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Tuesday, 12 October 2004, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping . . . . . (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 113 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/59/430)

The President (*spoke in French*): Before proceeding to the items for this meeting, I should like to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/59/430. It contains the text of a letter from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly informing the Assembly that 13 Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations under the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I should like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in document A/59/430?

It was so decided.

Agenda items 11 and 53 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/59/2)

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

Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti): We welcome the opportunity to participate in the joint debate relating to the report of the Security Council (A/59/2) and to the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

At the outset, we would like to express our thanks to the Security Council and to the Secretariat for their commendable efforts in preparing this year's report, which, as in previous years, conveys the intensity and variety of the issues considered and of the decisions taken. Over the years, the Council has been increasing the transparency of its work, and it needs to be encouraged to do more in that regard. However, the wider membership still finds the consultation process to be quite sketchy.

The gravity of the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council seems only to increase with each passing day. The pace at which significant developments occur around the globe today is often unnerving, particularly when compared with the snail's pace of the evolution of international governance mechanisms. Of course, conflicts between States

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remain a prime danger, given the potential numbers of people and resources that could be involved and the fallout of such conflicts on other States.

Equally if not more important today is the threat of terrorism, which, without established bases or locations and without uniformed soldiers or weapons of mass destruction, is difficult to address effectively while maintaining basic democratic rights and protection for the general population.

For many reasons, there has been a tendency of late to identify peoples along tribal, ethnic, racial or religious lines. Add to that the competition for natural resources, such as land, minerals and water, and the potential for conflict rises dramatically. That has been the story in Africa — as well as in other areas of the world — for much of the past few decades, and it has led to the increasing need for peacekeeping forces, in terms of both manpower and other resources, from outside the areas of conflict. The pressures imposed by the international flow of small arms and anti-personnel landmines — which has placed such weapons in the hands of often ruthless groups, thugs and even leaders — have complicated the issue even further.

Against that background, the Secretary-General rightly noted in an interview last year that there has been a tendency to focus on hard threats and to neglect soft threats — such as poverty, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, environmental degradation, inequality and the desperation in which some people live — which can be equally destructive.

If the world is to act collectively against those dangers, perhaps the only existing mechanism available to nations and able to confer legitimacy is the United Nations. Where action must be taken in a conflict situation, that usually means action through the Security Council. But as currently constituted, the Council is not a representative body; rather, it continues to be a legacy of the Second World War. Since its inception, there has been little or no change in its structure or power base, particularly on such issues as permanent membership or veto power.

Obviously, there is an urgent need for an inclusive Council that takes seriously into consideration the interests of both developed and developing States and of the world's power and population centres. The Council's powers, membership and composition must better reflect the demographic, economic and political realities of today's world if the Council is to slow the erosion of legitimacy it is suffering from because of its exclusion of vast numbers of peoples, States and economic classes.

Given the mounting pressure on the international system, from so many directions and against the background of events of the past few years, reform of the Council and perhaps of the United Nations system itself are undoubtedly part of a larger issue that calls for a rethinking of the international institutions. In the words of the Secretary-General, "Many of us sense that we are living through a crisis of the international system" (*Press release SG/SM/8803, 30 July 2003*). With particular reference to the crisis in Iraq, he said also that that war and ongoing crises in Africa

> "force us to ask ourselves whether the institutions and methods we are accustomed to are really adequate to deal with all the stresses of the last couple of years".

Certainly, few would question the need for reform of the multilateral system. And many would stress the dire necessity of reform of the Security Council, whether of its composition, or its capacity to anticipate as well as to respond to crisis, or its ability to follow through with respect to the maintenance of peace.

Security Council reform is currently stalemated, and as the President of the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session stated at the 94th meeting of that session, the stalemate is likely to be broken only if there is a major political breakthrough in the capitals of some key Member States. However, he also conceded that the Working Group on Security Council reform had succeeded in taking a few small steps. Responses to the questionnaire he distributed last year to members confirmed almost universal frustration over the inability of the Working Group to produce the desired outcomes. We are, therefore, pleased at the Secretary-General's establishment of the High-level Panel to assess the role of the United Nations in dealing with new global threats, challenges and change. Some of its initial soundings are encouraging. We look forward to its report to the Secretary-General in December, and to his own observations by the next session of the General Assembly.

Our goal remains that of a safe world where conflict is thwarted through mechanisms of preventive diplomacy. Many regions in the world, beset by conflict, suffer from neglect and inattention; some of the wars last longer, thus creating a generation of

armed, uneducated and hopeless youth. The result has been the failure of States, a cycle of poverty, instability, social disintegration and the collapse of governance. Such dysfunctional States also pose other threats as potential breeding grounds for terrorism and other kinds of crime. Obviously, the Council needs to have greater sensitivity towards poor countries embroiled in brutal conflicts, which require urgent attention concerning peacemaking and peacekeeping. Closely related to this is post-conflict peace-building, which in the view of some experts remains fragile and has yielded mixed results. That should not be the case, given that peace-building, in the view of professional analysts, is an international necessity and responsibility and represents a collective commitment by the United Nations and other international actors to deal with the sources of violent conflict in conflict-torn societies while preparing the ground for sustained peace and development.

Unfortunately, according to relevant studies, the results of the last 10 years of peace-building practices and policies are, at best, ad hoc, tentative and uneven. That is not encouraging and represents a real challenge to the efforts towards the reform of the Council, especially in the post-9/11 environment. Much is expected in that regard from the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, in terms of underscoring the need for the United Nations to renew its commitment to conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building.

Finally, my country is very pleased with the evolution of transitional governance in Somalia. The election of a President two days ago represents the clearest manifestation yet of the Somali people's desire to restore peace and stability to their shattered homeland. The Republic of Djibouti extends its unflinching pledge to the new Government of Somalia that it will spare no efforts to help its brothers and sisters in their earnest quest for nation-building.

Equally, I am confident that the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, will direct full and undivided attention to Somalia as it once again takes its place among the nations of the world.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic): It has been 11 years since the Working Group on Security Council Reform was created. That is a very long time — too long, I would say. Many of us are becoming a little frustrated, impatient and weary. However, in the light of existing and recently emerging threats to international peace and security, the significant role of the Security Council and the need to reform it in order to reflect today's global realities have never been more relevant. Hence, we must do everything we can to find an acceptable solution to the crucial question of reform.

The primary aim of this exercise is to make the Security Council more effective by making it more representative, transparent and democratic. In that endeavour, most Member States have focused on the issues of expansion of the membership of the Council and improving its working methods and decision-making process.

Along with the majority of other United Nations Member States, the Lao People's Democratic Republic is in favour of an increase in the number of both permanent and non-permanent members, with the new members coming from the developed and developing countries in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution and taking into account the relative importance of the various countries. In that context, the Lao People's Democratic Republic reaffirms its support for Japan, Germany and India becoming permanent members of a newly expanded Security Council.

Furthermore, we would like to stress that reform should also include measures that would render the Security Council more transparent in its working methods and, especially, in its decision-making process. We believe this transparency would not only boost the confidence of Member States but would also allow all of us to better understand the merits of the Council's decisions and to fully support them.

In this exercise, another important issue to be addressed is the veto power. Throughout the years, the world has witnessed an increasing abuse of the veto. The veto power is obviously antidemocratic and discriminatory. However, taking into account the sensitivity and complex nature of the issue, we hope that Member States will work out a solution acceptable to all.

Today's world is undergoing complex and rapidly changing evolution. Since 1945, great changes have occurred. The Security Council, the main body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, should adapt to these new changes and realities.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic believes that, with our tireless efforts and in a spirit of compromise, we should work together to reform the Security Council in order to make this body more effective and legitimate.

Mr. Rastam (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to participate in this debate on agenda items 11 and 53.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the President of the Security Council for the month of October, Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, for his presentation yesterday of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. My delegation has taken note of the Council's report, as contained in document A/59/2.

Consideration of the annual report of the Security Council by the General Assembly provides a good opportunity for the larger membership of the Organization to assess the work and performance of the Council during the period under review. This would be in keeping with Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Malaysia appreciates the serious efforts initiated by Mr. Julian Hunte, President of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, to institute greater and regular interaction between the General Assembly and the Council. We especially welcomed the adoption of Assembly resolution 58/126 of 13 January 2004. Part A of the annex to that resolution contains, inter alia, references to the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council in the context of revitalizing the work of the Assembly. It should also be seen in the context of promoting transparency in the work of the Council.

My delegation recalls that an open meeting of the Council for the purpose of discussing its report before submission to the Assembly was convened prior to the Assembly's fifty-seventh session. That promoted greater transparency and accountability in the work of the Council. We regret that the Council has done away with this practice. We also regret the late issuance of document A/59/2.

The report of the Security Council has shown a significant improvement in the Council's method of work. However, it continues to lack a substantive and analytical account of the work of the Council. The incorporation of more details and analyses beyond a factual account of the Council's work would certainly help the wider membership of the United Nations to appreciate the circumstances that had influenced the decisions of the Council on a particular issue. That would enable a greater appreciation of the achievements made or difficulties faced by the Council on all questions under its consideration, and it could allow non-Council members to offer suggestions to the Council on possible measures to further improve the work of the Council.

My delegation notes that the Council addressed a wide range of issues during the period under review. A total of 213 meetings were held and 60 resolutions adopted. Conflicts and instability in Africa continue to dominate the work of the Council. Malaysia is pleased that the situation in Liberia has considerably improved, and Guinea-Bissau has successfully completed the first phase of its transitional political process. The Security Council mission that visited some countries in the African continent in June this year made some important recommendations towards establishing political stability in the subregions, and those recommendations should be supported. Malaysia looks forward to the Council taking more effective decisions on conflict situations, particularly in Africa.

We agree that the holding of thematic discussions is useful to improve the effectiveness of the Council. We note that 12 meetings for thematic discussions, as well as 73 open debates and briefings, were convened. Malaysia considers thematic discussions and open debates as avenues for allowing Council members and the wider membership of the United Nations to offer views and suggestions on issues directly related to the work of the Council. However, it is not clear whether these have actually been fully considered by the Council when arriving at decisions.

Given the increasing workload of the Council, we believe that thematic discussions should be kept to the minimum and held specifically with a view to achieving concrete results that would have an impact on the performance, not only of the Council, but also of the United Nations at large. We continue to believe that thematic discussions and other important issues addressed by the Council from time to time would merit the submission of special reports to the General Assembly, as provided for under Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter and in keeping with the intent of Assembly resolution 58/126.

My delegation fully appreciates the practice increasingly adopted in the Security Council to urge speakers to be brief in their statements. We understand the need to respect precious time. However, we feel that this should be done in a manner that also respects the principles embodied in the Charter, as well as the Council's own provisional rules of procedure. At the same time, I would urge the Council to respect the wishes of Member States to express their views publicly in the Council, particularly on issues of wider concern to all, such as on international terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

In this connection, any decision by the Council to restrict participation in its open meetings, such as in the case of 8 October 2004, will not be helpful in maintaining the spirit of cooperation between the Council and the larger body of United Nations membership. On these very important questions related to international peace and security, everyone is a stakeholder. This is especially so in the case of the Council's work concerning the fight against international terrorism.

My delegation notes that the Council has increased the invocation of Chapter VII of the Charter. Since 1 August 2003, 28 of its resolutions contain this provision. We strongly believe that Chapter VII must be invoked responsibly after careful consideration of a given question. The Council must not apply double standards. For instance, why has the Council not invoked Chapter VII concerning the question of Palestine, despite the apparent threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, or acts of aggression committed by Israel? Chapter VII should not be invoked to advance narrow political objectives or to satisfy certain national interests. It is the collective interest of the wider membership in the maintenance of international peace and security that should be a major consideration.

