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General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

43rd plenary meeting
Thursday, 12 November 2009, 10 a.m.
New York

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

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Agenda item 109

Notification by the Secretary-General under Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations

Note by the Secretary-General (A/64/300)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): As members are aware, in accordance with the provisions of Article 12, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations, and with the consent of the Security Council, the Secretary-General is mandated to notify the General Assembly of matters relative to the maintenance of international peace and security that are being dealt with by the Security Council and of matters with which the Council has ceased to deal.

In that connection, the General Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General that has been issued as document A/64/300.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of that document?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 109?

It was so decided.

Agenda items 9 and 119

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

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

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should now like to make a brief statement in my capacity as President of the General Assembly.

Over the years, this joint debate in the Assembly has provided a valuable and critical assessment of the work of the Security Council. It has also served as a constant reminder of the urgent need for early, comprehensive reform of the Council, a collective objective to which Member States are deeply attached. This debate also contributes positively to strengthening cooperation and coordination between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

I am personally committed to promoting the relationship between the General Assembly and the principal organs. The provisions governing the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as their respective functions and powers, are clearly stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations. Among the provisions of the Charter is the requirement that the Council submit annual reports to the Assembly for consideration.

Among Member States, there is a widely shared view that that consideration by the Assembly can be more meaningful if the Council report is substantive in terms of information and more analytical in terms of

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providing a better understanding of the dynamics of discussion and decision-making in the Council. That process can be facilitated by maximizing the availability of information on the Council's work in a timely manner. In that regard, there is a strong opinion that the Council should continue to expand the practice of open meetings and briefings and limit the number of closed meetings. The recent practice of consulting non-Council members in the preparation of the annual report is also encouraging. That interaction should be further strengthened and broadened.

The report of the Security Council is indicative of the wide-ranging issues on its agenda. Given the crucial and vital nature of the Council's work, the expectations of the international community are high and the scrutiny of the Council's performance intense. In numerous situations, in Africa in particular, the Council has deployed significant efforts to restore peace and stability, with appreciable results that are well acknowledged.

At the same time, the Council has been questioned for not being able to fully shoulder its responsibility in dealing successfully with some of the most pressing peace and security issues, including the Middle East and the question of Palestine. We should encourage and support the Council in playing its due role in achieving a peaceful resolution of those conflicts. Consistent and impartial implementation of the Council's decisions and resolutions is imperative in that regard. While Member States have the right to hold the Council accountable in that area, they are also duty-bound to demonstrate a commitment to accept and carry out the resolutions of the Council in accordance with the Charter.

In fact, it is the whole question of improving the effectiveness and credibility of the Security Council, and that of the General Assembly itself and the entire multilateral system, that is at the heart of the United Nations reform effort. We need a strengthened United Nations — more democratic, open and inclusive — adaptable to changing realities and capable of responding to the challenges we confront.

I am committed to promoting this objective, on which Member States placed high priority at the 2000 Millennium Summit and subsequently at the 2005 World Summit. Security Council reform was also among the most mentioned issues in this year's general debate in September. I am encouraged that there is broad agreement and support among Member States on the need for that reform. We need to work diligently in order to attain more tangible results from our efforts.

The intergovernmental negotiations that commenced last year, under the informal plenary format of the General Assembly, offer an excellent opportunity to carry forward this effort. This is a collective endeavour, which we shall continue during this session, as agreed in decision 63/565 of 14 September 2009.

To that end, as I wrote in my letter of 13 October 2009, Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan has kindly agreed to chair the negotiations on my behalf. I am hopeful that he will continue to enjoy your cooperation, support and confidence so that we can build on the important work that he steered so skilfully during the sixty-third session. Member States will be informed soon of the way forward to continue those negotiations.

For my part, I will continue to guide the process and will remain engaged with all parties on that issue at all times. As President of the General Assembly, I see my role as a convener, facilitator and bridge-builder working with all Member States in the best interest of all.

The job ahead of us is not simple or easy. It requires the same vigour, seriousness and cooperation that characterized the intergovernmental negotiations in the last General Assembly session. The mandate is clear as contained in decision 62/557 of 15 September 2008.

That is our real challenge — to find a reform model which is comprehensive and which takes into consideration the inter-linkages of the following five key issues: categories of membership, the question of the veto, regional representation, the size of an expanded Security Council and working methods of the Council, and, finally, the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

A reform model that accommodates the interests and concerns of all Member States, including the small and medium States, which constitute the majority of States, as well as the underrepresented regions, particularly Africa and Latin America, whose legitimate demand to address the historic injustice with regard to their rightful representation on the Council is yet to be created.

Let us, therefore, chart a way forward for our work in the course of this session that takes us closer to achieving our objectives. I am confident that views and suggestions from all delegations will help make the intergovernmental negotiations more meaningful and productive.

I now give the floor to the President of the Security Council, His Excellency Mr. Mayr-Harting, to introduce the report of the Security Council. I welcome him and express our appreciation for the positions and initiatives he has taken with regard to cooperation between the Council and the Assembly.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): On behalf of all members of the Security Council, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. I am confident that, under your leadership, cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council can be further enhanced and strengthened.

In my capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of November, it is my honour to introduce the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly as contained in document A/64/2. The report covers the period from 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009.

The introduction to the report was prepared by the delegation of Uganda, which held the presidency in the month of July. On behalf of the Council, I wish to thank the delegation of Uganda for its efforts to provide a more informative, balanced and analytical report. The second part of the report, which contains useful statistics and data on the work of the Security Council, was prepared by the Secretariat.

While there will always be scope to improve further the analytical depth of the introduction, it is also important to remind ourselves that the annual report constitutes, in its entirety, an important reference document for our work in the medium and long term. That should not be underestimated.

During the period under review, the Council addressed a wide range of regional, thematic and general issues. It held 228 formal meetings, of which 205 were public, in addition to 18 meetings with troop-contributing countries. The Council also held 141 consultations of the whole. In that period, the Council adopted 53 resolutions, 43 presidential statements and issued 35 press statements.

During the reporting period, the Council's extensive work was also characterized by an increase in the number of open debates and open briefings. The Council undertook missions to Afghanistan from 21 to 28 November 2008, to Haiti from 11 to 14 March 2009, and to Africa from 14 to 21 May 2009, including visits to Ethiopia and the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, to Rwanda, to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to Liberia.

We also recognize the initiative by the Permanent Representative of Uganda to organize an informal meeting with the General Assembly, at which Member States were given the opportunity to learn about the process of preparing the report and to comment on it in an informal setting. I was very happy to participate in that meeting. I am also pleased to inform the Assembly that the Council is paying particular attention to requests from Member States regarding its working methods. In the reporting period, the Council held an open debate on its working methods for the first time.

The introduction to the annual report sets out in detail the Council's activities during the reporting period and all the issues it addressed. The Security Council again faced a challenging and complex set of situations and issues posing a threat to international peace and security throughout the world.

The Security Council was regularly briefed and took appropriate actions on developments in conflict situations in Africa, including Chad, the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, the Great Lakes region, Djibouti/Eritrea, Somalia, the Sudan and the situation in Western Sahara.

Peacebuilding efforts in Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone were reviewed on a regular basis. In the cases of Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, the Central African Republic and Sierra Leone, the respective Chairs of the country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission also addressed the Council. The Council adjusted peacekeeping mandates and amended some sanctions regimes to make them more appropriate to the respective situations.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular in the east of the country, continued to be of great concern, especially with respect to the protection of the civilian population. The instability in Somalia and the Horn of Africa required increased attention by the Council. The Council

extended the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia and requested the Secretary-General to provide a United Nations logistical support package to that Mission. The Council also adopted several resolutions on fighting piracy off the coast of Somalia.

The Security Council remained engaged on the Sudan, both with regard to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in the Sudan and the situation in Darfur. In that context, it received two reports from the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, in accordance with resolution 1593 (2005).

The Council also adopted a presidential statement in which it expressed its deep concern over the resurgence of unconstitutional changes of Government in a few African countries, and stressed the importance of expeditiously restoring constitutional order, including through open and transparent elections. During the reporting period, the Council addressed the unconstitutional changes of Government, or attempts thereof, in Madagascar, Mauritania and Guinea-Bissau, as well as in countries outside Africa, such as Fiji.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, received close attention by the Council. The Council remained engaged with the situation and held urgent meetings, particularly with regard to the situation in Gaza during the latter part of 2008 and early 2009. It also held debates and open debates, including four at the ministerial level. The Security Council adopted two resolutions, one focusing on support to the overall peace process and the parties' agreed principles for bilateral negotiations, and the other calling, inter alia, for an immediate, durable and fully respected ceasefire leading to the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza and the unimpeded provision and distribution of humanitarian assistance throughout Gaza. In a presidential statement, the President of the Council for the month of May reiterated the Council members' call for a just, comprehensive and lasting solution. The situation in Lebanon was also addressed regularly.

The Council intensified its engagement on situations in the Asian region, including Iraq, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Timor-Leste. In November 2008, the members of the Council undertook a mission to Afghanistan to get a first-hand assessment of the situation in that country. On Iraq, the Council followed developments in the country, where there were improvements in the security situation and an ongoing need to work towards national reconciliation. On Nepal, the President made a statement on behalf of the Council, contained in document S/PRST/2009/12, which expressed concern about the political crisis in Nepal and underscored the urgent need for the Nepalese Government and all political parties to work together in the spirit of compromise.

In March 2009, the members of the Council undertook a mission to Haiti and assessed the country's situation at a time when there appeared to be an opportunity to ensure stability and sustainable development. In April, the President delivered a statement in which the Council welcomed progress on the consolidation of Haiti's stability, but also reiterated the need for security to be accompanied by social and economic development as a means of achieving lasting stability. The Council also expressed its strong support for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in their efforts to improve stability and governance in Haiti.

With regard to Europe, the Security Council followed developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Cyprus and Georgia. The Council did not adopt a draft resolution to extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG). In view of that outcome, the Secretary-General instructed his Special Representative to cease the operations of UNOMIG.

