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New York

President: Mr. Kerim . . . . . (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda items 9 and 122 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/62/2)

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

Mr. Ehouzou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of my delegation, Mr. President, I thank you for convening this meeting to consider the report of the Security Council (A/62/2). I am grateful to the President of the Council for presenting it. I also thank the Secretary-General for his notification pursuant to paragraph 2 of Article 12 of the Charter (A/62/300). My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Angola on behalf of the Group of African States.

Reading the report makes us aware of the many challenges that the Council faced during the period under review. Outstanding progress has been made in managing such issues, thanks to the Council's commitment and firmness. Nevertheless, a great deal remains to be done in order to restrain the serious threats to international peace and security.

In the area of peacekeeping, Africa continues to take up a considerable proportion of the Council's agenda. We welcome the synergy that has been established between the Security Council and the African Union, which has enabled the two bodies to cooperate and gradually integrate the peace and security architecture of the African Union into the system of collective security established by the Charter.

Implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme to strengthen the capacities of the African Union will help the efforts to bring long-term stability to the continent. We urge the Security Council to continue to promote the Programme and to improve coordination of its activities in Africa with the African Union Peace and Security Council. We hope that the forthcoming report of the Secretary-General on relations between the United Nations and the African Union will contain concrete recommendations on improving the structure of cooperation.

We welcome the Security Council's efforts to strengthen its actions to prevent the outbreak of new crises threatening international peace and security. The Council should establish an institutional framework to make its efforts more systematic and effective, as is currently the case with regard to preventing the resurgence of conflict by promoting peacebuilding in the framework of the Peacebuilding Commission established in December 2005.

We welcome the practice of Security Council visits to the countries on its agenda, in particular to African countries as well as to the headquarters of the African Union. This makes it possible to intensify consultations with the parties involved, particularly with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, as well as to harmonize options and approaches to joint solutions in order to overcome the problems identified.

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In this connection, the decision to deploy a hybrid mission to Darfur marks a significant evolution in cooperation and a better division of labour. We also welcome the efforts to improve the prospects of a lasting peace in West Africa. The Council's report emphasizes that, in spite of the grave concerns caused by the proliferation of light weapons, the situation appears more promising than it has been for some years.

The considerable efforts to promote international justice and combat impunity for crimes connected with massive violations of human rights and international humanitarian law must be continued. The Council should consolidate the achievements made in this regard, so that the implementation of completion strategies does not call into question the possibility of prosecuting fugitives, which is essential to the preservation of peace in the countries concerned.

The Council should also ensure that the jurisprudence of the international criminal tribunals is accessible to those countries at all times. The African Union must also be considered as a possible destination for the records of the proceedings of the tribunals operating in Africa. In this respect, there should be cooperation with the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.

It is noteworthy that the Security Council has conducted a fruitful dialogue with Member States on general issues pertaining to international peace and security, especially through public and thematic debates. The views expressed by States in that dialogue should be taken into account so that this extremely valuable exercise of thematic debates may give rise to a constant momentum, strengthening the effectiveness of the Council's action.

The fact remains that the Security Council in its current configuration has inconsistencies that affect its capacity for action. We hope that steps will be taken during the current session to carry out the long awaited reform of the Council. My delegation looks forward to this reform, which should affect the two categories of seats on the Council and its working methods. Our views are well known on the bold steps needed to enhance the Council's representativity, and thus its legitimacy and authority.

In general, we should take advantage of the significant progress achieved during the course of the sixty-first session, which should serve as the basis for determining the parameters of the Council's new configuration so that it can respond to the new geopolitical realities of the 21st century. This new configuration should take into consideration the need to correct the historic injustice done to Africa by its exclusion from the permanent seats on the Security Council. We repeat the legitimate claim of the African continent to two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats to provide equitable representation of all of its subregions, in accordance with the Ezulwini Consensus and the 2005 Syrte Declaration. Reform must ensure an equitable representation of developing countries, as well as a geographical distribution of seats, taking into account the numeric weight of each region within the Organization.

In the same vein, we should firmly commit to reform of the Council's working methods to clearly take into account and express the sovereign equality of Member States and other cardinal principles of the Charter. The consideration that the Council has begun on this matter deserves to be pursued, taking into account Member States' specific proposals, and in particular those of the "S-5" group, which my delegation supports.