Malaysia is concerned with recent trends in the Security Council to prescribe legislation to Member States through its resolutions that also invoke Chapter VII. Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1566 (2004) are cases in point. Malaysia registered the concerns of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) concerning resolution 1540 (2004) in the Council's 4950th meeting, a public meeting held on 22 April 2004. We have insisted that the substance of resolutions such as those mentioned should serve as a basis for consideration by Member States when formulating, in due course, a comprehensive multilaterally negotiated legal instrument to address the specific question at hand. Malaysia would urge the Council to be more circumspect in its attitude towards prescribing legislative measures and invoking Chapter VII on behalf of the Member States of the United Nations.

Malaysia applauds the Council's continued interest on the Palestinian question demonstrated in its monthly briefings and open debates. A total of 20 meetings and 33 informal consultations were convened on that question. That notwithstanding, only one resolution was adopted by the Council, namely, resolution 1544 (2004) of 19 May 2004, pertaining to the demolition by Israel of Palestinian homes in the Rafah refugee camp.

The Security Council must improve and maintain its credibility by enforcing its authority on the Palestinian question, in particular in respect of the commitment to the road map and to the two-State solution, the end of occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories, the termination of Israel's settler colonialism activities and the reversal of the construction of the separation wall. The Council must not allow its resolutions to be manipulated or allow itself to be prevented from doing anything meaningful. The Council must take resolute action concerning the construction of the Israeli expansionist separation wall, which was declared illegal in an advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice. Malaysia hopes that that will be done soon on the basis of the initiative presently before the Council.

The question of Iraq naturally has continued to dominate the attention of the Security Council. Iraq is still in turmoil despite all efforts to improve the situation on the ground. Although Council resolution 1546 (2004) of 8 June 2004 returned sovereignty to the people of Iraq, peace, security and stability remain major concerns. Malaysia reiterates its call for the United Nations to play a leading role, particularly in establishing appropriate conditions in preparation for the elections scheduled for January 2005. The orderly conduct of elections is critical to the process of re-establishing a truly independent and sovereign Government in Iraq. Malaysia reaffirms its conviction that the United Nations has the best credentials and can provide the best platform to enable Member States to participate in post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction efforts in Iraq. We look to the Security

Council to find creative ways of achieving those objectives.

The cooperation provided by Member States in the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee is an excellent illustration of effective multilateralism. Member States have displayed their full commitment in implementing and responding to Council resolution 1373 (2001). Certainly this can also be anticipated with respect to resolution 1566 (2004). Malaysia is convinced that the political will displayed by Member States in combating international terrorism will be fortified and gain greater momentum.

Sadly, such cooperation is not replicated in the implementation of many other Council resolutions. As Security Council resolutions are legally binding, it is incumbent upon Member States to implement them without selectivity. The Council must play its role without discrimination to ensure that all Member States adhere to and implement its resolutions.

We wish to reaffirm our support for the adoption by the Security Council of clear and precise indicators to measure its work. One such indicator is the level of compliance by Member States in implementing Council resolutions. That would help to underscore legitimacy in the work of the United Nations and allow the United Nations to regain credibility in the eyes of the international community.

On the issue of sanctions, Malaysia in principle continues to oppose their imposition owing to the debilitating impact of sanctions on the general population. Sanctions should be utilized as a measure of last resort and after careful consideration of their ramifications. The sanctions should hit their intended target and not the innocent populace. Sanctions must be devised with clear parameters, including specific and clearly identified targets, time frames and regular impact assessments. Malaysia hopes that the Council's Working Group on General Issues on Sanctions could expedite its efforts to reach a decision on the recommended duration and termination of sanctions. In that connection, Malaysia welcomes the lifting of the Council-imposed sanctions against Iraq and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya during the period under review.

Turning to agenda item 53, my delegation wishes to state that we agree with the prevailing view that the United Nations, including the Security Council, needs to be reformed in such a way as to enhance both its effectiveness and its credibility. It is essential that the countries that play a major role in the maintenance of international peace and security participate actively in the decision-making process of the Security Council. As the number of Member States, and with it the proportion of developing countries, has increased dramatically, the representation of the Security Council needs to be enhanced. For that purpose, the Council must be expanded in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. During the general debate of the fifty-ninth session, 149 countries referred to the need for Security Council reform. Out of those, 86 countries supported expansion in both categories of membership.

I should like to recall the address delivered by the Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia, at the general debate of the fifty-ninth session on 27 September 2004. He said that the Security Council should be rendered more democratic and representative of the number and geographical spread of its international membership. He also said that the exercise of the veto by the permanent members of the Security Council should be regulated so as to prohibit that power being used unjustly, at the sole discretion of its holder, to overrule the wishes of the majority. He believed that that injustice could be rectified, for instance by making certain types of General Assembly resolutions capable of setting aside a Security Council veto.

We look forward to receiving the report to be submitted early next year by the Secretary-General pursuant to the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, including, we anticipate, recommendations concerning Security Council reform. Meanwhile, Malaysia looks to your leadership, Mr. President, to give impetus to the much-needed forward movement of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform. Indeed, international peace and security cannot be fully maintained without significant reform of the Council, in terms of its membership, methods of work, transparency, democratization and the veto. We look forward to working closely with you, other Member States of the United Nations and the Secretary-General to explore new ideas and produce a fresh outlook towards reforming the Security Council. We already possess the necessary tools to advance the reform process. We believe that what is required now is the full support and political will of Member States.

Mr. de Santa Clara Gomes (Portugal): For many years, there has been widespread agreement on the

need to adapt the United Nations and its main bodies to an international context that has evolved significantly since the end of the Second World War. Today more than ever, the international situation needs a working and effective international system, and the need to reform the United Nations has become more pressing. The Secretary-General, by establishing the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, has given new momentum to our efforts. We look forward to the Panel's recommendations.

The world needs a Security Council that is representative, effective and transparent. The international community, on whose behalf the Council acts, must feel it is a part of the Council's deliberations. In this respect, we welcome some recent improvements in the working methods of the Council. I would highlight the following points.

First, there are increased debates on cooperation with regional organizations. However, this dialogue needs to be further structured and institutionalized, as regional organizations, such as the European Union or the African Union, play an increasing role in crisis management, adding important political, cultural, human and financial value to United Nations missions.

Secondly, the quantity and quality of the troop-contributing countries' meetings with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has improved, thus making troop contributors privy to the workings of peacekeeping operations. There are also mechanisms in place for consultations between troop-contributing countries and the Security Council. However, these mechanisms should be genuinely implemented and become more substantive. Troop-contributing countries and other significant actors should be enabled to express their views and thereby contribute to the creation and mandate of peacekeeping operations at an early stage.

Thirdly, I would like to mention the so-called groups of friends, in which member States of the Council, together with other interested States, organize themselves around a certain issue. This informal format allows for frank and open exchanges. So far this practice is limited, but it should continue and expand. Although decision-making will remain in the hands of the Council, these groups can serve as useful contact points between the Council and the membership.

The reform of the United Nations must not be restricted to the working methods of the Security Council. Its membership must also reflect today's international realities, which differ significantly from the context in which the United Nations was created almost 60 years ago. Portugal has already expressed its support for the presence of Brazil, Germany and Japan on the Security Council. We believe that Africa must be permanently represented at the Council and have expressed support for a permanent seat in the Security Council for India.

It goes without saying that an enlargement of the permanent membership of the Security Council should be accompanied by a revision of the voting procedures concerning the veto, set out in Article 27 of the Charter. To maintain that power as it is would be detrimental to the effectiveness and the perceived legitimacy that we seek to increase through a wider representation.

United Nations reform must include more effective mechanisms and practices in conflict prevention, which is also a major responsibility of the Security Council. In this respect, allow me to recall that Portugal has proposed the establishment of a peace and development commission aimed at addressing conflict prevention in a more effective and comprehensive way, particularly with regard to countries emerging from conflict and with weak institutions.

The proposal stems from the undisputed fact that, since the sources of conflict are varied in nature, only by addressing both security challenges and development needs can countries embark on a sustainable path for peace and prosperity. In the long run, apart from it being ethically correct, a policy of prevention is always the less costly option for the international community.

The new commission we propose would seek combined action on the security, political, economic and nation-building fields, promoting a coherent and cohesive sustained effort by the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, in conjunction with the Bretton Woods institutions and other major interested parties. Bearing in mind that the Charter defines the prevention of armed conflicts as one of the main goals of the United Nations, we sincerely believe that this proposal would significantly contribute to reinforcing the central and crucial role that the United Nations must continue to play in international affairs.

Mr. del Rosario Ceballos (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to say that we are very grateful to the Security Council and the Secretariat for having published this report.

The United Nations is the outcome of an historic convergence of wills forged in the struggle against fascism. The United Nations, as a result of the part it played in maintaining world peace and equilibrium and in light of recent history, remains the ideal instrument for the international community to prevent conflict or restore the peace.

In his statement at the 17th meeting during the general debate at this fifty-ninth session, the Secretary of State for Foreign Relations of the Dominican Republic said:

> "Multilateralism is one of the main pillars of the foreign policy of the Dominican Republic .... For that reason, we join those nations that call for a thorough reform of the United Nations system, with a view to enhancing its democratization and making it a more effective instrument for States Members."

One of the two main bodies of the United Nations is the Security Council. As Article 24 of the Charter says, this small body acts on behalf of the entire membership, but geographical representation within it is unequal. In recent years, a great deal has been said about the need to introduce reforms in order to make the Organization more effective. This aspiration should not become a dead letter, because the responsibilities of the United Nations are growing considerably at a time when unprecedented events and situations of our generation require a high degree of creativity.

To face this challenge, we need far more open participative mechanisms. That is why we — along with many Member States — are very interested in having the Security Council expanded, in recognition of realities that did not exist when the Organization was founded. Asia, Africa and Latin America should quite appropriately have two permanent members, and, at the same time, we should increase the number of non-permanent members. Not only would this contribute to making the most active body of the Organization more democratic, it would also include wider segments of humanity in the making of decisions that, when all is said and done, affect all of us.

Mr. Elisaia (Samoa): Allow me, first of all, to register my delegation's appreciation to the President of the Security Council and to the Secretariat for the work that has gone into the preparation of this year's report (A/59/2). Samoa is grateful for the Council's report, which provides a comprehensive summary of its activities for the period ending 31 July 2004.

While some previous speakers have lamented the absence of an analytic assessment in the report of the Council's achievements, including setbacks, challenges and threats confronting it, my delegation believes that the real and significant value of the report is the opportunity it affords the United Nations membership to gain insight into the work and deliberations of the Security Council.

The workload of the Security Council is steadily increasing. That, we feel, can be attributed in part to the trend in the Council to deal with thematic topics that more appropriately fall under the purview of the General Assembly. There is therefore a pressing need to demarcate the division of responsibilities among the Security Council, the General Assembly and the other organs of the United Nations such as the Economic and Social Council in order to eliminate conflicting mandates, duplication of efforts and waste of limited resources.

On the issue of the transparency of the work of the Council, we welcome the fact that more open meetings and briefings were held over the last year. While we commend them as useful means of engaging the international community on issues that directly affect it, those consultations are not institutionalized and, at best, are held selectively and at random. We therefore urge a more structured approach to allow Member States to contribute in an effective and meaningful manner to the decision-making process, both to encourage wider ownership of decisions taken and to facilitate their timely implementation.

The Council's primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under the Charter has not eroded with the passing of time. On the contrary, it remains as valid, relevant and important as ever. It is therefore in the collective interest of the United Nations membership that the Security Council should be effective, decisive, representative and respected.

Samoa continues to actively support the enlargement of the Security Council in both its

permanent and non-permanent membership. We believe that the expansion of the Council is both necessary and desirable to mirror present-day realities and to enhance the Council's effectiveness and legitimacy.

Like other Member States, Samoa supports a credible and efficient Security Council as the central point of reference in a multilateral peace and security system. In that regard, we continue to support the increase in the number of permanent Council members to include Japan and Germany because of their invaluable contribution to the international community. Samoa first took that stance eight years ago at the Assembly's fifty-first session, and recently during last month's general debate.