Terrorism remained a top concern of the Council. The Council was quick to react to terrorist acts wherever they occurred, including in Mumbai, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Pakistan, among other places. The work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001), which is known as the Counter-Terrorism Committee, and that of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999), concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) was considered extensively by the Council.

The Council devoted significant time and close attention to the consideration of thematic, general and other issues, including peacekeeping, peacebuilding, the mediation and settlement of conflicts, the protection of civilians in armed conflict, children and armed conflict, the strengthening of collective security

through general regulation and reduction of armaments, and women and peace and security. Following a joint Franco-British initiative, the Council devoted particular attention to the current challenges encountered by United Nations peacekeeping operations. During the reporting period, the Council held two debates with the participation of troop- and police-contributing countries and regional organizations. The relationship between peacekeeping and peacebuilding — and in particular the fact that peacekeeping and peacebuilding should go hand-in-hand — was a theme that was addressed both in country-specific and thematic debates.

Non-proliferation matters also received close attention from the Council, particularly in response to a series of actions by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in violation of relevant Security Council resolutions. That led to the adoption of resolution 1874 (2009), in which the nuclear test conducted by that country was condemned in the strongest terms and the sanctions regime was strengthened, including through new designations and the establishment of a panel of experts.

The work of the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda was discussed by the Council on several occasions, particularly in relation to their completion strategies.

Let me conclude with some general observations on the work of the Council during the reporting period. First, the Council increased its open debates and open briefings.

Secondly, decisions by the Council were taken by and large unanimously. Council members made considerable efforts to preserve the unity of the Council. Only in a few cases was the Council unable to adopt resolutions with a unanimous vote — for instance, on the Middle East and the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. In one case, as I have already mentioned, the Council did not adopt a draft resolution to extend the mandate of UNOMIG due to the use of the veto. The unity of the Council's decisions was also preserved in connection with procedural questions. Let me add that the annual report also sets out instances in which the Security Council was unable to agree, and therefore did not take action.

Thirdly, Security Council missions constitute an important tool for the members of the Council to receive first-hand information on the work of United Nations missions on the ground and on the challenges that they face. The experiences gathered contributed to the richness of the Council's deliberations when addressing the work of specific missions and cross-cutting issues such as the protection of civilians in armed conflict and sexual violence against women.

Fourthly, the Security Council made efforts at strengthening its cooperation and partnership with regional and subregional organizations. Council members met with senior African Union officials during the mission to Addis Ababa. The Council also held a high-level debate on peace and security in Africa, during which it welcomed the efforts of the panel, led by President Romano Prodi, to prepare a report containing recommendations on strengthening African Union-United Nations cooperation.

Cooperation with the European Union has been continuously strengthened. The support of the European Union bridging operation in Chad to assist the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) was an interesting example of such cooperation. The transfer of authority to a United Nations-led military presence in MINURCAT was successful.

In conclusion, on behalf of all Security Council members, I should like to thank the members of the Assembly for this opportunity to introduce the report of the Council. I would also like to express my appreciation for the work of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, who demonstrated their customary leadership and professionalism and provided invaluable support to the Security Council, allowing it to fulfil its mandate.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt): I am pleased to deliver this statement today on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

At the outset, the Movement expresses its gratitude to you, Sir, for including reform of the Security Council among the main priorities of your presidency of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session and for your commitment, expressed in your opening remarks today, to making all possible effort to achieve such reform as soon as possible. I assure you of the Movement's strong support in making tangible progress under your presidency towards our common goal of expanding and reforming the Security Council. I would also like to express the Movement's appreciation for the remarks made by the Permanent Representative of Austria, in his capacity as President

of the Security Council, in introducing the report of the Council today.

In addition, I would like to express the Movement's appreciation to His Excellency Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, for his efforts in advancing this important issue and to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, His Excellency Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations, on his good work during the sixty-third session and to express our support for your decision to entrust him with that task at the sixty-fourth session with a view to achieving the required results.

The Non-Aligned Movement attaches particular importance to achieving rapid and concrete results through intergovernmental negotiations in the informal plenary of the General Assembly on the important question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council, in accordance with General Assembly decision 62/557.

The heads of State or Government of the Movement, gathered at Sharm el-Sheikh on the occasion of the fifteenth NAM summit, held on 15 and 16 July 2009, expressed the Movement's common position in section E of the summit's final document. The NAM summit document welcomes the commencement of the intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Security Council in the informal plenary of the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, pursuant to General Assembly decision 62/557.

The Movement believes that reform of the Security Council should be addressed in a comprehensive, transparent and balanced manner. Moreover, enlarging and reforming the Security Council and its working methods should ensure that the Council's agenda reflects the needs and interests of both developing and developed countries in an objective, rational, non-selective and non-arbitrary manner. It should be aimed at limiting and curtailing the use of the veto with a view to its elimination and should lead to a democratic, more representative, more accountable and more effective Council.

In that context, the heads of State or Government acknowledged the historical injustices against Africa with regard to its representation in the Security Council and expressed support for increased and enhanced representation for Africa in a reformed Council. They took note of the African common position as reflected in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

Our leaders stressed that, while there have been some improvements made to the Council's working methods, they have not satisfied even the minimum expectations of the United Nations general membership, leaving much room for improvement. In that regard, the Movement will push for the implementation of all its proposals as reflected in the final document of the Sharm el-Sheikh summit. The rules of procedure of the Security Council, which have remained provisional for more than 60 years, should be formalized in order to improve the Council's transparency and accountability.

Furthermore, the leaders rejected any attempts to use the Security Council to pursue national political agendas and stressed the necessity of non-selectivity and impartiality in the work of the Council, as well as the need for the Council to keep strictly within the powers and functions accorded to it by Member States under the United Nations Charter.

The summit document further stresses that sanctions imposed by the Security Council remain an issue of serious concern to non-aligned countries. In accordance with the United Nations Charter, the imposition of sanctions should be considered only after all means of the peaceful settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the Charter have been exhausted and thorough consideration undertaken of the short- and long-term effects of sanctions.

Sanctions are a blunt instrument whose use raises fundamental ethical questions as to whether sufferings inflicted on vulnerable groups in the target country are legitimate means of exerting pressure. The objective of sanctions is not to punish or otherwise exact retribution on the population. In that regard, the objectives of sanctions regimes should be clearly defined, imposed for a specified time frame and based on tenable legal grounds. They should also be lifted as soon as their objectives have been attained. The conditions demanded of the State or party on which sanctions are imposed should be clearly defined and subject to periodic review.

Sanctions should be imposed only when there exists a threat to international peace and security or an act of aggression, in accordance with the Charter, and are not applicable as a preventive measure in instances of the mere violation of international law, norms or standards.

Last year, the Non-Aligned Movement expressed regret that the annual report of the Security Council lacked analytical depth and had limited added value for the membership at large. Upon examining this year's report, NAM notes that it continues to be a procedural overview of the Council's meetings, activities and decisions. While the enumeration of meetings and documents in the report reflects the major role played by the Council in various fields, NAM continues to believe that the report could better reflect the Council's challenges, assessments and rationale, as well as the decision-making process followed in each of the cases covered during the reporting period.

In our view, the report should be more explanatory with regard to positions taken concerning the various issues being addressed in the Council, including why the Council refrained from taking or was unable to take decisive action in some situations, particularly those related to the maintenance of international peace and security, or why the Council reacted in various ways, including resolutions, presidential statements, press releases or other statements to the press, as well as the criteria followed and arguments used by the Council in deciding how it would react in every case.

Now addressing the Assembly in my national capacity, I would like to associate myself with the statement to be made by the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the African Group and to highlight a few additional significant points concerning the Security Council reform process.

The African common position, as outlined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, adopted by consensus and reiterated by African leaders at all consecutive African summits, demands, among other things, no fewer than two permanent seats, with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership, including the right to the veto, and two additional non-permanent seats.

It has to be stressed here that Africa is opposed in principle to the right of veto, but it is also of the view that as long as the veto exists, as a matter of common justice it should be made available to all permanent members of the Security Council. As the veto right continues to be the central issue in the expansion process that aims to enhance good international governance, Africa continues to believe that expansion in the non-permanent category alone is not an option, as it will not change the power structure of the Council nor correct the historical injustices to Africa. The same applies to increasing the number of permanent members without granting the new permanent members the same veto granted to the current permanent members, pending the full elimination of the veto.

It is therefore essential to rapidly rectify the serious historical injustices to Africa because of the fact that it is not represented in the category of the permanent membership of the Security Council, nor represented by an adequate number of seats in the non-permanent category, and because of the negative impact of the continuation of the current situation on the Council's ability to deal effectively with many of the conflict situations around the world, particularly on the African continent.

Decision 62/557, adopted by the General Assembly without a vote on 15 September 2008, should continue to be the main guide for the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. In paragraph (d) of the decision it is clearly stipulated that the intergovernmental negotiations will be based on proposals by Member States only, in clear exercise of national ownership and full responsibility for the proposals, which should reflect exclusively a governmental point of view, thus making the negotiations truly intergovernmental. Moreover, the decision explicitly specifies in paragraph (e) the negotiables for the intergovernmental negotiations, including the interlinked five main issues that constitute an integral, inseparable package that has to be agreed together.

It is imperative that all of us in the sixty-fourth session continue to abide by the letter and spirit of that decision as the basis of the intergovernmental negotiations, taking into account the progress achieved and all the positions and proposals presented by Member States so far, as well as those that may be presented at the present session. In this context, Egypt expresses its appreciation to all States that submitted proposals at the sixty-third session aiming to push the process forward.

Egypt continues to believe that the veto is the cornerstone in the process of the reform of the Security

Council. The African demand for the elimination of the veto in its entirety is closely tied to its demand to grant the same veto rights to the new African permanent members in the Council until its elimination, in full application of the principle of equality between current and new permanent members. The same equality should apply in case the General Assembly decides, within the enlargement process, to restrict the scope of application of the veto in cases that could include crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide, acts of aggression, the cessation of hostilities between belligerent parties and the selection of the Secretary-General. In that case, applying the same principle of equality and common justice, the new permanent members would only be granted the veto with the same restricted scope of usage.