At the end of the sixty-first session, Mr. President, under the visionary leadership of your predecessor, Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa — to whom I pay tribute — the General Assembly gave a clear mandate on the next stage of Security Council reform. As you so well emphasized in your statement at the beginning of the current session, we must have the courage to begin the next phase, which should lead to concrete results. The next phase of which you spoke is intergovernmental negotiations to provide the United Nations and the international community with a Security Council that is more representative in its composition, more transparent, more inclusive in its working methods, and thus more effective in dealing with threats to international peace and security.

We count on you, Mr. President, to conduct the negotiations, and encourage you to appoint one or two coordinators to help you in that very delicate exercise. Before the end of this session we should — working modestly, calmly and with determination — reach agreement on the substance of a bold reform meeting the expectations of the international community and the peoples of the United Nations, especially in the twenty-first century.

Mr. De Palacio España (Spain): The Spanish delegation appreciates the opportunity of this joint debate to express its views about Security Council reform in all its aspects.

The last session of the General Assembly witnessed unusual and particularly fruitful activity concerning consideration of equitable representation on the Security Council, increase in its membership and other issues relating to the Security Council.

To a large extent, that activity was due to the leadership of the former President of the General Assembly and, through her mandate, to the work done by the group of five facilitators — the Permanent Representatives of Cyprus, Croatia, Chile, the Netherlands and Tunisia — as well as the work done later, under a new presidential mandate, by the Permanent Representatives of Chile and Liechtenstein, building on the work of the former group.

If one had to single out one proposal that embodied the spirit of the conclusions reached in those reports, the most significant would undoubtedly be the proposal that the General Assembly should choose a formula for Security Council reform that could win the greatest possible political acceptance among Members, and in any case a level well above the majority stipulated by the Charter.

As a result of our work at the end of the previous session, the Assembly decided to continue, at the current session, to examine the question now before us, in order to achieve further concrete steps, including through intergovernmental negotiations, building on the progress made so far. In a striking step forward, it also urged the Open-ended Working Group to exert efforts to achieve general agreement among Member States in the consideration of all topics related to this question. This decision was ratified by the General Assembly in plenary session.

My delegation, together with the other delegations that form the Uniting for Consensus group, considers that the new phase of negotiation to be started under your leadership, Mr. President, should use the framework provided by the Open-ended Working Group. We can all be represented there and make known our positions in a fair and open fashion, building on the results achieved so far, particularly in the previous session. We can do so with a view to reaching general agreement, ruling out alternatives that would promote voting on exclusive and partisan positions reflective of interests that we believe are not the general interests of the Assembly.

The dialogue begun in recent months, resulting in the recommendation of the Working Group and the Assembly decision that I referred to previously, is the only way in which to resolve the question of Security Council reform in a manner that can pave the way for genuine negotiations, with an in-depth exploration of formulas that will make it possible to reach general agreement, as regards both the composition of the Security Council and the reform of its working methods. We believe that the two aspects should be considered jointly, with a view to finding a solution.

My delegation believes that the two reports resulting from the work at the last session should be considered together as a useful tool in order to begin a negotiating process, as noted in the letter of the former President of the General Assembly of 26 June. Together with a significant number of other delegations, we have been supporting the proposed approach that we should first seek a provisional agreement, subject to revision, known as the “intermediary approach”, in order to secure the broadest possible support for reform and thus increase the probability of being implemented and being effective.

At the current session, the Open-ended Working Group should undertake consultations for the necessary drawing up of the framework, format and modalities of negotiations, in order to better prepare for a proper negotiating phase. Without wishing to set artificial and unrealistic deadlines, we hope that that phase will begin soon.

Mr. President, my delegation has complete confidence in your capacity and determination to push forward the work of preparing this negotiating ground. The preparation should be carried out in transparent and open consultations with the relevant groups, already known, without intermediaries, since the task of defining the alternatives and proposals has already been done and is well known.