The almost fourfold increase in United Nations membership over its 59-year history, comprising in the main developing and small island States, makes it imperative that the expansion of the permanent membership of the Council should encompass representatives from the regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.

It will always be difficult to carry out any reform of the Security Council given the sensitivity of the issues and the competing and sometimes irreconcilable interests at stake. That is why my delegation earnestly awaits the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and its recommendations to breathe new life into Security Council reform. We will be actively engaged in the consideration of the Panel's report and any other ongoing initiatives in the collective search for reforming the Security Council so that it responds effectively to today's global challenges, threats and current realities.

Mr. Tekle (Eritrea): The Eritrea delegation takes this opportunity to thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry, who in his capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of October presented the annual report of the Council for the period of 1 August 2003 to 31 July 2004 (A/59/2).

My delegation also extends its appreciation to the previous President of the General Assembly, Mr. Julian Hunte, and his colleagues, Ambassador Luis Gallegos Chiriboga of Ecuador and Ambassador Christian Wenaweser of Liechtenstein, who during the past year steered with dedication 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.

On the other hand it is dismaying that while the Working Group has been seized of the matter and has carried out serious consultations since its creation in 1993, no meaningful agreement has been reached to narrow the gaps between the varying positions of Member States, particularly with regard to cluster I issues, on the increase in the membership of the Council. It is hoped that the recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, to be issued on 1 December 2004, will add fresh impetus to the efforts being made to create a plausible consensus.

Throughout recorded history, humanity has been preoccupied with the search for newer and newer formulas to avert wars, resolve conflicts and maintain peace and security. The normative changes that take place in any historical era inevitably trigger new epochal values and structures which, in turn, spawn new concepts, norms, principles and laws — or modify old ones — in order to meet the revolutionary changes of the times.

Humanity has now entered such an era. The end of the cold war and the advent of globalization have ushered in such epochal changes, with their attendant consequences. There is as yet no consensus on whether globalization offers hope and opportunities or has become the major source of disasters, discontent and despair. Yet, there is agreement that the challenges of globalization have become so enormous in both their present impact and potential consequences, that they require us to redefine our concepts, norms, principles and laws. There is also agreement on giving multilateralism even more prominence in international relations. All seem to agree that the United Nations and its mechanisms remain the best institutions for meeting the challenges of globalization and that they therefore must be reformed and revitalized in order to make their principles relevant and structures more competent.

In the age of globalization, discourse on security can no longer be dominated by traditional State-centric paradigms. While it is true that the defence of a State's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity remains paramount, the overwhelming number of people of our world, the threat of hunger, disease and environmental disasters, as well as internal conflicts and massive

displacements, have become equally prominent concerns. Indeed, it is not difficult to conceive of situations in which the security of the citizens of a State that faces no threat to its sovereignty and territorial integrity may actually be gravely threatened by their living conditions. Security must be viewed as going beyond military threats and State-centred analysis and must include socio-economic, environmental and political dimensions, as well as the linkages among them. The security of human beings must be the critical core of concern.

The achievement of a certain commonality of interests among the permanent members of the Security Council following the end of the cold war enabled the Council to make some progress in several areas, including the use of force in the prevention of conflict; the control of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction; the strengthening of the relationships among institutions of the United Nations, as well as relations between the United Nations and regional organizations; and the enhancement of the role of the Secretary-General.

Yet it is also evident that the United Nations was not prepared to cope with the new threats to international peace and security that were given life and quickly matured during the great transition to what has been dubbed the new world order. It was clear that neither the Charter nor the structures of the United Nations system were designed to meet such epochal changes. Thus, while the Organization could contribute to the conclusion of the 10-year war between Iran and Iraq and to the smooth transition to Namibian independence and could play significant roles in conflict resolution in Central America, Afghanistan and Cambodia, it is having difficulties in meeting the challenges of terrorism, transnational crime, including the trafficking of human beings and of illicit drugs, and intra-State conflicts, which are often exacerbated by foreign intervention and massive internal displacement. Afghanistan, Somalia, Haiti and the former Yugoslavia are but a few examples.

Indeed, when the United Nations found it expedient to involve itself in such conflicts — often in cooperation with regional organizations — new questions arose related to the criteria for intervention and the reluctance of major Powers, particularly permanent members of the Council, to subordinate their interests and the interests of their allies — or their debtors — to the wider interests of peace and security.

The need to strengthen the Security Council and to make it a body that is more representative, united and proactive but that still reflects the configuration of global power has become self-evident. It is also believed that, if the reform and strengthening of the Security Council is to be meaningful, there must be equally credible reform and revitalization of other United Nations institutions, including in particular the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat.

The Eritrean delegation is convinced that, if any reform is to be effective, the Security Council must benefit from the trust and confidence of Member States by being representative of all Members, rich and poor, big and small; it must ensure that its decisions — which necessarily affect the lives of people in the most direct manner — are anchored in the rule of law and in respect for the Charter and other international instruments; it must honour treaty agreements to which the United Nations itself is a party and by which it has undertaken the obligation to enforce final and binding decisions made by legal mechanisms created at its behest; it must ensure that its members — particularly its permanent members — overcome the restrictive effects of their respective national interests and that they faithfully carry out the collective responsibility of guarding international peace and security in all parts of the world, without fear or favour; it must be truly transparent, accessible and accountable; and it must benefit from the contributions of non-members — particularly stakeholders — in such matters as conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict confidence-building.

It is for those reasons that the Eritrean delegation supports the position of the Non-Aligned Movement on expanding the membership of the Security Council in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories as well as on the progressive elimination of the veto. The veto has hampered the effectiveness of the Security Council; the process aimed at eliminating the veto must begin so that we may progressively adjust to its inevitable but not hasty elimination.

Any attempt to reform the Security Council will be contingent on the political will of its member States. The world is being warned that a new world order is evolving and that that order brings with it the seeds of future conflict and the possibility of a new epochal war. Do we have the unity of interest and purpose to meet the challenge?

Mr. Kmoníček (Czech Republic): Since the Czech Republic has been actively involved throughout the years in the discussions on Security Council reform, I should like to make a few points with regard to that topic.

More than 11 years after the discussions on Security Council expansion began, the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council has been unable to come up with a realistic, politically acceptable solution that would strengthen the role and functioning of the Security Council. In that respect, we await the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, which should place United Nations reform — including reform of the Security Council — in the wider context of global threats and challenges.

Here, let me briefly reiterate the position of the Czech Republic. My country is an advocate of Council expansion in both categories of membership; our choice would be five additional permanent seats and four to five additional non-permanent seats. We believe that the criteria for selecting new permanent members should reflect the candidates' overall influence on world affairs, taking political, economic, military and cultural aspects into account. Readiness to participate in the safeguarding of international peace and security and the capacity to assume greater financial responsibility are crucial for permanent membership. In particular, we support the aspirations of Germany and Japan to permanent seats and the allocation of three additional new permanent seats for Africa, Asia and Latin America. There is no doubt that new permanent members from among the developing countries will help to increase the credibility of the Council.

With regard to the question of the veto, we continue to favour some reduction in the areas where the veto can be applied, possibly through voluntary commitments on the part of permanent members and other steps that do not necessarily require amendment of the Charter.

The Czech Republic considers itself a reform-minded country. We have no vested interest in Security Council reform except for better functioning and greater authority of the Council. We share the majority view that the composition of the Council should be adjusted to the current state of affairs. The present situation is unsustainable; it undermines the legitimacy of the Council's decisions and therefore calls for action. Words can be considered action if action follows them. Let us take action after 11 years of discussions.

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): As this is the first time I have addressed the Assembly in your presence, Sir, allow me to express to you my sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly and to assure you of our full cooperation in ensuring the success of its work.

My delegation wishes to thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, the current President of the Security Council, for presenting to the Assembly yesterday the report of the Security Council (A/59/2), whose content we fully endorse. We are certain that the report contains elements of great interest to Members of the Organization that will help them to evaluate the Council's work. However, as more than one delegation has already said, we are aware that the report should become a more substantive and analytical instrument so that it will promote a debate on how to improve the Council's functioning in the future.

The Council has already made notable progress in an area particularly important to my delegation: the transparency of the Council's working methods and closer exchanges with other Members of the Organization. The Council must further intensify, if possible, its practice of public meetings, with the effective and widest possible participation of all parties interested in the question under consideration.

Spain is firmly committed to the process of reform of the United Nations as established in the Millennium Declaration. In that context, Spain supports the efforts made to advance the revitalization of the General Assembly and believes that there should be greater reflection on the reform of the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council and the adaptation of the entire United Nations system to the new challenges that led the Secretary-General, whose leadership we applaud, to appoint the High-level Panel that will issue its report on 1 December.

The reform of the United Nations system is among the questions that have generated the most lively discussion in recent weeks in the Assembly. We trust that it will now be possible to make substantial

progress on the urgent and necessary reform and that the whole ensemble of institutions and mechanisms of the Organization will be considered, wherever it is necessary to improve them and make them more effective. Spain is ready to contribute to that process through ideas and constructive dialogue with all Member States.

There is no doubt that within that general reflection aimed at the action we are all urging, the question of Security Council reform is especially important. However, we must clarify that despite its importance, the future development of this question cannot dictate the overall course of the wider reform, which we know the Organization as a whole requires. In other words, that wider reform cannot become hostage to the success or the failure of the attempts to reform the Security Council.

Before spelling out the principles informing the Spanish position on the possible reform of the Security Council, I wish to express my thanks to the former President of the General Assembly, Mr. Julian Hunte, for his leadership in the work of the Open-ended Working Group and the Group's Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Luis Gallegos Chiriboga of Ecuador and Ambassador Christian Wenaweser of Liechtenstein. Their report (A/58/47) contributes very interesting information, analysis and reflections on the item under consideration.

Spain seeks a reform of the Security Council based on the safeguarding and the promotion of the greater interests of the Organization and therefore hopes that the reform can be achieved with the broadest consensus of Member States, enhancing the representativeness, democratization, effectiveness and transparency of the Council's work.

To that end, Spain favours an increase of the number of Member States on the Security Council, with the aim of improving the Council's representativeness at a time when the Organization has 191 Member States. We therefore support an increase in the number of non-permanent members so that the various geographical areas are duly represented in that category open to all Member States, through their periodic election by the Assembly, thus strengthening the Council's democratization.

Increasing the number of permanent members is, of course, not the only option. Nor is it the best that can be conceived. Spain does not favour an increase in the number of permanent members, either with or without the veto. The creation of a new category of permanent members without the veto power would not in any way reflect the reality of the international community in the twenty-first century. We are certainly willing to consider formulas that in certain circumstances permit longer periods on the Council. We are convinced that there are States that make a significant contribution to the work of the Organization, and we are certain that it would be possible to find formulas of representation that respond in the best way to the general interests of the United Nations without having to grant certain States the privilege of acceding to the category of permanent members of the Council.

Spain supports addressing the question of limiting the veto power of the permanent members, with the goal of enhancing the Security Council's effectiveness and facilitating the decision-making process, in order to prevent a situation in which a single country could block the Council's action. In that context, formulas could be proposed such as limiting the veto power to resolutions under Chapter VII of the Charter or deciding that the veto, in order to have effect, must be imposed by at least two States.

Spain favours continuing to develop the open and accessible functioning of the Security Council for the benefit of greater transparency and to demonstrate that the Council's work really is being done on behalf of Member States — as the Charter says — and in the interest of the international community and should thus receive the valuable contribution of interested States.

We support the proposal to promote better coordination among the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in order to ensure the continuity in the work of the Organization towards the maintenance and consolidation of peace, while safeguarding the responsibilities and the competencies corresponding to each organ in accordance with the Charter.

We also support promoting the exchange of information and coordination between the Security Council and the regional organizations that play a relevant role in conflict prevention and management, in particular, to mention a few, the African Union, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, NATO and the Organization of American States.