Egypt is convinced that the effectiveness of the Council is not linked to the size of the enlarged Council. An enlarged Security Council that includes members that enjoy the confidence and trust of the larger membership of the Organization will definitely constitute the success of our intergovernmental negotiations, and we believe that a Council with at least 26 seats will achieve that goal.

By all means, any enlargement in the size of the Security Council should take into consideration the African demands for larger representation in both categories of the membership in the Council. It should also achieve a balanced representation of all regional groups. That is why Africa is demanding no less — I repeat, no less — than two permanent seats. The final number will be decided on the basis of how many permanent seats will be allocated to other regional groups.

Regarding regional representation, Egypt believes that some elements of the concept may be reflected in the Ezulwini Consensus, which states that the African Union should be responsible for the selection of its representatives in the Security Council, based on criteria to be determined by that organization and taking into consideration the representative nature and capacity of those chosen. However, Egypt deems it appropriate that we discuss the application of this concept in all regions, not only in Africa, and without prejudice to the provisions of Article 23 of the Charter covering the procedures for election of new members of the Security Council by the General Assembly.

Reform of its working methods, which should be based on enhancing transparency and accountability, is also an important aspect of Security Council reform. Although several attempts to improve the working methods of the Security Council have been undertaken within the Council, particularly by the its Informal Working Group on Documentation and other Procedural Questions, and as expressed in the note of the Council President contained in document S/2006/507 — as well as in the proposals by Costa Rica, Jordan, Liechtenstein, Singapore and Switzerland, known as S-5, submitted in March 2006 — none of those attempts stands up to the ambitions of Member States. What is missing to reform the working methods of the Security Council are not additional proposals but the political will on the part of the permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council to achieve real reform of the working methods of the Council.

Egypt opposes any attempt to categorize the veto issue as a subsidiary issue falling under working methods. We still believe that the veto should remain a separate issue among the five negotiables as agreed in paragraph (e) of decision 62/557.

The relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly is defined in the Charter. Egypt is convinced that the problem in this regard lies in how the Council and the Assembly apply this relationship. The Security Council continues encroaching on the mandate of the General Assembly. It does not bring any matter to the attention of the General Assembly nor does its composition reflect the implementation of the principle of equitable geographical distribution. In most cases it acts in a way that ignores the will and views of the countries concerned and the general membership of the United Nations.

For its part, the General Assembly does not exercise its rights enshrined in the Charter concerning its relationship with the Council, even though it can do so — and very successfully — as it did in dealing with the situation in Honduras at its last session. Therefore, concrete steps should be undertaken to enhance the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly in the future.

On the way forward, Egypt reiterates the African position that the transitional or intermediary approach is not acceptable. This approach does not respond to the African demands encompassed in the African

common position, as it is not based on expansion in permanent seats, but on extended seats without the prerogatives and privileges of the permanent seats, particularly the veto right. In practice this means expansion in the number of non-permanent seats for larger or shorter durations. We believe that this approach lacks clarity and requires further clarification.

Egypt supports increasing the representation of the developing countries and small States in the Security Council, as was enshrined in 1993 in General Assembly resolution 48/26. I will omit the details from this statement.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I am confident that, under your guidance, we can reach an agreement on the reform and expansion of the Security Council, built on solidifying the principles of justice and equality in rights and obligations which would allow the Security Council to become a platform for democracy, transparency and accountability.

Mr. Touray (Sierra Leone): It is an honour for me to speak on behalf of the African Group in this joint debate on agenda items 9 and 119. I wish to express our appreciation for including them on the agenda and to note with thanks the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council (A/63/47) and the report of the Security Council on the work of the Council for the period covering 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009 (A/64/2).

For us, this joint debate provides a welcome opportunity to take stock of the recently concluded three rounds of the intergovernmental negotiations and to set the stage for the next phase. Hopefully, this time they will be geared towards moving the process in a more meaningful direction that leads to the building of consensus.

The transition from consultations of the Open-ended Working Group following the adoption of Assembly decision 62/557, of 15 September 2008, to the launching of the intergovernmental negotiations that ensued in three rounds during the past session was a significant move in this debate, which has been ongoing for over a decade and a half.

The report on the Open-ended Working Group on reform, contained in document A/63/47, provides an instructive catalogue of the evolution of this discussion dating as far back as the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, in 1993. The three rounds of intergovernmental negotiations in the past session ushered in moderate but meaningful development in the Security Council reform dialogue.

Allow me, on behalf of the Group, to pay tribute to the facilitators for their stewardship of the process to date. Since the adoption of decision 62/557, the reform process has cautiously forged ahead, albeit at a pace not to our liking. But delegations have remained remarkably engaged with interest. Convergences, divergences and possible sticky areas are now very well known. In our view, that is a commendable point of departure.

We believe that the positions of the various groups and of Member States have by now been stated and restated during the many exchanges of the three rounds already held. At this time, it is our hope that a spirit of an effective interactive approach in the subsequent rounds of the Security Council reform negotiations will dictate the pace of the process and conveniently lead to trade-offs in the negotiations.

Bringing together agenda items 9 and 119 in this joint debate is a clear indication of an appreciation of the interrelationship between the two. In that connection, the African Group acknowledges the Council's holding of more public meetings with other stakeholders, such as Member States, troop-contributing countries and non-governmental organizations, with a view to nurturing, enhancing and improving its relations with relevant stakeholders. The Council's move to provide an opportunity to discuss its draft report informally with Member States was a welcome innovation. We would encourage such open and frank discussions to ensure transparency and inclusiveness. We also welcome the Security Council's visits to various areas on the continent in connection with specific missions on its agenda, which were intended to increase the effectiveness of sanctions and to gather information on the ground.

However, we are wholeheartedly disappointed about the apparent resistance to improving many other aspects of Council's working methods that we believe will further lead to increased transparency, inclusiveness and the legitimacy of its proceedings. In particular, that is the case with regard to its rules of procedure, which still

remain provisional, even after 60 years of the Council's existence.

We have consistently emphasized the need for the Security Council to conduct its work in accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter, and to maintain a balance in its relationship with the Assembly, as envisaged in the Charter. In that regard, we have expressed our preparedness to subscribe to, and consider, views and measures that require the Council to submit special subject-oriented reports to the General Assembly for its consideration, including on issues of current international concern. We have also urged that the Council's reports be comprehensive and analytical, as well as that the Council engage, interact and interface with the Assembly more regularly and seamlessly.

The African Group has consistently reiterated the imperative need to reform the Security Council if the United Nations is to respond to the current geopolitical realities of the global community. Only a comprehensive reform of the Security Council will address the historical injustice that leaves Africa as the only continent not represented in the permanent category of Council membership.

Paradoxically, that organ devotes 70 per cent of its time to dealing with issues that directly, and sometimes exclusively, affect the continent, which also provides over a quarter of the membership of the United Nations. Accordingly, Africa has a common position, which is reflected in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. That position is based on opposing in principle the right of the veto. But as long as that right exists, as a matter of common justice, it should be made available to all permanent members of the Security Council. Africa therefore requests to be fully represented in the Security Council, with no less than two permanent seats having all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership, including the right of the veto, as well as five non-permanent seats, with the African Union being given the responsibility for selecting Africa's candidates for permanent membership.

The requirement for a democratic, inclusive and legitimate decision-making Council, in particular in the execution of its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, cannot be overemphasized. We therefore remain firm in our common position for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council that will make the Council more responsive to the needs of the current geopolitical realities of the world. As a Group, we have always expressed reservations about the process of the negotiations itself. In a way, that process seems to be driven by other than the proposals and positions of Member States, as is required by decision 62/557. But we have nonetheless, in a spirit of good will, continued to be engaged and committed to negotiating in good faith and with mutual trust.

The emergence of an intermediate approach, along with its various permutations, as well as the failure to produce an outcome paper that reflects the degree of support enjoyed by each and every position and proposal on the table, was, in large measure, an unwelcome démarche vis-à-vis the expectations of many delegations, including the African Group. The last session of the intergovernmental negotiations served to strengthen Africa's determined position that an intermediary, transitional or intermediate approach ought not to factor as a viable proposition in the reform process. It is the product of the facilitators, which actually predates the intergovernmental negotiations and is not a natural outcome emerging from that process. It leaves itself open to different interpretations, thereby making all proposals based on it unclear with regard to its main pillars. Moreover, it is in conflict with the African Union's Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, and does not in any way respond to African demands. It can now be safely assumed from the last session of the intergovernmental negotiations that the intermediate approach did not garner the expected support from Member States and groups necessary for it to contend for consideration at this stage.

On the other hand, the sense of the house was that a good majority of delegations during the negotiations were in favour of an expansion in both categories. Clearly, some Permanent Five members expressed support for the candidacies of a select few Member States to become permanent members of the Security Council. The African Group and Caribbean Community (CARICOM) regional group, and some Member States of Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe, as well as others, also expressed support for expansion in the two categories. Furthermore, there was considerable support for the inclusion of small and medium-size States, and of course Africa, in the expansion of the Council.

One sticky area of concern in the negotiations has been the question of what to do with the veto. Should it be abolished, curtailed or extended? Though there appears to be a preponderance of views in favour of its curtailment and use in some specific instances, there is strong resistance to abolishing it from quarters that now enjoy the privilege exclusively. Again, while there has been resistance to extending the veto, there are those who favour that extension, either immediately or after an agreed period of review.

Africa's position has been that the veto should be abolished as a matter of principle, but if it has to be retained, we favour its extension to all new permanent members as a matter of common justice. We are of the view that more focus should be placed on discussions of the veto in an effort to determine the scope and nature of the type of expansion, in both permanent and non-permanent categories, that would be acceptable to the general membership.