We believe that this is not the moment to present unilateral initiatives. Instead, we should work together under the same leadership, without prejudice to our respective positions, with the shared objective of achieving viable reform. We therefore consider that it is not appropriate for us to give you a new mandate, beyond the one that you already have, Mr. President,

much less fix terms of reference, however general, in order to begin the work that we must now all undertake, since that would be neither necessary nor desirable.

Mr. President, you may rely on the support of my delegation in initiating the measures you consider necessary within the framework that we have indicated. My delegation — together with, I am sure, all the delegations working together for consensus — is fully committed to the ultimate goal of continuing to work honestly and seriously, with an open mind, for a negotiated proposal that will lead to general agreement on Security Council reform.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): At the outset, we thank the Permanent Representative of Indonesia for introducing the report on the activities of the Security Council for the period 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2007 (A/62/2).

The 2005 World Summit Outcome document (resolution 60/1) reflected, amongst many other important issues, the resolve of world leaders to support the reform of the Security Council. That reform is considered an essential element of the overall reform efforts of the United Nations. Additionally, and indeed critically, the reform of the Security Council would make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent, and would further enhance its effectiveness and legitimacy in the implementation of its decisions globally.

We commend you, Mr. President, for your strong leadership in translating the resolve of world leaders in your five stated priorities of climate change, financing for development, the Millennium Development Goals, countering terrorism, and, lastly and importantly, renewing the management, effectiveness and coherence of this Organization, which includes Security Council reform.

In order to facilitate a fair, effective and transparent process, an intergovernmental negotiating process must be initiated immediately. Such a process could be determined through an objective and transparent method, such as a questionnaire or straw poll, to arrive at a set of elements that could command the widest support, so that they can serve as the basis for such intergovernmental negotiations.

In this regard, we propose that the following elements be included: first, expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories; secondly, greater representation for the developing countries, including better access for island and small States; thirdly, representation for the developed countries and those with transition economies, reflective of contemporary world realities; fourthly, comprehensive improvement in the Council's working methods — here we acknowledge the work of the S-5 group; fifthly, equitable geographical distribution; lastly, provision for review.

We also believe that there must be a review mechanism on a periodical basis so that you, Mr. President, and future Presidents of the Assembly can inform Member States of progress in achieving concrete results on the comprehensive reform of the Council.

Sixty years after the founding of the United Nations, the Security Council no longer reflects current political realities. Despite a nearly fourfold increase in the membership of the United Nations since the Organization was established, the size and composition of the Security Council, particularly its permanent membership, has remained intact.

Any reform process must advance the core interests of the vast majority of Member States. Any expansion of the Security Council needs to be in both the permanent and non-permanent categories, with representation given in both categories to developing countries from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

To conclude, the discussions on this issue have continued unabated for over a decade. Unless there is an intergovernmental process, the discussions will remain just that.

Mr. President, we support you, and we look forward to your strong leadership in this instance.

Mr. Soborun (Mauritius): Mr. President, I join colleagues in thanking you for convening this timely meeting on agenda item 9, report of the Security Council, and agenda item 122, question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

I start by associating myself with the statement made by Mr. Gaspar Martins, Permanent Representative of Angola, on behalf of the African Group. I also commend Mr. Marty Natalegawa, Permanent Representative of Indonesia, for his very succinct and lucid presentation of the annual report of the Security Council.

With regard to the report, I shall limit myself to a few comments.

My delegation believes that by simply presenting its activities in chronological order the Council does not fully live up to its mandate. It would be more helpful if the following steps were taken.

The report could be more analytical, giving an assessment of the actions and decisions taken. The Council could hold an open session to discuss its report in depth, so as to enlighten Member States on its actions and its decision-making process, as most decisions are thrashed out and finalized in closed consultations. The Council could submit to the Assembly a quarterly or semi-annual report, or a special report, so that the Assembly could hold periodic meetings on the Council's activities during the course of the year. That would no doubt enhance the transparency, accountability and effectiveness of the Council.

There could also be periodic interaction and coordination between the Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, with a view to enhancing coherence and avoiding any encroachment on each other's mandates.

Notwithstanding the points I have just made, I commend the Council for its efforts in striving for peace and security, particularly in the countries in conflict situations in Africa.

I approach agenda item 122 from the following angles: the ongoing consultations in the Open-ended Working Group; the report of the President of the General Assembly at the sixty-first session; and the report of the facilitators.