Spain supports greater dialogue between the Security Council and civil society, especially the non-governmental organizations, the media and academic, business and union organizations. To that end, the Security Council should improve the established formulas and explore innovative initiatives such as systematic meetings with political, social and economic actors during its missions on the ground and the holding of thematic seminars on current issues of importance to the Council and the international community.

We are faced with an enormous challenge, and we want to face it with a spirit of consensus in order to safeguard and boost the cohesion of our Organization. We hope that our stated basic principles can be taken into account during future discussions of possible reform. We believe they offer an attractive alternative that is more representative and democratic for all Member States, while avoiding unjustified privileges, and open the important organ that is the Security Council to the broader and more active participation of all Members, large and small, of our Organization.

We know that you, Sir, are personally committed to this process, and we therefore assure you of our complete cooperation.

Mr. Gallegos Chiriboga (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to give thanks for the expressions of gratitude made by many delegations in the Hall for the work carried out by Chairman Hunte and the Vice-Chairpersons of the Working Group, in particular with respect to the report of the Working Group on Equitable Representation of the Security Council.

In previous debates, Ecuador has stated that the Security Council must be reformed in order to face present challenges, which are completely different from those that existed at the Organization's inception after the Second World War, more than 50 years ago. Today's world is completely different from that of 1945. Today we are not facing only intergovernmental problems; we are also confronting new, transnational threats such as international terrorism, which require vigorous and effective international coordination. Large or small, all countries face the same problem.

The delegation of Ecuador is grateful for the report of the Security Council, which was introduced by its current President, the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom. We consider it an improvement, but we believe that it should be more analytical in nature. It is our view that reforming the Council requires amending the Charter of the United Nations. That is the only way to create an international structure that will allow our Organization truly to meet the needs and expectations of each and every one of our peoples.

Increasing the number of Council members is a step in the right direction, but it is not enough. We have to devise new mechanisms that will make the Security Council more effective in fulfilling its obligations and discharging its mandate. At the same time, the resolutions it adopts must be implemented by the international community as a whole.

Reform must also entail a new definition of the use of power and of the veto. Ecuador believes that no right of veto should exist in an Organization that is based on pluralism and democracy and in which all States are equal. The veto was a necessary concession at the time when the Organization was founded, but circumstances have changed. The use or threat of use of the veto has led to the exercise of power in ways that are of concern — for instance, what the non-permanent members of the Security Council term the "silent veto" used by the permanent ones. That threat to the equality of States must be eliminated.

The Security Council must become more democratic and more transparent. It has to move in the direction of effectiveness. It must avoid drifting into the exercise of legislative capacities that are not within its mandate. All of these changes can be brought about if there is political will on the part of the Member States. It is imperative that we endeavour to arrive at consensus decisions that will ensure the international system's effectiveness in the quest for peace.

The year 2005 will be the best one for us as Member States to take decisions on changes as fundamental as these, which will enable the Organization to lead the international community.

Ecuador reiterates its desire to cooperate with you, Mr. President, and to contribute, with dedication and hard work, to all activities aimed at bringing about structural reform in the Organization, because we are convinced that this is the only way to achieve a more democratic and equitable international community.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): Mr. President, through you, my delegation thanks Ambassador Emyr

Jones Parry, in his capacity as the President of the Security Council for October, for presenting the Council's report to the General Assembly. I would also take this opportunity to commend Ambassador Wenaweser of Liechtenstein and Ambassador Gallegos Chiriboga of Ecuador for their leadership in the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the reform of the Security Council.

The issue of equitable representation is not a new matter for the General Assembly. However, at no other time in the last decade has this matter, along with issues related to the reform and revitalization of the United Nations, been more important. Since Secretary-General Kofi Annan's statement at the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly noting "the fork in the road", the international community has become more sensitized and more aware of the distinct possibility that the much-needed changes within the Organization can actually be achieved. Thinking that no changes can be effected can only lead us back to the abysmal and protracted dialogue to which we all have become accustomed.

The United Nations was born out of the ashes of terrible wars, after which it was pledged that we, as a human family, could not ever let such catastrophes occur again.

Sadly — although no world wars have occurred — the incidence of many conflicts since the end of the Second World War means that the international community must stay engaged in the process of preventing conflicts and ensuring that peace prevails. There is a need for a new compact of shared responsibilities in the upholding of the norms of international peace and security.

As we see the need for and importance of attending to conflicts as and when they arise, we also see the need for and importance of conflict prevention. Thus the importance of the work of the Security Council becomes more apparent given the current proliferation of conflicts. The agenda of the Council is continuing to expand, with the holding of a variety of thematic debates, and its importance has increased, especially in relation to the General Assembly. But that does not excuse the General Assembly from accepting its responsibilities.

The revitalization of the General Assembly, in our respectful view, is just as important as the need to address the issue of equitable representation on and reform of the Council.

The issue of equitable representation assumes that there is inequity in the makeup of the Council. Indeed, many have already stated in this debate that the Council was born during a different era and that its contemporary form needs to reflect the realities of today. The Council therefore needs to be more representative of today's global community.

While we reiterate our position that both Japan and Germany should be rightly assigned permanent seats on the Council, with equal privileges, we also believe that all regions should be fairly represented. We contend that one permanent seat each should be allotted to the following regions: Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Likewise, an additional four seats should be allotted to the same regions in the non-permanent membership category.

In relation to the veto, we support the contention that, while all permanent members should have it, it should be restricted to Chapter VII issues. We also believe that, where it is proposed to be used in other areas, particularly in a reformed Council, it should be exercised only when two or more members agree to use it in such a manner.

In conclusion, the reality is that not every United Nations Member State can become a member of the Council. The 58-year history of the United Nations and the Council bears out this fact.

For many small States, having a voice on the Council is also important, but we are probably better served by other Members which have the capacity to be effective members of the Council. Given that the membership is limited — even under a reformed Council — it is not appropriate, in our view, to assume that the primary focus of members of the Security Council is merely to serve their national interests.

In that regard, let me point to the example of Ireland's previous membership on the Council, which remains a good indicator of what a Member State can do for others when there is goodwill.

Mr. Stagno Ugarte (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, first of all, to thank the President of the Security Council, the permanent representative of the United Kingdom, for having introduced the report of that body to the General Assembly. We commend the efforts of the Security Council to make

this report a more concise and analytical document, and we urge them to proceed along the same path.

Today's debate has an indispensable part to play in the operation of this Organization. In accordance with the principle enshrined in the Charter of a balance of power among the various bodies, the Security Council is required to present its report to the General Assembly. The Assembly, therefore, has the obligation to carefully examine the work of the Council over the past year, commending it for its successes and pointing out any particular areas in which the work of the Council requires improvement or changes.

The Security Council is an executive body that is able to act promptly and is competent to handle specific situations that pose imminent threats to international peace and security. The Security Council is in the best position to take effective measures in emergency situations. The General Assembly, on the other hand, is the plenary deliberative body of the international community. Only the Assembly can express the firm and definitive opinion of all the countries of the world. Only the Assembly has the legitimacy conferred upon it by its universal and democratic composition. Since the Council acts on behalf of the Members of the Organization, in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter, it must periodically report to the Assembly on its activities.

In this context, Costa Rica approves, in general terms, the work of the Council over the past year. From the Caribbean to the South Pacific, from the Horn of Africa to the Balkans, the work of the Council has served to reduce international tension and build peace. It has facilitated the distribution of humanitarian assistance in Haiti. It has encouraged political negotiations in the Great Lakes region of Africa. It has contributed to the political stability of Timor-Leste. Those are important achievements and should not be passed over in silence.

However, in other areas, the work of the Council requires improvement or a shift in emphasis. My country would have liked to see it act in a more resolute manner in promoting peace in the Middle East. We would have liked it to consult and coordinate to a greater degree with regional mechanisms in the case of Haiti. We would like to see it acting more prudently in terms of adopting general standards. The Security Council is not a legislative body. According to the Charter, its mandate is confined to specific situations or specific disputes that endanger international peace and security. According to the Charter, the Council can adopt binding measures only in so far as they are addressed to specific conflicts. Adopting general standards is reserved to the international community as a whole on the basis of negotiated treaties or the gradual formation of binding customs.

As regards combating international terrorism, it is indispensable for the Council to respond positively to the appeal of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and enshrine human rights as the cornerstone of the struggle against terrorism. The Council must make sure that any measures adopted against international terrorism are in keeping with human rights and international humanitarian law, and in particular the principles of due process and non-refoulement. It is particularly indispensable that the Council adopt clear guidelines so that the inclusion or removal of the names of individuals from sanctions lists is more respectful of the high international standards of evidence and due process.

Costa Rica welcomes the work of the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC). This body, which is an ad hoc body set up temporarily, now plays an important role in the international community's efforts to combat that crime. But we believe that combating terrorism must become a permanent activity of the United Nations. This is why we think this task should be assigned to a permanent, professional, impartial standing body situated at the core of the organic structure of our institution. In this context, I would like to reiterate the proposal made on 22 September by the President of Costa Rica, Abel Pacheco de la Espriella, when he proposed establishing a high commissioner of the United Nations against terrorism. This proposal appears in document A/59/383.

As regards preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, we urge the Security Council to fully comply with the obligations arising under article III, section B, paragraph 4, and article XII, section C, of the International Atomic Energy Agency Statute regarding the non-proliferation treaty, and article VI of the Biological Weapons Convention.

Further, we urge the Council to reduce the number of requests for information it sends to Member States, concentrating only on States whose reports are

deficient, or in respect of which there is evidence that the implementation of the necessary measures is truly inadequate.

The Security Council should also reduce the number of thematic debates it holds and should focus exclusively on topics directly related to specific situations that endanger international peace and security. By their very nature, many of the topics should be considered by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and not by the Security Council.

We also appeal to the Security Council to present to the General Assembly special reports under Article 34, paragraph 3, of the Charter every time it wants to set up a new peacekeeping operation, whenever it substantially modifies a mandate or sets up a new sanctions regime. Similarly, the Security Council should report to the General Assembly whenever a draft resolution has been vetoed. The General Assembly, in discharging its function, should examine those reports carefully in order to adopt recommendations that, within the scope of its own competencies, support the decisions of the Security Council or, whenever a veto has been cast, make up for the failure to act.

As for reform of the Security Council, we consider it necessary to fully implement the principles already enshrined in the Charter, in particular the principles of sovereign equality among all States and equitable geographic distribution. From this perspective, it goes without saying that the current composition of the Council is undemocratic. A single regional group, which accounts for 14.7 per cent of the Member States, holds 60 per cent of the veto power and 33 per cent of the membership in the Security Council. In the meantime, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, which taken as a whole constitute 74.3 per cent of the Member States, represent only 53 per cent of the membership on the Council. Furthermore, within our group, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), 14 States — 45 per cent of our membership — have never had the chance of serving on the Security Council. These statistics show you that reforming the Security Council is urgent.

However, over the past 10 years, the process of Security Council reform has focused mostly on the creation of new permanent seats. Thus, over the past few years, different principles have been proposed on which to base the selection of new permanent members. Some have suggested that population size be taken into consideration. Others have said that the contribution of candidates to the budget should count. Others have advocated the importance of participation in peacekeeping or economic development. All those principles are valid; however, if we were to apply them all at the same time, several dozen nations would quite legitimately deserve to become permanent members of the Council. From a practical point of view, however, that would not work.

Hence, if we truly want to reform the Council, we will have to focus, for the time being, on increasing the number of elected members. In that regard, Costa Rica advocates the prompt creation of 10 new non-permanent seats in the Security Council, three of which should be allocated to Africa, three to Asia, one to Eastern Europe, one to Western European and other States and two to Latin America and the Caribbean. In a few years, when the international situation has stabilized, we could consider the possibility of creating more permanent members.

In conclusion, my delegation considers that it would not be advisable to modify paragraph 2 of Article 23 of the Charter. The prohibition of immediate re-election is a democratic guarantee that enables the smaller States, at least once in their history, to belong to the Security Council.