In conclusion, Africa stands ready and willing to continue to negotiate in good faith and with mutual trust as the intergovernmental negotiations continue in the informal plenary of the General Assembly of this current session, building on the positions and proposals of Member States and using such progress as may already have been achieved as a starting point. Africa is in a hurry and is impatient to see an historical injustice redressed. We therefore hope that an acceptable outcome will be forthcoming at the present session on the reform issue, and look forward to better coordination in the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Mr. Hackett (Barbados): I take the floor to speak on agenda item 9, concerning the report of the Security Council (A/64/2), and item 119, "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters". I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 14 Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) that are members of the United Nations, namely Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and my own country, Barbados.

At the outset, I would like to thank Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, Permanent Representative of Austria and current President of the Security Council, for his detailed presentation of the report of the Council. CARICOM commends the members of the Council for the work they have undertaken during the reporting period.

The work of the Council over the past year covered virtually all regions of the world, although the principal focus continued to be on Africa. CARICOM would like to thank the members of the Council for their efforts in seeking to bring peace and stability to the various conflicts around the world. We regret the fact, however, that the Council, despite paying close attention to the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, was not able to reach the unanimity needed for it to take any action on this issue during the reporting period. CARICOM hopes that the Council will be able to intensify its engagement with the issue in the future, for the people of that region of the world deserve sustainable peace and security after experiencing so many years of conflict.

CARICOM has noted that terrorism remained a top concern for the Council. We would, however, like to use this occasion to remind Member States of the causal nexus between the perpetrators of heinous acts of terrorism and other criminal acts, such as drug trafficking, the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the presence of criminal gangs. Within CARICOM this connection has given rise to a highly organized criminal network that is supported by various sophisticated criminal organizations within and outside our region, as well as the development of a subculture that glorifies violence and gun ownership. It also places severe constraints on the development efforts of our countries.

It is our desire that this dimension be given increased attention by the international community, and particularly by those development partners who support the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). We appeal to the Secretary-General and UNODC to secure the resources necessary to enable the reopening of the UNODC office in the Caribbean to assist the countries of CARICOM in addressing this problem.

CARICOM welcomes the attention that the Council has paid to the situation in Haiti and the support provided to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The extension of the mandate of MINUSTAH will provide further opportunities for the international community to continue to support the Haitian political leadership and

the Haitian people in rebuilding Haiti and progressing towards sustainable development.

The General Assembly, while determining in its decision 62/557 that the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform should commence in informal plenary of the General Assembly during its sixty-third session, also decided that the Open-ended Working Group on Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council should continue its work and submit a report to the Assembly before the end of that session. I would like to thank the President at the sixty-third session, Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, for the preparation of the report, which we have before us today in document A/63/47. During the early part of the sixty-third session, the Working Group addressed the framework and modalities in order to prepare for and facilitate the intergovernmental negotiations that had been called for in the Assembly's decision 62/557. Now that intergovernmental negotiations have begun, CARICOM sees no justification for the continuation of the Open-ended Working Group.

Let me now turn to the intergovernmental negotiations themselves and provide CARICOM's perspective on the progress achieved to date and on the way forward. Following the launch of intergovernmental negotiations in February, Member States fully explored, and I daresay exhausted, the substantive underpinning of the five key issues that were to be addressed in the negotiations, in accordance with General Assembly decision 62/557. CARICOM would like to thank Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan for his leadership in his capacity as Chairman of the informal plenary.

CARICOM continues to believe that Security Council reform needs to be one of the priority issues to be addressed at this session of the General Assembly and that it will be incumbent on Member States to build on the progress that was made during the sixty-third session.

During the negotiations, there were a number of competing options on the first key issue of expansion in both categories. These included, first, new permanent and new non-permanent members; secondly, new non-permanent members only; and thirdly, new extended-term members until the review of 10 to 15 years, or a defined term between 2 and 15 years, with the possibility for immediate re-election and new non-permanent members.

Having participated fully in the intergovernmental negotiations that were held to date and having followed closely all of the statements made, CARICOM recognizes that there has been general support for the model that calls for expansion in both categories, including its different varieties. We therefore believe that this should be the area of focus as we seek agreement in the intergovernmental negotiations on this issue.

In this regard, we restate our belief that any expansion in the permanent category should include representation particularly from those regions currently underrepresented or not represented at all in the Council, namely Africa, Asia and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. Regarding the non-permanent category, CARICOM believes that the number of seats should be increased to enable small States, particularly small island developing States, to have more opportunities to serve on the Council.

While CARICOM does not have a definitive position on the size of a reformed Security Council, we support the position of the African Group recognizing that a Council of between 25 and 26 seats might represent the most viable option.

On the question of regional representation, CARICOM believes that the African Group position is the one that comes closest to the concept of genuine regional representation. CARICOM's perception of a reformed Security Council is one that should ideally provide for equitable representation for developing countries, including more balanced, equitable geographical distribution of sub-groups within groups. It should also greatly increase accessibility and opportunities, especially for small developing States like those of CARICOM.

In this connection, we have stated in the intergovernmental negotiations — and I restate here — that CARICOM believes that one of the most meaningful ways of appropriately addressing this issue would be through the creation of a small island developing State seat in the Council, which would rotate among developing countries located within the regions of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia. This would be an additional seat in the non-permanent category exclusively to represent small island developing countries.

Indeed, as the Permanent Representative of Jamaica, Ambassador Wolfe, declared on behalf of CARICOM in his statement to the informal plenary of the General Assembly on 2 September,

> "a reformed Security Council should provide for greater access and the effective participation of small island developing States, including those of CARICOM. Any proposal, therefore, which seeks to exclude or marginalize us will not, under any circumstances, gain our support".

On the question of the veto, CARICOM believes that it should be abolished. We consider the practice to be fundamentally undemocratic and unrepresentative of the wider membership of the United Nations in whose interest the Council is empowered to take action. The misuse and abuse of the veto seriously undermine the main purpose of reform efforts to make the Council more transparent and accountable. However, if abolition of the veto is not likely to be immediately possible, there should be an agreement that it would be used with the utmost restraint and limited to actions under Chapter VII of the Charter.

In addition to forbidding the use of the veto except in specifically prescribed instances, we suggest further that an explanation of the use of the veto be made to the general membership and that a provision be adopted that would allow for a veto override by a specified super-majority.

Finally on this point, CARICOM countries believe that as long as the veto is retained, it should be extended to all new permanent members of the reformed Security Council, particularly since there exists the current untenable situation that no member of the African or Latin American and Caribbean geographic regions has the power of the veto.

The relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly is another issue that calls for critical examination so that the disparity that has developed over time in the relationship between these two important main organs of the Organization can be corrected. The General Assembly is the chief deliberative and policymaking organ of the United Nations in which all Member States participate. Thus, in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter, its primacy among the main organs of the United Nations must be respected and preserved. This essentially means that the Security Council should refrain from encroaching on the powers and mandate of the Assembly by not addressing issues that traditionally fall within the purview and competence of the General Assembly.

Furthermore, in discharging its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council is acting on behalf of the General Assembly and is therefore accountable to the Assembly. That is a responsibility that Member States have conferred on the Security Council in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter. Such accountability should include the submission to the General Assembly by the Security Council of clear, comprehensive and analytical annual and special reports for its consideration.

On this point, CARICOM would like to signal our disappointment in the report of the Council, which again this year is simply a factual listing of meetings, items on the Council's agenda and an identification of who spoke on a particular issue. We are of the view that the inclusion of an analytical component, which is currently missing from the report, would be an important step towards the Council's fulfilment of its obligations to the larger membership of the Organization. We would also like to see the Security Council, in the conduct of its work, take fully into account recommendations made by the General Assembly regarding matters related to international peace and security, consistent with Article 11 of the Charter.

CARICOM recognizes that there are no substantive issues or contending proposals to be negotiated on this point. We believe therefore that the President of the General Assembly should immediately proceed to undertake a compilation of the proposals and positions relating to the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly for inclusion in a draft outcome document of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform.

CARICOM believes that the reform of the working methods of the Security Council is integral to the comprehensive reform of that body. We therefore support the approval and implementation of working methods that make for greater transparency, accountability and effectiveness of the Security Council, as well as more inclusiveness of Member States that are not members of the Council.

In closing, much progress was made during the intergovernmental negotiations at the sixty-third session of the General Assembly. We now need to build on that progress. CARICOM welcomes the reappointment of Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan as the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations during this sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. We look forward to the resumption of these negotiations in the near future and recommit ourselves to participating actively and in a spirit of flexibility and compromise with a view to reaching a meaningful outcome before the end of the session that would command the support of a majority of Member States.

The call of all of our leaders in 2005 to reform that most important main organ of the United Nations should not be further delayed.

Mr. Lippwe (Federated States of Micronesia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States (Pacific SIDS) represented at the United Nations, namely, Fiji, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga, Vanuatu and my own country, the Federated States of Micronesia. The Pacific SIDS welcome the opportunity to participate in this debate on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. We thank the Austrian President of the Security Council for his comprehensive presentation in introducing the Council's report (A/64/2) under agenda item 9.

Let me begin by addressing the question of the categories of Security Council membership. We consider it important that there be an expansion of membership that includes both new permanent and new non-permanent members. It is clear that the increase in only non-permanent members of the Council in the early 1960s did not result in any real change in the Council's decision-making process. That was recognized by our leaders at the 2005 World Summit and led to the call for early reform of the Security Council. Furthermore, the increase in the membership of the United Nations since the early 1960s necessitates expansion in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories of the Council.

The view of the Pacific SIDS on regional representation in the Council is well known. The Council's current composition does not sufficiently represent all regions of the world and no longer reflects the geopolitical realities of the twenty-first century. The Pacific SIDS do not support the creation of new categories of membership in a reformed Council, such as a new category of extended seats.

Africa and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States are not represented in the permanent category of the Council. As a region, Asia, with only one permanent member, has been underrepresented. It is imperative that that historical imbalance be addressed through the election of individual Member States from the regions concerned as permanent members of the Security Council. We consider that essential to address the issue of non-representation and underrepresentation of regions in one of the major decision-making bodies of the United Nations.