The 15-year-old ongoing consultations on the reform of the Security Council, involving Member States at the level of Heads of State and Government, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and permanent representatives, among others, have generated many ideas and proposals, each as important as the others — so much so that we now find ourselves in the situation of having difficulty in choosing the best course of action.

However, on the basis of consultations held so far, my delegation is of the view that the optimum ground has been covered that could provide the necessary elements to start intergovernmental negotiations. Those elements may be summed up as follows: there can be no meaningful reform of the Council without an expansion of the membership in the category of both permanent and non-permanent members; greater representation of the developing countries, including small and island States; comprehensive improvement in the Council's working methods; and a review of the use of the veto.

The President of the Assembly at its sixty-first session issued a report (A/61/47) on the reform of the Security Council, including the reports of the facilitators. In her concluding remarks at the end of the sixty-first session, the President stated, inter alia, that she hoped Member States would "have the courage to begin discussions on meaningful intergovernmental negotiations" (*A/61/PV.109, p. 16*). Her report, read together with the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document on reform of the Security Council, underscores the following as points of prime importance: status quo no longer acceptable; support for early reform of the Security Council; start of meaningful intergovernmental negotiations; achievement of comprehensive reform of the Council in all its aspects; and a more representative, legitimate and effective Security Council.

Based on consultations that the facilitators held, particularly those about the status quo not being an option and the fact that flexibility is required to move the reform process ahead, they proposed what is described as an intermediary or transitional approach. However, the facilitators acknowledge that the parameters of the intermediary approach have yet to be defined appropriately and accurately.

The difficulty of a clear definition is mainly due to the complexity of the topic under consideration. That is also why the facilitators' reports contain all along such vague and inconclusive terms as "a large number of States", "a group of States", "overwhelming majority" and "a significant number" to describe certain proposals and positions. Obviously, these terms do not convey a clear picture of the accurate numbers involved. Transparency, objectivity and accountability of reporting on a subject of such great importance and magnitude are essential to enlist the confidence of Member States.

The intermediary approach, as proposed by the facilitators, is not very different from the transitional approach that has existed since 1965, when the Security Council was expanded by an additional five non-permanent seats. It is certainly not my delegation's

intention to repeat the same sort of exercise in the present changed geopolitical realities of the world.

Furthermore, the intermediary approach proposes a mandate review at a predetermined date to review and assess the inadequacy of this arrangement. As other speakers have pointed out, in the absence of a clear time frame and an accurately defined mandate, the mandate review itself may be doomed to failure, with the end result being that we may run the risk of postponing the comprehensive reform of the Security Council for decades.

The intermediary approach in its present form contains the seeds of further perpetuating the historic injustice done to Africa. It further eludes the legitimate aspirations of the Common African Position, which calls for at least two permanent seats as early as possible. Ambassador Wang Guangya, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China, was perfectly right when he said yesterday that

> "Any formula on Security Council reform that does not address the concerns of Africa can hardly win endorsement of the entire United Nations membership and will not have the backing of China". (*A/62/PV.48*)

We have observed in the past 10 years that the use of the veto in the Security Council has diminished significantly. For example, we have noted that the United States has used it 12 times, the Russian Federation twice and the People's Republic of China three times. The United Kingdom and France have not used it during that period. Indeed, the veto has become an anachronism in an era in which the Berlin wall fell down almost two decades ago, democracy is taking firm root almost everywhere in the world, from Africa to Asia, the Latin American and Caribbean region and Eastern Europe, and also at a time when we are witnessing wide-scale globalization.

Ambassador Mahiga, Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, in his statement to the Working Group on 3 May as Chairman of the African Group for the month of May 2007, clearly described the African position on the veto:

> "Africa is opposed in principle to the veto but it is of the view that so long it exists, and as a matter of common justice, it should be made available to all permanent members of the Security Council. Alternatively, it should be addressed in a manner to make it progressively circumscribed, rendered irrelevant and thereafter removed altogether."

We salute the legitimate aspirations of those regional groups and individual Member States that have had the courage to rise to the challenge and say that they are ready to serve as permanent members should a chance be given to them to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security and to serve humankind.