Mr. Dzundev (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): I would like to make a short statement in the joint debate on the report of the Security Council and on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

My delegation would like to welcome the holding of a number of open meetings of the Security Council over the past year. That approach improves the quality of the work of the Council and should contribute to its decision-making process. It also brings more transparency to the Council's work.

Regarding the issue of transparency, let me also recall the importance of the Security Council having early consultations with Member States before taking decisions that affect them. That can contribute to better understanding not only of the Council's work, but also of the implications of the decisions it takes and of compliance by Member States.

The practice of holding open meetings is also evidence of the change in the Council's work patterns, although one can argue that not all the issues immediately fall under the main responsibility of the Security Council. But today, the efforts at maintaining international peace and security should not be seen only in the context of the traditional role and practice of the Council as in the past, but also in terms of addressing problems that are the cause of conflict, which is no less important than addressing the direct threats themselves. Awareness of the fact that the world is changing and that we are confronted with new challenges justifies the new approach by the Security Council. That is yet another argument in favour of the need to reform the Security Council to become a more credible and representative body.

Like other delegations, my delegation is looking forward to the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change; among other issues of key importance to the new role and response of the United Nations, the report should set out proposals on reform of the Security Council. The proposals should be openly discussed among Member States with a view to obtaining action-oriented results and, to the extent possible, general agreement.

With the new increased role of the Security Council in mind, one can legitimately raise the question of Council reform, in particular regarding the necessity to expand the membership. The deliberations on that issue in recent years and the general debate at this session have led us to the conviction that there is a widespread view among United Nations Members that in this new era and acknowledging the new realities and confronting the new challenges, it is necessary to have a reformed and expanded Security Council. That expansion should bring the Council more credibility and should contribute to the effectiveness of its work.

The view of my delegation is that the Security Council must be reformed through increasing its membership from both developing and developed countries to ensure better geographical representation, and also to strengthen it in substance. As President Crvenkovski stated in this year's general debate, at the 9th plenary meeting, Macedonia is supporting the increase in the membership of the Security Council, in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories.

However, the expanded role and membership of the Security Council should not make the role of the General Assembly less important or less visible. While we are aware of the importance of reforming the Security Council, we also need to strengthen the role of the General Assembly and that of the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. McDonald (Ireland): The debate we are having today is a welcome step towards providing a more focused and coherent agenda for the work of the General Assembly. Ireland supports the recent improvements in the working methods of the Security Council and is firmly of the view that they need to be further developed.

One year ago, the Secretary-General announced the establishment of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change to recommend reforms for our collective security system. We await the Panel's report and the Secretary-General's recommendations, which will follow.

The essential requirement, however, is a more effective system of collective security. Such a system requires, as my Foreign Minister said in his speech here last month at the 8th plenary meeting, the unique legitimacy offered by an effective United Nations and its Charter. It is now very clear that the composition of the Security Council no longer accurately reflects global geographical realities. Here again, my Foreign Minister expressed his view that a modest and regionally balanced increase in its membership, both permanent and non-permanent, is justified.

However, whatever the size and composition of the Security Council, the obligation of Member States to comply with the decisions of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security remains a bedrock of the collective security system. Ireland is firmly of the view that this system needs to be strengthened through more substantial and meaningful cooperation among the United Nations membership, the General Assembly and the Security Council.

In that regard the report of the Council before us today (A/59/2) is one useful route that can be pursued. It is complete and informative as far as it goes. However, it lacks the elements of a more political and analytical focus which, we consider, would contribute to a more informative and meaningful debate.

The need for that type of substantive debate is all the greater given that the Security Council

interpretation of international peace and security has broadened and has moved into semi-legislative areas. As we move further into that more complex field, which has implications for the citizens of the States Members of the United Nations, we have greater need for a methodology that enables each Member State to explain clearly the whys and wherefores of decisions made in New York in a manner which our electorates can comprehend.

In that respect, the annual debate in this forum should afford the membership the opportunity to have a necessary debate on the strategic direction of the Council. It is even more the case that we need to foster a broader sense of both ownership and responsibility which can be shared by all the membership of the United Nations. That can realistically be brought about by only a year-round effort by the Security Council to involve all of us in its ongoing work.

My delegation, of course, welcomes the steps which have been taken to create a greater sense of engagement; we welcome all practical steps which can be taken to that end. We would also welcome a development of the dialogue with regional organizations. Ireland welcomes the increasing role of regional and subregional organizations in crisis management, under the overall authority of the Security Council.

While we await the outcome of the work of the High-level Panel and the formal adoption of balanced reforms for our collective security system, my delegation stands ready to support practical steps which may be taken to better engage all the membership in all aspects of the work of the United Nations.

Mr. Sharma (Nepal): I should like to join previous speakers in expressing my delegation's sincere appreciation to Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom and President of the Security Council for the current month, for introducing the annual report of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2003 to 31 July 2004 (A/59/2). The report provides us with information on activities on a wide range of issues dealt with by the Council during the past year. The situations in Iraq, the Middle East, Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur in the Sudan have prominently figured in the Council's work.

Also outlined in the report are the Council's efforts in its work to take on board the broader membership of the United Nations. Open debates on issues of wide interest, monthly briefings to the General Assembly President by the Council President and consultations with troop-contributing countries are some of the positive changes that have occurred over time.

Nepal commends those improvements and encourages the Council to redouble its efforts to make its reporting richer in substance and its approach more user-friendly. However, the report falls far short of meeting the reasonable expectations of non-Council members that it should provide deeper, analytical insight into the working of the Council. A response to that demand made by the general membership of the United Nations to the Council is long overdue. The Council should not rest on its laurels. There is still a profound need to improve transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in its work.

Lack of transparency in the Council's work has been a consistent, major bone of contention between the permanent members and the general membership of the United Nations. We understand that, every so often, the Council has to engage in discreet consultations to arrive at urgent and sensitive decisions. But the fact remains that it cannot fulfil its objectives by itself and must rely on the goodwill, support and compliance from the broader international community in order to do its job well. And the Council can have those only by reaching out to all Members and letting them participate in the decision-making process at various stages. Hence, the current degree of opaqueness in the Council's work is hard to justify, and even harder to appreciate.

Peacekeeping operations are a case in point. The Council now has 16 missions throughout the world, including political ones, aimed at keeping the peace and facilitating political processes in troubled countries. More than 100 countries have sent troops or personnel to those missions. It is an enormous task, and the Security Council can accomplish it only with the willing cooperation of troop-contributing and financing countries.

Nepal supports the peacekeeping missions in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan, Burundi, Kosovo, Afghanistan and other countries engulfed by conflict. We welcome the

growing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in keeping peace and promoting regional stability, and underline the need for the institutionalization of that mechanism.

For over four decades, Nepal has been an active partner of the United Nations in its peacekeeping efforts. We are proud that more than 45,000 Nepalese nationals have already served as Blue Helmets — and served with distinction. Forty-seven valiant Nepalese have laid down their lives in the service of humanity and peace.

Currently, more than 2,600 Nepalese security personnel are being deployed in 12 missions, and by the end of this month, their number is likely to have grown to over 3,200. Many of them are working in the most difficult areas of the most complex missions. The United Nations and the host countries appreciate their unwavering commitment and outstanding service to peace.

It is a matter of serious concern that of late members of the Security Council, particularly permanent members, have deployed few or no troops in peacekeeping missions, although they enjoy the permanent membership and veto power on the basis of the presumption that they are the kingpins in the maintenance of international peace and security. Nepal urges the permanent members of the Council to contribute sizeable numbers of troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Nepal is concerned that the Security Council has been stepping on the toes of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council by moving into the ambit of thematic issues. Even more disturbing are the growing forays by the Security Council into the legislative domain, using Chapter VII of the Charter. This infringement undermines the existing principles of international law and the treaty-making process, and undercuts the mandate of the General Assembly.

Various Security Council resolutions have created execution and reporting obligations for Member States. Resolutions 1373 (2001), 1540 (2004) and 1267 (1999) are some of them. Nepal has been exerting its best efforts to implement those resolutions and to report on time. But resource constraints have made it very difficult for us to sustain our compliance. The Council should therefore help Nepal and other least developed countries to mobilize financial and technical support and assistance in order to build capacity and fill the resource gap.

Nepal commends the work carried out by the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters, and applauds the initiative taken by the former President of the General Assembly. It is our position that we must agree on all six areas that the Working Group has identified — the size of the Council, regional representation, criteria, the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, accountability and the use of the veto — in order to arrive at a viable consensus for Council reform.

For the past several years, Nepal has supported the expansion of the Council's membership, both in the permanent and the non-permanent categories, so as to make the Council more effective and more representative. We have also strongly called for greater transparency and democracy in the Council's work.

Consistent with this, the Council should undergo a limited expansion to preserve its agility and effectiveness; the current 1:2 ratio between permanent members and non-permanent members must be maintained. Larger countries have always participated more frequently than smaller ones as non-permanent members of the Council. What would make the Council truly democratic would be to give small States the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Council. That must be ensured in an expanded Council.

I would like to draw the attention of Member States to the statement that Nepal's head of delegation delivered in the general debate. In his statement, he underlined that the aspirations of some Member States, including India, Japan, Germany and Brazil, merited serious consideration for permanent membership. I reaffirm the statement made by the minister. Africa must also have a permanent seat in an enlarged Council.

The sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations would be an opportune time to transform the Security Council. By the end of this year, the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change would have presented its report giving Member States ample time to reflect on its recommendations. But if Member States fail to arrive at a consensus on the expansion in the permanent membership category, then efforts must

be exerted to enlarge the non-permanent category, pending expansion of the permanent one.

Nepal believes, as per Article 24, paragraph 3, and Article 15, paragraph 1 of the Charter, that the Council is responsible to report to the General Assembly on the measures it adopts for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Assembly is empowered to provide guidance to the Council. Therefore, the Assembly must rise to its own obligations.

Council members ought to be accountable to the wider membership of the United Nations and should be able to rise above their national interests. In this context, the manner in which veto power is being used does not inspire confidence and weakens the credibility of the Council as an unbiased arbiter in the realm of international peace and security. In fact, Nepal strongly supports the eventual elimination of veto power and calls on Member States to work out a formula to rationalize its use until it is abolished.

Resolute measures are critical to making the Security Council a guardian of international peace and security, for which it was established. Concerted efforts to achieve the collective goal of humanity will strengthen the Council and the United Nations as a whole. This is the challenge that confronts us today.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): May I begin by welcoming the report of the Security Council contained in document A/59/2, introduced yesterday by Sir Emyr Jones Parry. I note that once again the report points to the increased workload of the Council. It is encouraging that, in spite of this, the Council has held a number of open meetings throughout the year. I strongly hope that this practice will continue and, if possible, be expanded.

Sweden, too, is a strong supporter of Security Council reform. We believe that, as the world changes, so must the Council. It must be able to manage change in order to stay relevant, representative and efficient. Its composition must be adapted to mirror today's world and to address today's global challenges.

The debate on Security Council reform has been going on for over a decade. As we approach next year's important summit, it is high time to come to an agreement. If we fail now, we might fail for a long time to come. Sweden is ready to shoulder its responsibility.

Fortunately, this year, we have seen some progress in the debate. Much credit goes to the Secretary-General, who, by establishing the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, has been instrumental in creating today's political momentum. We trust that the Panel's recommendations, to be issued in December, will be concrete, creative and bold. They should provide us with impetus, thus enabling us to build consensus on the main reform of the Security Council, and paving the way for a formal decision at the next General Assembly session. We should use this window of opportunity.

For many years, Sweden has taken an active part in the endeavours to reach consensus on far-reaching reform. We remain committed to that goal. We believe that for the Council to fulfil its crucial role in our collective security system it must be legitimate and relevant. This could be achieved by enlarging the membership of the Security Council to make it more representative.

Since the adoption of the United Nations Charter, a limited number of countries across the globe have emerged as key political and economic Powers. They should be given a role in the work of the Security Council that is commensurate to their importance. In addition, an enlarged Security Council must ensure the legitimate interests of small and medium-sized countries. As an option for the future, Sweden does not rule out a joint seat for the European Union (EU).