The support of the Pacific SIDS for six new permanent seats is in keeping with the desire expressed by leaders in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) to make the Council more broadly representative of the twenty-first century and ensure that it takes into account geopolitical realities. We support two new permanent seats on the Council for Africa and one for Latin America and the Caribbean. We also support two additional permanent seats for Asia and one for the Group of Western European and other States. Furthermore, our support for five additional non-permanent seats is premised on the conviction that all countries can and must contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, albeit to different extents.

The existing regional group arrangement used to propose members for two-year non-permanent seats on the Council through the concept of equitable geographical distribution requires reform. The existing arrangement is no longer equitable in the distribution or selection of members from within the regional groups to serve in the Council. Reform must ensure that there is a more democratic and fair system of selection and a more balanced geographical distribution of subregions within groups when proposals are put forward by groups for non-permanent seats on the Council.

The Pacific SIDS believe that the option of allocating a seat to the small island developing States within the existing group structures must be covered by some form of assurance, contained in guidelines that could be part of a realistic reform process. That assurance would afford the SIDS a more balanced

opportunity to serve on the Council and would reflect a more democratic, shared implementation of the concept of equitable geographical distribution.

We are aware that fatigue and frustration may set in, as there have not been many visible or tangible results after so many years of ongoing discussions within this Organization on reforming the Security Council. However, we must stay the course and remain committed.

The Pacific SIDS are grateful for your statement earlier, Mr. President, and your words of assurance and commitment to pressing on with this important issue during the current session. We must all work together aggressively to overcome the barriers that stand in the way of our progress and remain loyal to the cause of reform.

Mr. Tewari (India): I am honoured to address the General Assembly on behalf of my country on the report of the Security Council (A/64/2) and the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters. Let me commence by congratulating Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Nigeria and Lebanon on having been elected to non-permanent seats on the Council for the period of 2010 to 2011. India looks forward to working with those countries in a constructive and positive manner. We thank the delegation of Austria for introducing the annual report of the Security Council for the period of 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009.

In our view, the report of the Security Council is an important means of facilitating interaction between the most representative organ of the United Nations and its most empowered sibling. The United Nations Charter itself bestows on the report a profound gravitas, as is evident from the fact that a separate provision mandating such a report exists, rather than grouping it with reports from other United Nations bodies. It is, therefore, imperative that the annual report of the Security Council inform on, highlight and analyse the measures that the Council has decided upon or has taken to maintain international peace and security during the reporting period.

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

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

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

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

Let us recall that since the General Assembly deliberated on this agenda item last year, intergovernmental negotiations have finally commenced after years of going around in circles in the Open-ended Working Group. This is a significant development and the General Assembly must strongly support expediting the negotiations so as to achieve an early reform.

The most obvious way to achieve such a result is to immediately convene the negotiations and build on the progress achieved during the negotiations thus far. This, in fact, is precisely what the Assembly unanimously agreed to do in its decision on 14 September 2009. It would also be useful to recall that the preference of Member States for a Council reform involving expansion, in both the permanent and non-permanent membership categories, was clearly reflected in the summaries issued by the Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership and wisdom in reappointing Ambassador Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, as the Chair of the negotiations during the sixty-fourth session. The

need for continuity to ensure success can hardly be overemphasized. My delegation would also like to congratulate Ambassador Tanin on his appointment, and we wish him all success in his continued efforts. He can be assured of my delegation's full support in that very important role.

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

It is imperative that we make genuine and rapid progress on the issue of United Nations Security Council reform, without which the whole process of United Nations reform would be incomplete. Our institutions of global governance cannot remain chained to the balance of global power that existed in 1945. The economic meltdown of 2008 highlighted the urgent need for international institutions to reflect contemporary global reality. This, once again, strongly underscores the imperative of reform of the Council.

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

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

We have also heard proposals for interim or intermediate solutions. However, such ideas raise more questions than they can provide significant and substantive answers. Let us be clear: pushing this decision into the future does not solve the problem, it merely enhances the perception of the erosion of the credibility and legitimacy of the Council. The luxury of inaction is not an option available to the collective will of humanity represented in this Assembly.

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

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): May I first of all express my thanks to the Permanent Representative of Austria, in his capacity as President of the Security Council for this month, for the detailed presentation of the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly, contained in document A/64/2.

I would also like to express great thanks to the delegation of Uganda for their excellent work in preparing this report. I wish to emphasize the calibre of the document, which I firmly believe meets legitimate and well-known expectations.

The informal meeting, chaired by Uganda last July, provided the opportunity for dialogue on the Council's annual report with States that are not members, which, in turn, made it possible to raise many issues in a spirit of transparency, something we fervently wish to see.

Ms. Štiglic (Slovenia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

France remains, of course, committed to improving the working methods of the Security Council in order to achieve even greater transparency and better interaction with non-Council members, without challenging the balance of power set out in the Charter.

I would also like to clarify France's position on Security Council reform. The General Assembly has, this year, made that reform one of the priorities of its mandate and we welcome that. The renewal of the mandate of Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan as Chair of the intergovernmental negotiations is also good news. I wish to reiterate to him our full confidence and to wish him every success.

The support of my delegation can be relied upon so that, together, we may achieve ambitious reform of the core United Nations institution responsible for taking action on international peace and security, which is the Security Council. Reform of the Council is essential, if it is to remain effective and representative in a world different from that of 1945. That is imperative. The status quo is not an option.

In our view, and I understand that this is a position shared by many delegations, Security Council reform to make the Council more representative of the reality of today's world must be affected for both categories of members — permanent and non-permanent. Reform must take into account the emergence of new Powers who wish to bear the responsibility of a permanent seat on the Security Council and who, in accordance with the Charter, are

in a position to make an important contribution to the Council's action in maintaining international peace and security.

In this regard, we support permanent membership being awarded to Germany, Brazil, India and Japan. We also wish to see more African countries as members of the Security Council, in particular as permanent members. There is also the question of an Arab country being one of the permanent members of the Security Council.

At the same time, expansion of the Security Council must not come at the cost of diminishing its effectiveness of its action and its credibility as the principle body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council, therefore, must remain of a reasonable size.

To overcome the current stalemate, and in order to more surely arrive at Security Council reform, we must demonstrate pragmatism and creativity. As the President of the French Republic proposed, together with the British Prime Minister, on 27 March 2008 and once again on 6 July 2009, we support the option of interim reform. That solution could create a new category of membership with a mandate longer than the two years of the current elected members. At the end of the interim phase, a decision could be taken to convert those new seats into permanent seats. Such a pragmatic solution would make it possible to try out, during a transitional phase, the parameters of Security Council reform. That is why we trust that this solution may be discussed at the current Assembly session, during which we hope for significant progress.

In order to make real progress in intergovernmental negotiations, which we trust will be resumed as soon as possible, we must now propose a reform model. Here a document from the chair of the negotiations outlining the main parameters of the reform, in particular the composition of the Security Council, would help our discussions.

Mr. Ney (Germany): At the outset, I wish to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this important first debate on Security Council reform during his presidency. I should also like to thank the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, for presenting the report of the Security Council (A/64/2).

We are confident that we can make decisive progress on Security Council reform at the sixty-fourth session, and we look forward to the leadership to the President of the General Assembly and his support for this process. I trust that this debate will jumpstart the long-awaited resumption of the intergovernmental negotiation process. At the end of the Assembly's last session, if I may be permitted this reminder, we had agreed to continue this process immediately.

Allow me a brief look back at what we achieved in the General Assembly at its sixty-third session. Under the dedicated and skilful guidance of Ambassador Tanin — whose reappointment we welcome — we succeeded in clarifying the basic prerequisites for a successful reform process. The overwhelming majority want a meaningful reform of the Security Council, and they want to move forward now.

It is our responsibility to ensure that the Security Council can play its role in the twenty-first century. The overwhelming majority of Member States consider this aim to be served best by an expansion in both categories. Like our partners in Africa, the Caribbean Community and Micronesia, as well as many, many others, Germany and its partners in the Group of Four firmly support this model of expansion. That was the clear result of the sixty-third session — a result we now need to build upon.

Where do we go from here? How should we proceed in the months ahead of us? We all acknowledge the need for a speedy reform. Hence, we now need to take the process a step forward. And Member States are not only ready for this; they expect us to achieve decisive progress at this session.

We are convinced that the logical next step is to arrive at a text that will serve as a basis for negotiations. The positions of Member States are well known. They have been outlined repeatedly, including in this forum. They can and should now be cast into a negotiation text.

From our point of view, that text should emanate from a trusted, impartial and balanced source. That is why we call on the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations to present a text that will then be the basis for our negotiations. That text should of course contain all the relevant reform options presented and promoted by Member States in the past.

In this process, two things are obvious. First, the chair is of course invested with the authority to help Member States narrow down the options. That will allow us to focus on the main options. Secondly, the text the chair would present will not be the solution to the reform question; rather, it will be the beginning of a negotiation process — and by that I mean a negotiation process that is true to its name. Once a first draft is on the table, delegations can and should point out where they see shortcomings in the text and propose additions or deletions. The text would then be repeatedly revised by the chair, just as in all the other negotiation processes in the United Nations.

We want to achieve an expansion in both categories. On the way there, we might think about intermediate solutions. But let me be clear: any intermediate solution must be constructed in a fashion so as to pave the way for an expansion in both categories. An intermediate model must allow Member States to make a decision at the review conference for a transition of the intermediate model into a permanent expansion in both categories.

I wish to be clear here: all other variations of the intermediate model are just disguised forms of an enlargement in the non-permanent category only. We will not support any of these variations.

Since the positions of Member States have been stated over and over again, I will not repeat ours at length. I should like just briefly to stress that we should arrive at a reform that changes the Security Council for the better. In that, a permanent African presence on the Council and a permanent presence of other countries from the South — Brazil and India — on the Council are essential. But also those who significantly contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, like Japan and Germany, should assume their rightful place among the permanent members. And last but not least, the improvement of the Council's working methods is another essential element of such reform. The Council thus reformed would better serve the interests of all Member States.

Mr. Almansoor (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to thank the Permanent Representative of Austria, President of the Security Council for this month, for presenting the annual report of the Security Council, contained in document A/64/2, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. My delegation supports the statement made by the Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement on this matter.

