the United States Administration, together with the Palestinian Authority's responsible position supported by the Arab countries, that led to the relaunching of direct peace negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians on 2 September in Washington. However, the persistence of the Israeli Government in its illegal settlement policy, including in Al-Quds, reduces to zero the chances of negotiations being resumed, as shown by the recent decision of the Israeli Government to build 1,300 new housing units in the eastern part of Al-Quds, which has a majority Palestinian population.

The Kingdom of Morocco, whose King Mohammed VI presides over the Al-Quds Committee, reiterates its profound concern at the illegal acts by the Israeli authorities in eastern Al-Quds with the intention of altering the demographic composition of the Holy City. My country believes that only the establishment of a Palestinian State on the basis of relevant international legal decisions and the Arab Peace Initiative, with Al-Quds as its capital, as well as the withdrawal of Israel from the other occupied Arab territories, will guarantee lasting peace in the region.

We note, as we have in the past, that issues related to the African continent continue, unfortunately, to occupy a major part of the Council's agenda. That in no way diminishes the achievement of several African States that, with the help of the Council and the international community, have made commendable progress in emerging from crises and conflicts that have long plagued them.

We call on the Council to persist in and enhance its efforts, using approaches tailored to dealing with each situation on its own merits, to assist the African countries concerned in their quest for peace, stability and development. The Council's role in providing support and encouragement remains vital in helping the parties involved in conflict or disputes to seek solutions that are politically acceptable by all. Experience has shown that such solutions are fleeting or unattainable if requirements that they be reached realistically and in a spirit of compromise are not met.

It must be acknowledged that the contribution and sincere cooperation of neighbouring countries are indispensable in order to reach lasting solutions to the conflicts and disputes that hinder the process of the integration and development of entire regions in Africa. That is even more important when we consider the increasing and troubling threat in certain regions of the continent, such as the Sahelo-Saharan region, where only an inclusive, concerted approach can ensure the effectiveness and viability of efforts against the acts of terrorist groups that undermine the security of the States of the region.

Morocco has made promoting African issues a priority of its international agenda. It has spared no effort in its support for Council initiatives aimed at peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa. I can assure the Assembly that the Kingdom of Morocco will remain steadfast in its commitment to the United Nations for the achievement of the goals for which it was created.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on the items under consideration. May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Security Council contained in document A/65/2?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Two representatives have asked for the floor to exercise the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and 5 minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Kodama (Japan): I am compelled to state that Japan cannot accept the allegations made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

First, Japan firmly believes that the qualifications of any country for permanent membership in the Security Council should be based on that country's real contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. Since joining the United Nations, Japan, as a nation committed to peace, has been making a serious effort to meet that standard, contributing actively and constructively to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Secondly, regarding the reference by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the unfortunate past, my delegation cannot accept his comment, considering that Japan has been addressing its past sincerely and consistently since the end of the Second World War. To that end, for more

than 65 years Japan has consistently dedicated itself to promoting international peace and prosperity as well as demonstrating its respect for democracy and human rights. Japan stands ready at all times to contribute actively and constructively to international peace and security.

Mr. Yun Yong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation would like to exercise its right of reply concerning the remark made the delegation of Japan.

The Japanese delegation says that its Government has apologized for past crimes in this international forum when the issue of past crimes has been raised. That argument, however, is aimed simply at avoiding its responsibility and denouncing the international community.

As is well known, Japan is the only country in the world that has not admitted, apologized or compensated for the enormous crimes against humanity committed in the past. During its colonial rule over Korea, Japan illegally drafted 8.4 million Koreans into forced labour, killed one million and forced 200,000 young Korean women and girls to serve as sex slaves for the Japanese imperial army.

Furthermore, Japan blatantly challenges the international community's just demand for settlement of its past crimes. Officials of successive Japanese Governments, including its Prime Ministers, continue, without exception, to visit the Yasukuni Shrine, dedicated to soldiers who died in wartime, particularly those killed in the Second World War. Highly placed right-wing Japanese politicians openly whitewash the country's criminal wars of aggression as just wars designed to protect and liberate other Asian countries from Western Powers. They even resort to describing the systematic sex slavery established for the Japanese imperial army as deeds perpetrated by individual businessmen and voluntary commercial activity by prostitutes.

As everyone knows, on 9 April 2009, Japan published another middle-school textbook justifying its aggression and colonial rule over Korea and distorting such historical facts as sex slavery and forcible conscription. That textbook openly describes the Pacific war as the Greater East Asian War, preaching the revival of the old spirit of militarism and stating that Japan was a victim, unavoidably involved in the war as a result of the acts of the Western Powers, including the United States and United Kingdom. Those are a few examples of how Japan is trying to conceal its past crimes and evade its responsibilities.

Japan continues to state that the qualifications for potential new Security Council members will be evaluated on the basis of their contribution to international activity. That means that Japan has sufficient such qualifications. Such logic is simply not understandable in our world. A country that denies its past crimes will commit such crimes again. That is the lesson we have learned from history. Even today, Japan is doing its best to claim the Dokdo islets, which are part of Korean territory. In that regard, my delegation believes that Japan can no longer be allowed to talk about a permanent seat on the Security Council.

Mr. Kodama (Japan): Since we have explained our position on the issues that the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has just raised here and also in the Third Committee, we will not repeat it now.

However, we cannot accept the baseless statement that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has made here today, using unseemly expressions and vulgar language. It is regrettable that the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic is taking advantage of this meeting in order to advance its accusations against Japan, while all the Member State is sincerely discussing is the issue of Security Council reform and the report of the Security Council.

Mr. Yun Yong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The Japanese delegation should take note that the crime committed already is the one to be addressed. A crime once committed does not disappear by itself with time; it can be thought of as having disappeared only once it has been clearly settled.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 29 and agenda item 119.

Programme of work

The Acting President: I should like to consult members regarding an extension of the work of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

Members will recall that at its 2nd plenary meeting, on 17 September 2010, the General Assembly approved the recommendation of the General

Committee that the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) should complete its work by Wednesday, 10 November 2010. However, I have been informed by the Chairman of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) that the Committee was not able to complete its work by Wednesday, 10 November, and would need an additional meeting on Monday, 15 November, depending on the availability of conference services.

May I therefore take it that the General Assembly agrees to extend the work of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) for one additional meeting?

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.