An expansion of the Security Council should not be allowed to undermine its efficiency. A way to make the Council's work more effective would be to limit the use of the veto power, and the efforts to modernize the working procedures of the Security Council need to continue.

In December, we will find ourselves at yet another important juncture. This time, we cannot afford to fail.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly decided to consider both the report of the Security Council contained in document A/59/2 and the reform of the Council in a joint debate. Both questions are clearly interlinked, and both are crucial for our Organization.

I am participating in this debate, and my delegation would like to start by making some general comments before coming to the two items in question.

The first general comment has to do with the consideration of the report of the Security Council by the General Assembly and the requirement to do so. This requirement is contained in the Charter, and it presents an ideal opportunity for the United Nations family, through the General Assembly, to consider how this organ — to which the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security has been entrusted — did its job throughout the reporting period. In this respect, here are a few points I would like to make.

Article 15, paragraph 1, of the Charter very clearly states,

> "The General Assembly shall receive and consider annual and special reports from the Security Council; these reports shall include an account of the measures that the Security Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security."

Paragraph 3 of Article 24 states that the Security Council shall submit annual and, when necessary, special reports to the General Assembly for its consideration.

Those two Articles of the Charter take us right to the heart of the question of the intertwined competences of the General Assembly and the Security Council in the area of the maintenance of peace. We believe that they clearly demonstrate the Assembly's pre-eminence and central position in deliberations on international peace and security.

The present debate is therefore important in the framework of the revitalization and the strengthening of the General Assembly's authority. Accordingly, we continue to stress that this debate should not merely consist of general statements. The Security Council should reflect in its work the comments and the proposals made in the Assembly. In that regard, we propose that the General Committee, at the conclusion of the consideration of this item, make a synthesis of the comments and observations on the Security Council and that the Council convene a meeting to examine those observations.

My second general observation concerns enlarging the Security Council, which my country has always considered to be of special importance. Members will recall that in 1963, Cameroon cosponsored the draft resolution adopted as resolution 1991 (XVIII) of 17 December 1963, which increased from 6 to 10 the number of non-permanent members on the Council. Similarly, noting that the membership of the United Nations had increased from 113 Members in 1960 to 154, Cameroon was one of the initiators of draft resolution A/35/L.34/Rev.1, which aimed to increase the number to 16. Unfortunately, that draft resolution was not adopted. We are pleased to note that among the proposals now before the Assembly on the increase in the number of non-permanent Council seats, the number of 16 seats has been retained, at least by Africa and the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Having made those general comments, I shall address the two items under consideration. First, with respect to the report of the Security Council (A/59/2), taking into account the recommendations made by States when considering the report, the Security Council — and we pay tribute to it for this — made some important improvements to the text of the report before the Assembly. The report was first submitted to the Assembly in its current, synthesized form in October 2002, under Cameroon's presidency of the Security Council. In that context, I convey to our friend and colleague Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry our appreciation for the high quality of his masterful introduction to this excellent and comprehensive report containing a wealth of useful information.

The Council has worked hard over the reporting period to improve both the transparency of its work and, above all, its treatment of crucial questions related to the maintenance of international peace and security. Understandably, I shall use the example of Africa. We are pleased to note in the report that Africa remains the Security Council's foremost concern. Thirty-one of 61 resolutions, 74 of the 213 meetings of the Council, 20 of 45 presidential statements and 15 of its 27 official communiqués were devoted to Africa. We also note that four of the five sanctions committees that published reports during the reporting period deal with African countries. We had the privilege of chairing the Security Council's informal working group on sanctions, and we appreciated the importance and the usefulness of sanctions, in particular targeted sanctions, for peacekeeping and peace-building, particularly in Africa.

At the present time, the outcome of the multidimensional action of the Security Council on Africa can be clearly seen. With the exception of six or

seven countries, Africa is enjoying relative political stability.

Furthermore, we appreciate the Security Council's efforts further to develop fruitful cooperation with regional organizations. In that respect, we underline Central Africa's determination, through the Economic Community of Central African States, to organize to promote peace and development. To that end, it has established structures within the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, known as COPAX.

Central Africa wishes to strengthen cooperation not only with the Security Council but with the entire United Nations system. That is why we continue to stress that we in Central Africa should be given permanent political structures to coordinate United Nations action.

With respect to the question of the increase of the membership of the Council, next year the Organization will celebrate its sixtieth birthday, and the United Nations has fixed the year 2005 to review progress on the discussion of reform and on implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

The debate on Security Council reform has been going on for 11 years. The peoples of the United Nations are waiting with impatience and with hope for Security Council reform to be achieved. Despite the many difficulties, we are duty-bound to complete the reform process. Last year, when the Secretary-General addressed the fifty-eighth session, he warned that the difficulty of reaching agreement does not excuse our failure to do so. The Secretary-General's observation remains true.

The great majority of Member States agree on an increase in the number of Security Council members in both categories. It is therefore urgent that we agree on the modalities for such an increase. Ideas and proposals in that regard were already formulated by delegations during the consultations held in previous meetings of the Open-ended Working Group. We hope that the conclusions, proposals and recommendations that we hope will be made by the High-level Panel will add further substance to our discussions and debates so that we can take decisions.

Here, Mr. President, I should pay a well-deserved tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Julian Hunte, for his innovative proposals on the form of our debates. It is now up to you to continue on the course charted by your predecessor, bearing in mind — as you yourself indicated at the close of the general debate — the forceful reference, made in their statements by the leaders of 140 States, to this issue of Security Council expansion.

Africa, for its part, made known its proposals on expansion in the Harare Declaration of 1997. Our continent expressed its wish to have seven seats, comprising five non-permanent seats and two permanent seats, allocated by rotation in a Security Council expanded to 26 members. My country — as we indicated during the general debate — fully supports the Declaration, which we believe remains valid.

In that connection, we should strongly emphasize that Security Council reform must also take into account the legitimate desire of all Member States — rich and poor, large and small — to serve the cause of peace. I hear people say that they doubt that there are good reasons for such an expansion, for reasons of effectiveness. Effectiveness is often mentioned to oppose Council expansion. In our view, that stems from a concept of the criterion for contributing to the maintenance of peace that is limited to a State's military means or its capacity to intervene. We are often told — and this is very important — that people often forget that an organization's effectiveness depends not only on the speed of decision-making; it is also tied to meeting the objective being sought by the various members of that organization.

In addition, people forget that contribution to the maintenance of peace also results from steadfastness in peace negotiations. Contribution to the maintenance of peace results from steadfastness in mediation to put an end to conflicts. In that regard, States that are small or that lack great military power can make a remarkable contribution to the maintenance of peace. We might wonder, then, whether the current composition of the Council has always guaranteed great effectiveness and speed in taking decisions and acting on them.

One year before the symbolic meetings commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations, my country appeals for calmness, serenity and a spirit of compromise so that we can swiftly arrive at a consensual solution that will guarantee the unity of the Organization and the sought-after effectiveness of

the Security Council. Cameroon, for its part, remains open to dialogue and to consensus at every level.

Mr. Grey-Johnson (Gambia): My delegation commends the Security Council for a detailed and comprehensive report (A/59/2), which shows how fully engaged the Council has remained on all the key issues. We commend all its members for their hard work and dedication over the past year.

While it is true that the Middle East has accounted for a good part of the Council's time, it is also very clear that much more needs to be done to effectively contain the situation in that region. Attention must be focused more sharply on the Israeli-Palestinian question, and more concrete measures must be devised to get all concerned to begin moving towards the ultimate objective of the road map: the creation of a Palestinian State existing side by side and peacefully with the State of Israel.

There is no gainsaying the fact that, in spite of the Council's efforts, the situation deteriorated further during this reporting period. Settlements and refugee camps are being attacked on a regular basis, while suicide bombers cause havoc among innocent civilians. The whole world, meanwhile, watches helplessly as casualties rise from day to day. My delegation urges the Council to act urgently and more aggressively to bring the situation under control. For there is no doubt that the Israeli-Palestinian issue is what inspires and drives a number of other conflict situations elsewhere.

For a start, the Council may wish to consider measures aimed at fully enforcing the ruling of the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction of a wall in the occupied Palestinian territory. It is indeed a matter of regret that it is over the salient issues surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian question that the Council often cannot reach agreement, as evidenced by the number of draft resolutions on that question that it has not been able to adopt.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the ending of the occupation of Iraq with the transfer of sovereignty to an Interim Iraqi Government. We look forward to the Council's continued engagement with that Government as it moves forward with the political transition. The security situation in that country gives much cause for concern and will definitely affect the degree of United Nations involvement in the political process. Even so, the Council must do all it can to assist in putting out the fires of war and in restoring a more normal and more bearable life for the suffering Iraqi people.

The Council's achievements in Africa have been commendable. Peacekeeping and peace-building efforts have shown remarkable results, particularly in West Africa. Significant progress has been made in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea-Bissau. Improvements have been slower in Côte d'Ivoire. That requires us all to do more to enable all parties in that conflict to subsume their individual differences in the greater interest of the Ivorian people and then to return to the negotiating table to begin implementing the Linas-Marcoussis Accord.

Special challenges continue to be presented to the Council by the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the situation in Burundi. Those situations call for a sharper focus on the causes and antecedents of the conflicts in those countries with a view to ensuring that they are properly addressed and, if possible, rooted out.

In all the post-conflict situations in Africa, particularly in West Africa, what stands out in bold relief is the need for appropriate interventions to relaunch economic growth in ways that will have a positive impact on the lives of the people. That is the only insurance against a relapse into conflict for, as has been amply demonstrated, poverty, deprivation and economic marginalization are the major factors that give rise to violent upheaval. Addressing those issues in post-conflict situations therefore constitutes an important contribution to the consolidation of peace. Regrettably, this aspect of peace-building has been severely downplayed, as evidenced by the dire situations in Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and, to a lesser extent, Sierra Leone. In fact, in Guinea-Bissau, when the army recently mutinied over salary arrears this almost led to the collapse of the peace-building effort and the political process. Fortunately, the situation was contained, albeit with the sad loss of life of the chief of the armed forces and a few of his colleagues. But if things had crumbled the cost to the international community of putting them back on track would have been enormous. It therefore seems more cost-effective to provide the investments necessary to stimulate economic growth in ways that will create jobs and ensure that the workforce, especially the youth, are gainfully employed and have the opportunity to earn realistic incomes.

My delegation is aware that the Council did indeed hold a public meeting on the role of business in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building and commends it for that initiative. We are also aware that the Council has been working with the Economic and Social Council on some of those issues. Equally, the Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa continues to actively pursue its mandate. We can only hope that through its work the Council will find the means to shore up peace-building gains in ways that address the need for economic growth and employment creation in post-conflict areas, so that the surrounding socio-economic environment in post-conflict situations ceases to constitute an important trigger of conflict.

A second area of concern has to do with the need to realign militaries in post-conflict situations to the peacetime needs of their countries. Oftentimes, it is their very inability to act like peacetime militaries that gives rise to a cycle of instability and violence. Countries emerging from conflict should be assisted to restructure their armed forces and scale them down to fit the needs of a country at peace. The Council should pay urgent attention to that issue.

We commend the Council for its efforts in working with African regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations to find solutions to some of the daunting problems that have dogged progress on the African continent. We urge the Council to continue and even to intensify that process so that synergy is generated among all major actors in the search for answers to our problems relating to peace, security and development.

There is general agreement among all Member States that the present composition of the Security Council does not mirror present-day global realities or even the present pattern of membership of the United Nations. The Gambia has always joined those Member States that have called for action to have that anomaly redressed. The Open-ended Working Group on reform of the Security Council certainly covered some ground during the fifty-eighth session and it is to be expected that its achievements will be complemented by the work of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.