These two agenda items — numbers 9, on the annual report of the Security Council, and 119, on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters — are of particular importance to the Member States of the United Nations. We are discussing them together because they are inextricably linked. While we are discussing these two items, I would like to make some observations.

First, with regard to the Council's annual report, we believe that these discussions are the only opportunity for the non-members of the Council collectively to make comments and observations on the Council's work, assess its activities and resolutions in detail and propose adequate solutions to improve its working methods.

The report now before us reveals in its introduction the increase in the number of public meetings and open briefings. Like previous reports, it groups the Council's decisions and resolutions in a descriptive overview of the various topics discussed in the course of a full year. That method results in a report that needs to take a more analytical approach and show the obstacles and problems that stood in the way of the Council's reaching agreement on certain issues. It would fare better to discuss, even briefly, the reasons that prevented agreement on those issues.

We might say that the international community views the United Nations through the prism of the Security Council and the resolutions it takes, but it is also correct to say that it is urgent to clarify the reasons for the Council's failure to find solutions to issues so that all of the Member States can help settle those problems.

My delegation appreciates and understands the considerable efforts and tasks entrusted to the Council as well as the grave responsibility assigned to it, which is evident from the report. We highly appreciate the Council's interest in the continent of Africa, which has witnessed numerous conflicts that have led to both positive and negative changes. The Council has dealt with issues in Africa in a very careful manner. It also takes interest in other parts and regions of the world, and we commend it for that and appreciate its efforts.

We can say that the Council has acted seriously in redressing numerous problems. However, it failed to tackle other highly important issues, such as the question of Palestine, which is still on the Council's agenda.

Despite the clarifications made in the report on measures taken by the Security Council this year with regard to increasing the number of public meetings and open briefings, efforts must be intensified to make the Council's work more transparent and to undo the ambiguity that surrounds its work. All States should be able to participate in decisions regarding the items on the Council's agenda that would lead to concrete results, especially if States see the issues that are relevant to them being discussed in the Council. That would contribute to achieving the aspirations of the various Member States and would improve the relationship between the Council and the General Assembly. Discussing those two issues would contribute to achieving that goal, as the two organs undertake considerable responsibilities in strengthening and implementing the principles and purposes of the United Nations.

Secondly, on the matter of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, I would like to commend the President of the General Assembly at is sixty-third session and the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan for the important roles they have played and the efforts they have deployed in conducting comprehensive and transparent intergovernmental negotiations to arrive at proposals that can be implemented and upon which a wide-ranging political agreement among the Member States can be built.

The leaders of the world are still committed to supporting the early reform of the Security Council, to which they committed themselves in 2005. We have to insist on the preservation of the clear mandate that exists on this issue. It is an essential element in the overall effort to reform the United Nations and to make the Council more representative, more efficient and more transparent, to enhance its legitimacy and make its resolutions more effective. That perspective is set out in paragraph 153 of resolution 60/1.

After many years of discussions that have failed to lead to an outcome on this matter, it is high time for all of us to make a realistic evaluation of this question in all its aspects. We should look at it with an open mind so that progress can be achieved and an agreement satisfactory to everybody can be reached.

In this regard, I would like to state that the consultations under way since last year, which are continuing this year, have contributed to providing specific, useful proposals on Council reform. What is needed now is to pursue those negotiations to scrutinize once again the proposals presented and studied and to present new ideas to reach an agreement attracting wider support by Member States.

Through the exchange of views it has become clear that there is a general agreement that the Security Council is in need of greater balance. At present, it does not reflect the international political situation, and that situation must be corrected immediately. The reform must be inclusive and interrelated. We back the principle of increasing the membership of the Security Council in accordance with equitable and just geographical distribution and including the two categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent. All States should be represented therein. It is important to set aside a seat for the Arab States, which should be occupied in rotation in accordance with what is agreed on by the League of Arab States.

We wish to emphasize the need to reform the working methods of the Council. With greater openness and transparency in this area, the Council's performance, competency and efficiency will improve.

It is important that the competence of each principal United Nations organ be respected in order to ensure that none of them encroach on the competence of the others. The role to be played by the Council in addressing issues that pose threats to international peace and security must be specified, in accordance with the Charter provisions.

An equal relationship must be promoted between the Security Council and the General Assembly, which is the highest legislative authority of the United Nations and embodies the sovereignty of all Member States. Members of the Council should not overuse Chapter VII of the Charter, which should be resorted to only after all diplomatic means set out in the provisions of Chapters VI and VIII have been exhausted.

With regard to the right of the veto, it is important to restrict its use, which obstructs the

adoption of resolutions agreed upon by the majority of Council members. Therefore, the right of the veto can be invalidated through an affirmative vote by the majority of Council members or nullified by a two-thirds majority vote in the General Assembly.

The Kingdom of Bahrain attaches particular importance to this matter. It regards the Security Council as the organ that should reflect the current international economic and political situation. That would enable all Member States, small or large, to participate in the Council in a democratic and transparent manner. We hope that the Security Council will soon have a new expanded image so that all will feel that it expresses their positions, aspirations and hopes.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): I wish to thank the President for convening this joint debate on the agenda items "Report of the Security Council" and "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters". I would also like to express my gratitude to Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, President of the Security Council, for his introduction of the annual report of the Council (A/64/2) and to the representative of Uganda for his important contribution to its preparation.

The annual report of the Security Council provides the General Assembly with a valuable account of the work of the body that the Charter of the United Nations entrusted with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. But the relevance of the report goes well beyond the description of the Council's activities. In fact, the preparatory process leading to the adoption of the report and the report's content reflect the way in which the Security Council understands that its business should be conducted and the way in which it believes its interaction with the wider membership should appear.

While I once again thank Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, I believe that there is room for improvement in these areas. With that in mind, allow me to briefly put forward some remarks in a constructive mood.

Regarding the preparatory process, we believe that the idea of a meeting with the wider membership to exchange views on the report well in advance of its formal adoption is a commendable and helpful one, as shown in the past. Secondly, we would like to see the Security Council take advantage of the possibility of presenting annual reports with a more analytical perspective, as well as of the possibility of submitting special reports to the General Assembly. Thirdly, we are of the view that the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions could play a more meaningful role with a view to improving the Council's working methods. Finally, we continue to believe in the usefulness of annexing to the annual report assessments by outgoing Council Presidents of the work done by the Council under their leadership, as provided for in a 1997 note by the Council President (S/1997/451).

During the Assembly's sixty-third session, we successfully launched intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform. Portugal welcomed that development, believing that the need for such reform is pressing. As I stated last February, Security Council reform is an urgent task, not only because the Council does not reflect the present geopolitical realities and needs to reflect them in order to effectively discharge its mandate, but mainly because the Council runs the risk of becoming irrelevant. Since then that risk has been further underlined as formal and informal bodies that do not represent the international community as a whole and do not enjoy the legal, political and moral legitimacy emanating from the Charter increasingly take responsibility in deciding issues that affect us all.

The primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the Security Council, and it should and must remain there. However, in order to carry out that responsibility effectively and unquestionably, the Council must be reformed.

Portugal's views on how to bring the Security Council into line with current geopolitical realities are on record. We support comprehensive reform touching on both the Council's working methods and an expansion in its two existing categories of members. In particular, we firmly believe that the current underrepresentation of developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean must be redressed.

Portugal is also on record as holding the view that the legitimate interests and aspirations of small and medium-sized Member States — which account for the vast majority of the membership — must be fully

respected. We have heard no dissent from that assertion during the intergovernmental negotiations. In the opinion of Portugal, the following consequences should derive from that principled position.

First, there must be an increase in the opportunities for medium-sized and small countries to serve on the Council. In any case, the conditions for an effective rotation in the non-permanent category, preventing the establishment of a de facto category of "permanent non-permanent members", must be preserved. Secondly, the role played by non-permanent members in the Council's decision-making process must be enhanced. Finally, there must be improved access for the wider membership to the work of the Council when they are not members of that body.

Deep divergences remain between States and groups of States concerning Security Council reform. That should be expected and is even healthy, for the exercise touches upon core national interests and key security concerns are at stake. But we cannot carry on endlessly, restating well-known positions as in a ritual exercise with a foregone conclusion. Our work during the previous session was undoubtedly useful and clarifying, but we must now move ahead.

For that, we need an effective spirit of flexibility and compromise, so that we achieve a solution with which the whole membership is comfortable, one reflecting the legitimate concerns and fundamental interests of every Member State. It also requires that we build on areas of convergence that we have already been able to identify.

If the Assembly's sixty-third session marked the commencement of intergovernmental negotiations, at the sixty-fourth session we must make decisive progress under the able leadership of the President and with his commitment to Security Council reform.

We welcome the reappointment of Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan as chair of the intergovernmental negotiations. We recall his words in the context of our debates: "impartial to any of the positions, yet partial to progress". We are sure that that principle will continue to guide his efforts. We look forward to the workplan that he will soon share with the membership, which we envisage as the framework that will place the negotiations in a more decisive stage after the exhaustive rounds at the sixty-third session, which already allowed us to look at all relevant issues from every possible angle.

But now, as I said, we must move forward, taking into account the importance and the urgency of the task before us. Ambassador Tanin has our full confidence and we encourage him to state the options that lie before us and upon which we must decide. We are sure that his task will be carried out in a fair and comprehensive way, and we wish him well in his endeavours.

As always, Portugal offers its full cooperation and support to the President of the Assembly and to the Chairman of the negotiations and stands ready to engage deeply and constructively in the collective work that lies ahead of us.

Mr. Dapkiunas (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Belarus is in favour of maintaining and strengthening the role of the Security Council as a central element of the system for the maintenance of international peace and security. At the same time, we are against the unwarranted expansion of the Security Council's agenda to include issues that fall within the purview of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. We believe it essential to improve interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council, including through regular consultations and joint briefings of the presidents of the two main United Nations bodies.