My delegation reiterates once more the position of the African Union that Africa must be represented on the Security Council in the permanent category, as well as having its representation in the non-permanent category increased. Countries such as Japan, which make important contributions to the operations of the Organization, must also be considered for a permanent seat on the Council. My delegation hopes that during this session much progress will be made towards bringing this lingering question to final closure.

Mr. Kaludjerović (Serbia and Montenegro): Allow me at the outset to express the appreciation of my delegation to the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, for his introduction of the report of the Security Council (A/59/2).

As stated in the report, over the past 12 months the Security Council has addressed a wide range of issues, from those directly threatening international peace and security — such as acute crises — to those of a global character involving the fight against terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, peacekeeping operations and other thematic issues that are of no less importance in the present-day world.

The involvement of the Security Council on a wide range of issues reaffirms its role in today's interdependent world. But it also points to the need for it to adapt to current international circumstances. The political picture of the world has changed to the point where it is necessary to reform the structure of the United Nations, and particularly that of the Security Council, as the Organization's key body. In our view, such reform should primarily involve more equitable representation and, by extension, more balanced participation among developed and developing countries. In effecting those reforms we have to take into account the responsibility of those countries that make the greatest contributions to the United Nations, particularly to peacekeeping operations, as well as their legitimate interests. At the same time, an overwhelming majority of countries, including newly established ones, should be adequately represented so as to avoid exclusiveness in the decision-making process. In that regard, we strongly believe that the Group of Eastern European States should be granted one additional non-permanent seat on an expanded Security Council.

Transparency in the work of the Security Council is highly relevant to the strengthening of international solidarity and responsibility. In that regard, we highly value the practice introduced by some members of the Security Council of briefing the broader membership on the Council's activities. We are also encouraged by the number of open meetings in which other Member States are invited to participate.

Peacekeeping operations are one of the most important tools for the Security Council to maintain international peace and security. That was clearly demonstrated last year with the establishment of a number of new United Nations peacekeeping missions — in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Haiti, as well as the monitoring mission in Iraq. A comprehensive approach to the issue of peacekeeping operations, with clear goals and legal criteria used to define their mandates, will greatly facilitate the establishment of peace and improve the efficiency of peacekeeping operations. Setting up new missions — which today are much more diverse in character, encompassing both conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace, including post-conflict reconstruction and long-term social development — requires a multidisciplinary approach to complex crises, particularly those on the African continent.

Terrorism continues to pose a grave threat of global proportions. As stated in the report, over the past year there has been an increase in both the number and gravity of terrorist attacks, which is why the fight against terrorism should remain one of the major areas of engagement of Security Council.

In that respect, the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which obliges Member States to adopt and enforce appropriate and effective laws and to undertake administrative measures with a view to preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, is of vital significance. My country fully supports the activities of the Security Council in that field.

A considerable part of the report of the Security Council is devoted to my country. The fact that during the reporting period Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Montenegro addressed Security Council meetings on two occasions testifies to the difficult situation in our province of Kosovo and Metohija. We fully concur with the assessment in the report that mid-March violence led by Kosovo Albanian extremists against the minority Serb community "had been an organized, widespread and targeted campaign and represented a huge setback to stabilization and reconciliation in the province" and that "violence had challenged the sustainability of the international community's efforts to build a multi-ethnic Kosovo" (*ibid., p. 15*).

We expect the Security Council to exert additional pressure on the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Kosovo and Metohija to implement two key sections of the Kosovo Standards Implementation Plan: sustainable returns and the rights of communities and their members, and freedom of movement. We also expect the Security Council to do its utmost to speed up the reconstruction efforts of destroyed churches and monasteries that represent not only part of the Serbian, but an integral part of the European cultural heritage.

I would like to take this opportunity to recall the words of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Montenegro, Mr. Vuk Drašković, at the Security Council meeting on 11 May 2004, as cited in the report: "that the 'standards before status' policy must provide for full security, right to life and other human, civil and ethnic rights of Serbs and other minority communities in Kosovo" (*ibid.*).

Survival, life in peace and security as well as the right to return are basic preconditions without which it will not be possible to make progress in Kosovo and Metohija. The European character of Kosovo and Metohija within Serbia and Montenegro, based on European standards of minority protection, decentralization and border access, is equally in the interest of Albanians, Serbs and other non-Albanian populations in the province.

In that regard, we expect that the appointment of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Mr. Søren Jessen-Petersen, will mark a new, more action-oriented, active and constructive approach of the international community to the problem.

The completion strategy of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which is mentioned in the report, is in the interest of Serbia and Montenegro and is in line with its efforts to fully honour international obligations and actively cooperate with the Tribunal, particularly in view of

transferring some trials to national courts. The competent authorities of my country will urgently inform the ICTY of the measures undertaken to track down persons indicted by the Tribunal.

Warrants have recently been issued for the arrest of four Generals sought by the Tribunal. The National Council for Cooperation with the Tribunal granted waivers on 1 October 2004 to 30 witnesses to testify on classified military issues and made a decision to transmit documents requested by the Tribunal.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that, like other Member States, we are looking forward to the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, particularly concerning conflict prevention, the link between peace and development and the need to address root causes with a view to preventing, managing and resolving complex crises.

Mr. Maquieira (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): The President of Chile, His Excellency Mr. Ricardo Lagos Escobar, said when addressing the General Assembly, at the 4th meeting,

> "If we wish to strengthen multilateralism, reform of the United Nations is becoming increasingly necessary. Its ideals and founding purposes remain valid, but ... the power structure upon which the Organization was built at its inception corresponds to a world that is very different from today's world."

By its very nature, the Security Council is at the centre of the exercise in renewal. We must have a more representative, transparent and democratic Security Council on which we can rely — in other words, a body that enjoys all the prerequisites that determine whether an organ is legitimate. We also need a more efficient and effective Security Council, in other words, more functional. We know that we need not only to enlarge the Council but to make it more democratic in a thorough reform of the Organization.

The many statements we have heard here confirm that reform is timely from a political perspective, and that implies two important dimensions — the Security Council, on the one hand, and the reorganization of the rest of the system, on the other.

The Security Council is central to reform, but it is not the only element of reform that is necessary, nor should it serve as a pretext to distract us from the rest of the reforms required to strengthen multilateralism within the Organization. That is because organizations must reflect political realities. The Security Council, together with the other main bodies of the system, all need to be adjusted and made more functional with streamlined agendas. Similarly, we should examine the relationship between the Security Council and the other principal organs of the system.

It is important for the work of the Council to carefully consider the relationship between the global and the regional, as dealt with in Chapter VIII of the Charter. That applies in terms of prevention, management and exit strategies for crises. To some extent, we have to look at the functioning of the Council in sensitive areas, such as the responsibility to protect, as well as preventive action. Those aspects must be regulated and guidelines provided — goals shared by the international community — failing which multilateral effectiveness could be weakened.

We renew our support for the work of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, appointed by the Secretary-General, and we emphasize that great expectations await its recommendations. We should voice our confidence that the Panel will produce options, perspectives and alternatives that can contribute to a comprehensive political compromise where all countries will feel they have benefited. That may be the most difficult part of the exercise — even more difficult than finding a common perspective concerning the reform process.

In addition to the reform of the Council, Chile has upheld a position that I will describe as follows: we have supported the expansion of the membership of the Council in both the permanent and non-permanent membership categories, in order to facilitate the greatest possible participation by developing countries.

We trust that the Panel will be able to contribute ideas that will enable the Secretary-General to make recommendations that will facilitate a political compromise in favour of expansion, and that those will be accepted by the international community as a whole.

We have also supported limiting the veto. We have supported adopting decisions under Article 18 of the Charter, which calls for two thirds of the membership of the Organization to agree. Chile would have preferred a consensus for reform of the membership, but if that is not possible, we prefer the

higher threshold provided by the Charter to obtain that result.

Finally, we have supported increased transparency in the relationships between the Council and other bodies of the system. However, Council reform cannot be limited to changing the number of members; it should also apply to their powers.

In considering the possibility of increasing the membership, we deem it important to bear in mind criteria such as representativity, greater diversity, the right of veto, and power differences between membership categories. When the Council was created, there were only 51 Member States and 11 Council members. Today there are 15 Council members, but 191 Member States. We therefore must enhance the Council's representativity by increasing the number of its members.

Throughout this process the criterion of effectiveness should be borne in mind. Increasing the possibility for countries to participate can be done through expansion and rotation combined, which would enable more countries to sit on the Council.

Finally, reducing the gap between the powers enjoyed by the two categories of members entails limiting the use of the veto, for example only to Chapter VII issues; using a qualified majority to overcome a veto; pinpointing areas in which two vetoes are required to prevail, and so on. These are some of the aspects that Chile has considered in terms of reforming the Security Council.

Mr. Chimphamba (Malawi): Mr. President, allow me to join others who have spoken before me in making a small contribution on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. At the same time, I would like to thank the Council for its very important report.

Under Article 24 of the United Nations Charter, Member States confer on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the functions of which fall mainly under two headings. These are the pacific settlement of disputes and action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression.

Although not all United Nations Member States sit on the Council — and, indeed, some have never been a member of the Council — its work is of specific national, regional and international interest and has far-reaching ramifications for all countries.

The Security Council contributes to the solution of conflicts and to the creation of conditions for sustainable peace, in particular through peacekeeping operations. Malawi, my own country, is proud and pleased to be a participant in such peacekeeping operations.

But, as the United Nations approaches its sixtieth anniversary, it must be recognized that the principles and norms of its Charter reflect the historical realities of a specific moment. The radically new nature of today's challenges and threats demands a decisive and comprehensive adjustment effort. The need for change is there, but Member States must consider carefully how to initiate such change and how to build consensus.

Today the United Nations is almost four times bigger than when it was created. It has now become truly global and universal in character. However, the current membership of the Security Council has come under scrutiny and has been criticized for not being sufficiently representative. The central institutional question is that its composition does not reflect the distribution of power on the international scene. Thus the majority of Member States believe that the legitimacy of the Security Council's decisions is weakened by such questionable representativity. There is a strong belief that the Security Council should be expanded to empower it to implement the principles governing human security in the field; otherwise, imposing sanctions might well harm the population in defence of which sanctions are undertaken.

In order to solve the question of equitable representation on the Security Council, the General Assembly established, as we all know, a Working Group to consider all aspects of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and improvements in its working methods.

Terrorism represents a new type of threat, as does the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the existence of States whose Governments are unable to exercise power over their territory and population in an effective way, often due to a lack of legitimacy. The effects of the globalization process reveal these threats clearly. Such threats demand a review of the functions of the Security Council, hence the need to reform it in

order to enable a wider participation of Member States through an increased membership.

Usually the Security Council acts when a crisis has already erupted. Consequently, its resolutions are of a punitive nature, instead of addressing long-term challenges in the areas of economic assistance, the promotion of human rights, good governance and debt reduction, with a view to consolidating the work of the Economic and Social Council. Malawi believes that the Security Council, as one of the principal organs of the United Nations, is long overdue for reform and expansion. In that respect, I support all the other Member States that have pleaded sincerely for an expansion of the Council and a change in its methods of work.

Mr. Own (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Let me take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to Mr. Julian Hunte, the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, for the able manner in which he guided the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters. We commend also the constructive efforts of his two Vice-Chairmen, the representatives of Liechtenstein and of Ecuador, to achieve progress in the process of comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

My delegation welcomes the joint debate by the General Assembly on the reports of the Security Council and of the Open-ended Working Group, respectively, which include reference to a number of measures to improve and reform the methods of work of the Security Council. However, the tireless efforts made are appreciated but they do not meet our expectations — and we insist on the fulfilment of our expectations. The report of the Security Council has only passing references to informal consultations. What we would like to emphasize is that the report should include a discussion of the real mechanism of the decision-making process, which occurs sometimes even before the Security Council begins discussing a matter. The consultations of the Council should, however, begin after open discussion, not the reverse.