Although the report of the Security Council (A/64/2) is comprehensive and informative, it still lacks analytical depth. One of the main ways to remedy this would be to shift the main analytical focus over to the monthly reports prepared by delegations presiding over the Security Council. That has already been proposed by Belarus. It would be beneficial if the monthly reports were prepared regularly, included analytical assessments and were prepared with less delay. Fulfilment of those three conditions would make it possible for delegations that are non-members of the Security Council to have more timely and complete information.

We believe it essential to continue working towards improving the transparency of the Security Council. Belarus welcomes expansion of the practice by the Council's presidency of holding open debates and briefings and we suggest that such briefings should not be limited to the beginning of the month but could also occur at the end of the month or, as appropriate, throughout the term of the presidency.

We call upon the Council to reflect on ways of ensuring wider participation of non-members in its activities. Belarus suggests that, in addition to the existing formats for the Council's work, we consider a new format for meetings that would be closed to the press and to non-governmental organizations but would be open to delegations.

Belarus believes such an approach would take into account the views of Security Council members that are in favour of retaining the traditional conservative or closed methods of work, as well as the wishes of those that are in favour of trying out more modern work methods. We also think it appropriate to consider allowing more time between an open meeting and the adoption of decisions based on the results of that meeting, which would allow for better reflection, in the outcome documents, of the ideas expressed in the meeting. Belarus believes that that would be a fairer approach and would take into account the views of a broader number of delegations.

When we choose members of the Security Council, we are not only deciding on who will be involved in the debates on important security issues, we are also entrusting those members with an extremely responsible mandate. In addition there is an obligation of honesty and openness with respect to those who have elected them. We count on close cooperation with the newly elected Security Council members and on their readiness to hear our concerns and to share information on the work of the Council with non-members.

Belarus also hopes that permanent members of the Security Council consider their role in the Council to be first and foremost as guarantors of peace and stability in the world, rather than as an opportunity to be members of an elite club with an exclusive position vis-à-vis the other members of the General Assembly.

Reform of the Security Council is an important element relating to the renewal of the Organization and its adaptation to the new realities in the world. Belarus thus calls on Member States to speed up efforts to find a compromise formula to expand the Council's membership and strengthen its efficiency.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, first of all, to thank Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting, Permanent Representative of Austria and President of the Security Council in November, for the presentation of the report of the Security Council (A/64/2) to the General Assembly.

Examination of the report year after year confirms the growing number of issues brought before the Security Council and its increased activity in order to address the many conflict or emergency situations and regional or international disputes. The annual presentation of the report makes a valuable contribution to cooperation and interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council within the balanced framework established by the Charter.

Algeria thanks Ambassador Le Luong Minh, Permanent Representative of Viet Nam, who, as President of the Council in July, organized a meeting with Member States on the draft report. That initiative contributed to greater transparency in the Council's discussions and should become a permanent practice.

As indicated in the report, during the course of the year from August 2008 through July 2009, the Council adopted more than 130 texts, including 53 resolutions. It held more than 200 meetings. The number of informal consultation meetings — private meetings — has sharply risen. This shows the need to make real efforts towards greater transparency. Regular consultations between the Security Council President and the President of the General Assembly are indispensable, so that the latter remains permanently informed on the Council's examination of certain topics.

The Security Council must also ensure that it provides special reports on the questions before it to the General Assembly during the course of the session, pursuant to Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter.

My delegation has already stated that this report of more than 200 pages is narrative and factual, at the expense of being more analytical and critical, which allow greater visibility of what is at stake with regard to the Council's activities. In particular, the report does not indicate those cases where the Council failed to reach a decision on a specific issue and the reasons behind the apparent absence of an adequate majority or some other reasons. In that context, the report does not explain why the Security Council was not in a position to react promptly to Israel's invasion of the Gaza Strip and had to wait a long time, while Israel continued its aggression and the Israeli army committed crimes in Palestinian territory over three long weeks, before Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) was adopted.

The adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 64/10 on 5 November, in which the Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to transmit the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict to the Security Council, provided an opportunity from that time on for the Council to assume its responsibilities. As the main organ with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council must provide the necessary answers following the violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law perpetrated by Israel and confirmed by the Goldstone report (A/HRC/12/48).

The same applies to Western Sahara, where the decolonization process for that last remaining colony on the African continent remains blocked. Established by the Security Council in 1990, the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) has been virtually reduced to overseeing a ceasefire that has been in force since 1991. The Security Council is duty-bound in this case to lift the constraints and refocus its action on MINURSO's original mandate — the organization and supervision of a referendum on self-determination that will allow the Saharan people to freely decide their future.

As in previous years, the report of the Security Council reveals that questions of peace and security in Africa continue to dominate the Council's agenda. The Council has made considerable effort in this area, which has deployed two of its most significant peacekeeping operations on that continent: the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in the Sudan. This effort remains nonetheless inadequate to the African countries and peoples who face challenges beyond their capacity to address.

For its part, the African Union (AU) has increased its initiatives to strengthen its capacity in the areas of prevention and settlement of conflicts in Africa. On 31 August, the AU summit in Tripoli decided to double budget allocation to the African Peace Fund. It was also decided at the summit to operationalize the African Standby Force in 2010. AU member States, which have been working on this courageous effort for several years, will soon possess a valuable tool for ensuring the timely deployment of African forces in the five subregions of the continent.

Moreover, the commitment of the AU has also been demonstrated through the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) since 2007. Organized to compensate for the lack of a United Nations mission and to create conditions conducive to the restoration of peace and stability in a country that has been crippled by long years of civil war, the Mission has faced many challenges, particularly a lack of equipment and funding, since its inception. Following the Security Council's assistance to AMISOM through transfers of equipment and financial contributions, we call on the Council to decide forthwith, as it has pledged to do, on deploying a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Somalia.

The report of the Prodi Commission on the modalities of how to support African Union peacekeeping operations (see A/63/666) clearly indicated ways, often involving innovative proposals, to establish a true partnership in this area between the United Nations and the AU. As the main body responsible for maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council must play an essential role in this process by contributing to the implementation of the Commission's proposals.

Another aspect that we believe deserves particular attention, both in regard to the Council's activities and in its formulation of its report to the General Assembly, is that of post-conflict peacebuilding. We feel it essential that this dimension be taken into account from the very beginning of every peacekeeping operation through a specialized unit and earmarked resources. Increasing the civilian component in this regard would improve the reintegration of former combatants into society.

In a world undergoing profound change and the globalization of every aspect of international existence, the Security Council, whose composition and operating rules reflect the realities of the world as they were in 1945, cannot confront these challenges reliably and effectively. Security Council reform must ultimately create an organ that is more representative, more balanced, more transparent and, finally, more legitimate.

The launch of intergovernmental negotiations within the framework of the General Assembly has allowed for a more practical approach to this important issue and for better awareness of the various positions held. Algeria subscribes to the common African position defined by the Ezulwini Consensus and set out

in the Sirte Declaration, and stresses the need for a comprehensive approach, aimed at redressing a historical injustice to Africa by offering the continent two permanent seats with all attendant prerogatives, including the right to veto, and five non-permanent seats.

In this regard, my delegation stresses its willingness and determination to take part, constructively and in good faith, in the negotiations on this issue at the current session. We trust that this process, under way for more than 15 years, will be completed in a reasonable period of time and finally redress the injustice done to Africa, the only continent without a permanent seat.

Mr. Kleib (Indonesia): We welcome the convening of this joint debate on two related important issues. We wish to thank the President of the Security Council for his remarks, and all members of the Security Council for their comprehensive annual report. We are also grateful for the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council (A/63/47). We also wish to thank the chair of the intergovernmental negotiations on Council reform during the sixty-third session.

Indonesia associates itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The wide range of regional and thematic issues mentioned in the report of the Security Council (A/64/2) demonstrates the progress made and challenges facing the Council in this reporting period. The number of resolutions adopted, presidential statements made and field missions undertaken reveal the Council's continued commitment to addressing the matters on its agenda. This is indeed commendable.

Indonesia also notes some positive developments, such as more open debates in the Council involving the wider United Nations membership, more open briefings and early consultations with troop-contributing countries when renewing or issuing new mandates for peacekeeping operations. Initiatives of non-permanent Council members, such as the opening up of committee and working group discussions and outreach to the wider membership, are also encouraging. We wish that they might be imitated, as appropriate, in the Council's other working methods.

The Security Council must continue to interact and engage with the wider United Nations membership on a more frequent and regular basis. There is no other avenue for the Council to gather ideas and views concerning the issues on its agenda. This is the path that will ensure that the Council's deliberations are in line with reality on the ground. This is the way to build greater support for the Council's efforts to promote global peace and security. We also support an early and meaningful exchange of views between the Council and relevant United Nations entities, as well as non-Organization partners.

We are confident that, building on its own initiatives, the Council can further explore ways to better address the challenges to discharging its mandate and finding early solutions to most conflicts in a more comprehensive manner. The Council's effectiveness in carrying out its work is compatible with greater transparency and interaction with non-Council members. Indeed, such transparency and interaction is quite inseparable from efforts to further enhance the legitimacy of the Council's decisions and its efficacy in discharging its Charter-mandated responsibilities.

We commend the Council for its efforts in producing a more analytical report, but there is always room for improvement. In this regard, it would be useful to Members if the Council's report could also include the status of the implementation of its own decisions. The report should not be only about its successful deliberations, but also about its failures to act on particular cases. The Council is not an Oedipus that considers itself incapable of failure.

Turning to the issue of the reform of the Security Council, Indonesia has no doubt as to its urgency. The General Assembly informal plenary is the appropriate primary vehicle for promoting long-overdue Council reform. The General Assembly is the fount of global legitimacy. No other organ of the United Nations can have the stature of the Assembly.

As we launch a fresh round of negotiations at the sixty-fourth session, we must ensure that this valuable opportunity is not squandered because of the differences on some key reform issues. Differences will always be present; there can be no doubt about that. Instead, our political energies should be funnelled towards finding a way to build a bridge that will lead us to common ground.

Indonesia believes that if we are to yield tangible results, we must strive to emphasize our collective

interests as Member States. We must seek the convergent elements in the various proposals that have been offered. There are already areas of convergence. They are the need to address the Council's working methods and its relationship with the General Assembly and to reflect equitable geographical distribution and the plurality of the world in the Council.

With regard to the key issue of categories of membership, there should be some middle ground. An insurmountable wall of difficulties will prevent us from reaching an agreement should we fail to achieve the widest possible political acceptance. Thus, Indonesia's choice is to expand the Council in both categories. We need to invest more of our political energy in order to make substantial progress.

In Indonesia's view, however, idealism must be coupled with pragmatic approaches. We must build the house of reform brick by brick, wall by wall. Therefore, the least divisive option at the present time is to further consider the possibility of an intermediate approach. In that regard, sufficient time should be allocated to further exploring the elements on which agreement can be reached in the intermediate approach.

We hope that the workplan for the intergovernmental negotiations reflects this. Indeed, the workplan was established with the understanding that all five key issues of Council reform should be agreed upon and adopted as an integral part of a comprehensive package. However, the fact that we have stated our preference for the intermediate approach does not mean that the possibility of future reform involving an expansion in the number of permanent members is off the table. That is certainly not the case. That issue can be properly addressed at the proposed review conference.

Finally, the family of nations today is characterized by greater diversity and pluralism, which means that the Security Council is now grappling with far more complex and multidimensional issues. That requires a comprehensively reformed Council that is representative, accountable, democratic and able to speak in a single voice with credibility and legitimacy.

Mrs. Dunlop (Brazil): The report of the Security Council (A/64/2) makes it clear that attempts continue to be made to reach out to the wider membership and other relevant international actors. Open debates, field missions and consultations with troop- and police-contributing countries reveal that intent. It is essential to deepen and broaden the effort under way so that non-members of the Council can be properly heard and the organ can be better prepared to discharge its responsibilities. Increased participation in and access to the Council for non-members will certainly strengthen international peace and security.

However, Brazil believes that, no matter how often the Security Council reaches out to other actors, all such initiatives will be insufficient if that body does not truly reflect present-day global realities. Only genuine reform of the Council's structure can bring it closer to that goal. Diversity must be embedded in its very heart, thus making it more legitimate, more representative and hence more effective. That is why we are now discussing equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council.

During the Assembly's sixty-third session, we made decisive progress in that direction. That was made possible by the faithful implementation of decision 62/557, which mandated the launching of intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform in the informal plenary of the General Assembly. The three rounds of negotiations yielded important results, as described in the note by the President of the General Assembly contained in the document A/63/960. Now that the oral and written positions have been exhaustively discussed by the membership, the main options and negotiable elements for successful reform are very clear. It has also been possible to establish that the model of Security Council reform that commands the most support from delegations is the one that includes expansions in both categories of members.

As for the so-called intermediate model, it has become evident that it does not represent the first preference of any delegation. In addition, it continues to raise many questions owing to the lack of clarity about its meaning. Just as important, Member States agreed in decision 63/565 to immediately continue intergovernmental negotiations at the Assembly's sixty-fourth session, building on the progress made at its sixty-third session.

In that connection, we welcome the letter from the President of the General Assembly dated 13 October, in which he appointed His Excellency Mr. Zahir Tanin, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, to continue chairing the negotiations on his behalf. Ambassador Tanin ably

performed that task at the previous session. His stance of impartiality towards any of the positions, yet partiality to decisive progress, has earned the trust of Member States.

My delegation eagerly awaits the workplan that the President has requested Mr. Tanin to draw up for the negotiations. We cannot afford to waste any more time. We must maintain the momentum generated at the sixty-third session. We should not miss the opportunity to take advantage of current movements towards global governance reform. The renewed commitment of Member States to multilateralism has sent the right message across the entire United Nations membership.

By the end of this session, my delegation expects a concrete outcome. If that is to be accomplished, it is imperative to narrow down the options for reform as soon as possible, discarding those that have a very limited chance of attracting the majority vote required for Charter amendments. We hope that Ambassador Tanin's text can be used as a basis for negotiations, which should — I repeat — narrow down the options and clear the way to our objective. A road map with too many roundabouts and detours gives us no direction.

History has been evolving towards ever-growing interconnectedness and interdependence among peoples. The establishment of multilateral institutions is testimony to that broad tendency. In that sense, Security Council reform is an historical necessity.

Brazil has always been a staunch supporter of the United Nations as the embodiment of multilateralism. We are convinced that we are on the side of the United Nations when we uphold our preferred model of reform. A Security Council of 25 members, with six new permanent members and four new non-permanent seats, including developing countries in both categories, can bring about the desired change.

Such a Council would be up to the task of dealing not only with the threats of peace and security of today, but also with those of tomorrow. Such a Council would be better prepared to hold high the principles and purposes of the Charter in the twenty-first century. That is an imperative of sound international governance, the fulfilment of which we should not delay any further.

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation appreciates the opportunity to have this joint debate on the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/64/2) and on the question of Security Council reform. With regard to the report of the Security Council to the Assembly, I am grateful for the presentation by the Permanent Representative of Austria as this month's President of the Security Council. The report submitted during this session is more analytical than last year's, but we believe that even more progress should be made by including additional qualitative information.

Spain attaches great importance to the existence and the development of good interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly. It is essential to improve the interaction and the cooperation between those two principal organs of the United Nations through greater transparency and accountability, which would contribute to adopting more effective measures to prevent and eliminate threats to international peace and security.

As we know, the United Nations Charter provides guidelines for the interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council. Articles 15 and 24 establish the submission not only of annual reports but also of special reports by the Security Council to the General Assembly for its consideration. With that in mind, we believe that it would be very interesting to receive special reports of the Security Council on cross-cutting matters that are particularly relevant to the General Assembly. I am referring in particular to issues such as the protection of civilians in armed conflict, women and armed conflict, the fight against terrorism, non-proliferation and disarmament and the reform of peacekeeping operations. All of those issues have been occupying the attention of the Council and are also of great interest to the Assembly.

Greater transparency in the work of the Security Council and a greater participation of Member States on those issues that affect them directly would also be desirable. Rule 48 of the Security Council's provisional rules of procedure provides that unless it decides otherwise, the Security Council shall meet in public. My delegation believes that open Council meetings should be the general rule, thus giving States not members of the Council greater access to information and participation in its activities.

Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter provide for the participation of General Assembly members in the Security Council's deliberations when their interests are affected or when they are party to a dispute under

consideration by the Council. It would be desirable for the Council's debates to be more open to statements by those States that have an interest in issues under discussion and for there to be greater interaction with countries contributing troops to peacekeeping operations authorized by the Council. The fact that Council meetings with troop-contributing countries take place well before the adoption of extensions to such operations is a step in that direction. My delegation considers it very important that the points of view of troop-contributing countries be taken into account in approving or extending the mandates of such operations.

I would like now to speak of Security Council reform. My delegation is ready to continue engaging actively and constructively in the intergovernmental negotiations that we will soon resume, giving continuity to the three rounds held during the previous General Assembly session. We have been able to review in detail each of the five main issues of Security Council reform included in General Assembly decision 62/557, namely, categories of membership, the question of the veto, regional representation, size and working methods and the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

We have done this both individually, devoting meetings to single items, and collectively, grouping the items in clusters, as well as by meeting to consider all of them together. We also had a meeting to examine for the first time what is known as the intermediary approach, intended as a possible compromise solution among the main positions of various groups and Member States.

For its part, my delegation, together with others in the Uniting for Consensus group, has introduced a new reform model as an alternative to the one that we had submitted in 2005. This new model includes some elements of the intermediary model, such as the creation of a category of non-permanent members with lengthier terms than the current ones — longer-term seats, as they are called — with a review at the end of a certain period of time. Those elements did not appear in our 2005 model.

I sincerely believe that both Spain and the entire Uniting for Consensus group have shown that we are ready to adjust our positions by renouncing initial positions in an effort to reach a compromise solution that could attain the broadest possible support among Member States. We hope that the other groups of countries are willing to do the same.

That said, we remain convinced that a more democratic, more representative and more accountable, and thus more legitimate, Security Council can be achieved only through an expansion in the category of non-permanent members, namely, those that are periodically elected by the Assembly and therefore have the support of a very large majority of United Nations Members.

Although the assessment of the first three rounds of negotiations was generally positive, we noticed the appearance of some symptoms that seem to us of concern, above all with a view to continued negotiations in a fourth round. In particular, we were concerned about the increasingly repetitive and redundant nature of the statements made during the rounds, as well as the lack of flexibility and willingness to compromise shown to date by other groups, which could make us lose the momentum and determination necessary to reach an agreement. For that reason, we await with interest the workplan to be presented by the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Tanin, to whom we offer our congratulations on his reappointment as chair of the negotiations.

With regard to the workplan, I would like to make some recommendations regarding three aspects that seem fundamental to us: the starting date, the content, and the format or modalities of negotiations during the fourth and, eventually, future rounds of negotiations.

First, regarding the starting date, my delegation is in favour of starting the fourth round as soon as possible, ideally before the end of the year. That being said, we are aware that some delegations might have difficulty managing both the start of that round and adequate follow-up in the plenary and the Assembly's Main Committees. For that reason, it would be understandable if the start of the fourth round were postponed until the beginning of next year.

Secondly, on the content of negotiations, my delegation would like to stress the comprehensive nature of Security Council reform, as well as the interrelations among its five key issues. Thus, the negotiations should continue to include those five issues, without leaving any of them out, even temporarily.

Thirdly, regarding the format or modalities of the negotiations, my delegation wishes that they continue to be open and transparent but also, and above all, inclusive, in accordance with Assembly decision 62/557. Therefore, no delegation or group, nor any model, should be excluded, at least in the present informal phase of negotiations.

Finally, my delegation would appreciate increased involvement by the Assembly President in the negotiations, including his personal involvement, without diminishing the role of Ambassador Tanin. For that reason we take great interest in President Treki's words opening this debate, and we encourage him to take an active role in the coming phase of negotiations.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.