The absolute majority of this Organization finds itself addressing matters that have been pre-decided, where Members are required merely to accept those decisions. The Security Council should promote relations with all States, particularly those States affected by the issue under consideration. It should also expand its cooperation with regional bodies and organizations in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter. Additionally, we support the proposal that the Council be required to have a comprehensive review of its work. It is important that the Council take the necessary steps to make all measures binding in positive response to the proposals of the Secretary-General aimed at improving its working methods.

It is very important for the Security Council to foster its relationships with the other main bodies of the United Nations. It should not limit the presentation of its annual report only to the General Assembly. Additionally, the Security Council should give the General Assembly a special report in accordance with Articles 15 and 24 of the Charter, so that the two bodies will work more closely, including on issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security.

It is very important to promote the relationship of the Security Council with the Economic and Social Council and with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) by seeking the advisory opinions of the ICJ on matters under consideration.

The Council should approach its responsibilities with objectivity and neutrality and avoid double standards and selectivity. It should not follow the wishes of those who want to use it to serve their own purposes. If transparency and democracy are the criteria for determining the legitimacy of national Governments, then that standard should also be applied to all the bodies of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council. Closed meetings among a select few members of the Council and without the knowledge of the rest of its members is a practice that should be stopped completely. Silence vis-à-vis that practice implies tacit consent to the practice of one State, or a few States that are permanent members of the Security Council, dominating the process of decision-making in the Council. This increases public scepticism about the legitimacy of Security Council resolutions and raises questions as to whether or not this body really works for the international community.

The Security Council should be urged to approach its responsibilities in accordance with the Charter, especially regarding the equitable geographic

representation of its membership. Annex 4 includes some proposals by individual countries, as well as by regional groups such as the Non-Aligned Movement regarding expanding the membership of the Council. There should also be complete sovereign equality among all States as applied to the enlargement of the Security Council.

We would prefer that this enlargement be restricted to the non-permanent member category. We do not need more permanent members to continue to propagate distinctions of inequality among the Members of the United Nations.

We are against any proposal that is drafted in a discriminatory manner, such as one giving priority to those who would take up more responsibility for the budget of the Organization, or who have the capability of providing equipment and resources to peacekeeping forces. Such selectivity would have only one result — that of promoting the grip of the stronger and the richer countries on the Security Council at the expense of the smaller and poorer States, which constitute the majority of the Members of the United Nations.

It is very essential in the process of increasing the permanent membership of the Council to apply the principle of equitable geographic representation, taking into consideration the status of developing countries. Africa does not have a permanent seat on the Security Council, despite the fact that it represents a third of the Members of the Organization. This is an imbalance that should be corrected. We should accept Africa's legitimate demand in accordance with that continent's 1997 Harare Summit, which calls for two permanent seats on the Council to be held on a rotating basis according to criteria agreed by the African States.

The question of the veto privilege should be at the core of the reform of the Security Council. It is not an exaggeration to say that this is one of the more complicated and more controversial issues being debated — not just within the work of the Open-Ended Working Group, but since the founding of this Organization. The status quo in the Council is not compatible with the principle of sovereign equality among all States as established in the Charter. It contradicts the principle of justice, and undermines the principles of democracy. Many, including Libya, have said that the veto power is not used in the service of international peace and security, but rather in the service of protecting the national interests of those who have that privilege and of those allies that enjoy their protection and escape punishment and condemnation by them. Meanwhile, there are those who flagrantly challenge the power of the Security Council and reject the implementation of its resolutions before one and all.

This proves the importance of putting an end to the privilege of the veto power, or restricting its use to the greatest extent possible. My delegation supports all proposals along those lines. We would like to emphasize that the use of the veto should be subject to the ratification of at least two thirds of the Members of the General Assembly. All these measures are attempts to put an end to that privilege. We believe that the reform of the Security Council will be meaningless if this privilege is restricted to those who would use it for their own purposes.

We still insist and emphasize that any attempt to reform our Organization will not be successful or lead to positive results without comprehensive and integrated reform of the Security Council; and this will happen only with the cooperation of everyone. We hope that this spirit of cooperation will prevail in the work of the Open-Ended Working Group, so that it will succeed in reforming the Security Council in a manner that reflects the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations — by making the Council more representative in its membership, clearer in its work, and more democratic in its decision-making process.

Mr. Sow (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): More than a decade ago, we, the Member States of the United Nations, started discussions to decide on ways and means that could improve the working methods of, and introduce reforms into, the functioning of the Security Council — a body which under the Charter is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. This imperative need proceeds both from changes in the international situation, and from our common resolve to meet the many important challenges we face.

The Republic of Guinea therefore appreciates the fact that this thematic debate is being held on questions relating to the Security Council and we welcome this new report, which covers its activities for the period of June 2003 to July 2004. This present report of the Security Council is very timely, since it has appeared on the eve of the sixtieth anniversary of our Organization at a time when the international

community is preparing to give new political impetus to the comprehensive reform process. My delegation notes that the resolutions and decisions that were adopted over the past 12 months have moved several peace processes in the world forward, thanks to the cooperation among regional and subregional stakeholders.

We are pleased to note that Africa, more than ever before, is central to the work of the Security Council. As the report states, the situation in West Africa has improved considerably. Central Africa seems to be stabilizing, thanks to the special attention given to the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to Burundi.

We are grateful to Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry of the United Kingdom for having introduced the report of the Council (S/2004/2). We would also like to thank all the other members of the Council and the support staff for the high quality of the document, as well as for the enormous sacrifices that they have made.

We acknowledge — on the basis of our consideration of the report — that the working methods of the Security Council have evolved significantly. There are now many open meetings of the Council — one of the concerns expressed by Member States in their desire for transparency in the work of the Council.

While the importance of private meetings — the basic goal of which is to better discuss substantive and often very sensitive issues — is clear, several delegations regret the way in which some decisions are taken. In fact, some decisions are the result of partisan interests, and that affects the way in which they are implemented on the ground. In view of that situation, my delegation firmly believes that new steps should be taken to strengthen transparency, justice and democratic methods in order to make the decisions of the Council more effective and to give them greater legitimacy. We encourage all Member States to continue the discussion about the reform of the Council and related issues so that we can put an end to the perception of the Security Council as a body whose functioning is opaque. Unfortunately that leads to great frustration, which could discredit the values embodied by the United Nations.

In that context, Africa adopted, in 1997, the Harare Declaration, which supported the principle of expanding the Security Council on the basis of equitable regional representation and called for five non-permanent and two permanent seats to be allocated to Africa.

We have taken note of the many suggestions made during the consultative process at the fifty-eighth session and throughout these discussions. My delegation believes that the ability of a Member State to meet its obligations in the area of peacekeeping — over and above financial considerations — depends primarily on real political will, which requires a resolute and constant commitment to the cause of peace, security and stability.

We appeal for an orderly debate that begins, first and foremost, with general acceptance of the principle of equitable geographical representation and then proceeds to agreement on objective criteria for selecting Council members, followed by a decision about how long they would serve and, finally, by agreement on conditions for the exercise of the veto. Finally, in order better to meet current challenges, Member States must overcome vested interests and make it possible to implement reform in a speedy manner in order to ensure a more representative, more effective Council.

My delegation is pleased about the cooperation that exists between the Security Council and the regional organizations, particularly the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union. Such complementarity of action certainly helps to guarantee international peace and security.

In conclusion, I should like to express the appreciation of the Government of Guinea for the Security Council's working visit to Conakry on 28 June 2004 during its mission to West Africa. We hope that the lessons learned will be instructive for future missions. Field visits, which can provide useful information should be included, and sufficient time provided so as to better assess a situation and ensure that the message sent is not incomplete.

Ms. Bahemuka (Kenya): I would like to begin by revisiting some obvious facts about the Security Council and its mandate. First, the Security Council was established in 1945 to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, particularly with regard to the maintenance of peace and security. The circumstances then prevailing were very different from those of today. Secondly, in 1965 — 20 years after the

establishment of the Council — it was deemed necessary to expand the Council to its current composition, following Assembly resolution 1991 (XVIII) of 1963, which recommended an increase in membership. Thirdly, in 1994 — 30 years after the only expansion of the Council — States Members of the United Nations agreed to the formation of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Related Matters, which, 10 years down the line — despite the impetus occasioned by changed circumstances — has yet to achieve concrete, tangible results.

The time has come for a realistic approach to be adopted in dealing with issues related to the reconfiguration of the Security Council so as to enable it to meet new and evolving global challenges. With the end of the cold war, it was expected that there would be less conflict. On the contrary, conflicts have increased and intensified. Furthermore, the theatre of current conflicts is completely different from the one that prevailed in 1945. Then, the world had just emerged from a large-scale war that pitted countries against one another. Currently, inter-State conflicts are minimal and have been replaced by a proliferation of intra-State conflicts that are small in scale but more devastating in nature.

In the past two decades, the Council's reaction to conflict flare-ups in various parts of the world has been slow. More often than not, the Council has stood by as the world has witnessed massive killings and untold human suffering, as in the case of Rwanda and Yugoslavia. At times, the Council has been reduced to the status of an observer with the less-than-honourable task of counting the dead before timidly taking action. The Charter refers to "prompt and effective action" in the maintenance of international peace and security. Unfortunately, that noble objective has yet to be achieved.

My delegation is endeavouring to envisage a Security Council that could forestall conflicts by effectively establishing a tangible early-warning mechanism — a system that would be dynamic and, at the same time, foolproof. It would be a Security Council equipped with the necessary wherewithal to forestall and neutralize situations before they erupt into humanitarian catastrophes. This can be made possible only by the institutionalization of a well-financed Council that is able to effectively mobilize resources from Member States. The Council should also work closely with regional security bodies to constantly monitor the complex and diverse root causes of conflict. The Council should be able to seek the concurrence of Member States for a waiver to institute pre-emptive action whenever situations threaten international peace.

As has been stated, global circumstances have changed. Threats to international peace and security have also evolved. International crime and drug syndicates, money-laundering, HIV/AIDS, unprecedented proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the danger posed by the possibility of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of non-State actors, are but a few of the novel threats that require innovative approaches. Kenya would like to see a Security Council that is proactive and that provides reports indicating how it intends to deal with these new threats, should they escalate to threaten world peace. This in itself would give the world reassurance and a sense of security. The routine annual and special reports of the Council do not adequately fulfil this need.

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 was established with a view to addressing disparities that exist within the Council. Progress was achieved during the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, during which, as in previous sessions, the Working Group reached provisional agreement on a large number of issues, although a divergence of views remained on others. The majority of opinions expressed over the 10-year period have indicated the need for expansion. However, care should be taken to avoid expansion for the sake of expansion. Much thought should be put into how an expanded Security Council could most effectively and efficiently face the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

Somalia has been without a Government for over 14 years. Within the framework of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Kenya has been chairing the Somali reconciliation process. We are delighted to note that on 10 October 2004 — just two days ago — Somali delegates to the peace process elected their President, Mr. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, who will be inaugurated in Nairobi on 14 October 2004. We congratulate the brave Somali

people and call upon the Security Council to move quickly to support Somalia in the next phase in the peace process. This will entail disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating the militia to ensure peace and security in Somalia and the region at large. We would also like to urge the international community to support and recognize the new Government so as to give it the legitimacy it rightly deserves.

With regard to the expansion of the Security Council, African heads of State and Government, through the Organization of African Unity Harare Declaration of 1997, requested two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats on the Council. This position has not changed. Kenya supports the position of the African Union and requests other States to respect positions taken by regional bodies.

In conclusion, allow me to state that my delegation favours finalizing the work of the Working Group and acting on the sentiments expressed by the majority of Members. Kenya appreciates the difficult circumstances under which the Security Council performs its duties and lauds the Council for the achievements it has made over the years. We commend the positive interactions and relations that have emerged between the Security Council and the General Assembly. We believe, however, that a more transparent, accountable and democratized Security Council with a universal approach to issues of international peace and security would be more effective, despite the prevailing circumstances. My delegation hopes that after the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change is discussed, Member States will rise up and have the courage to positively transform the Security Council, especially as we look forward to commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.