We are among those who believe that by making our neighbours and friends stronger we become stronger, too. That is why Mauritius remains committed to the Common African Position, which calls for two permanent seats, with all the privileges, and five non-permanent seats, as spelt out in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

We continue to support the idea of a Member State from Latin America and the Caribbean having a permanent seat on the Security Council. We also continue to say that a permanent seat for India is long overdue, not only because it is a time-tested democracy, the largest in the world, established just after the founding of the United Nations, but also because it has proved to the world that, despite being a multiracial and multicultural society, and a developing country, it can provide stability, peace and security to more than one seventh of the world's population without any assistance or intervention from the international community.

Mauritius was one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/61/L.69, along with India, Brazil, South Africa, Nigeria, Benin, Burundi, Rwanda, Cape Verde, Jamaica, Barbados, Papa New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, to name but a few. Mauritius sponsored it in full awareness of its content and implications, and in conformity with the Common African Position.

As of now, when we refer to a permanent seat on the Security Council, we mean a permanent seat with all its privileges. Indeed, the draft resolution was successful in breaking the usual stalemate of the Open-ended Working Group by including the element of intergovernmental negotiations in the Group's report to the Assembly at its sixty-first session. As a matter of fact, it was a wake-up call with regard to adherence to the lowest common denominator with regard to comprehensive reform of the Security Council. It

demonstrated that it was not a matter of business as usual.

I conclude on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other related matters with a view that is in keeping with the recommendations of the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, with paragraph 26 of the second facilitators' report (A/61/47) and with the resolve of the Millennium Declaration and the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit of Heads of State and Government. My delegation believes that it is high time we initiated intergovernmental negotiations, without any further delay. In this respect, my delegation proposes that we adopt an objective and transparent mechanism that could determine the elements that enjoy the widest possible support in order to start intergovernmental negotiations.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I assure you of my delegation's total support for an equitable, meaningful, comprehensive, transparent, legitimate and effective Security Council.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): Thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate. My delegation is among those that believe that it should — and, indeed, will — be the last of this general nature. The feeling of déjà vu is already too strong. The only assured plus of repeating this debate over and over is that it may leave us with the illusion of staying young.

It is decades since the last enlargement of the Security Council. Soon it will be decades since we started open-ended discussions on how we can set about the next. Let us agree that politically it is not healthy to have a subject matter open indefinitely for revision and reform.

I refrain from saying "It is now or never", although the tune plays in many minds each time we touch this topic. It is, nevertheless, clear that either we start serious enlargement negotiations now or it would be better to call it quits, live with the Council as it is and go about our business.

If we decide to go for it, we shall find that plenty of substantive preparatory work has already been done. We are overwhelmingly of the view that we need an enlarged Council so that it is more representative and more reflective of today's political realities.

We have a framework for an intermediary enlargement that commands broad support, for under the present circumstances it is logical to expand the Council in both categories of membership. There are several draft resolutions on the topic. We also have a fresh resolution from last September warranting negotiations on the Council's reform during this session.

My take from all this is that now you, Mr. President, have a historic opportunity to set the negotiating process in motion and see to it that it delivers the enlargement of the Security Council. You know that on this goal you can count on several times more friends among the delegations than on any other conceivable issue. Please register the unconditional readiness of my delegation in that regard.

A sufficiently representative enlargement might significantly increase ownership of the United Nations for countries and nations around the world. Conversely, lack of reform here would badly hurt the Organization, for it would have stayed the same for 40 years, as if there had been no such things as the end of the cold war or the dawning of the globalization era. At a time when even the climate seems to be changing, one could choose to view that as remarkable institutional stability, yet most would see it as, rather, a recipe for assured institutional diminution.

Failure to reform the Council would also mean that we had not been able to get our act together and do our job here in New York. Granted, decision-making on such a delicate political question cannot be confined to New York. Our job here, however, is to provide our leaders with proposals that can inform their policy- and decision-making. They actually formally asked us to do precisely that back in 2005.

Let me now sketch briefly the parameters around which the Romanian delegation would develop its position for the start of intergovernmental negotiations.

To be qualitatively meaningful and politically sustainable, enlargement should encompass both permanent and non-permanent membership categories. If the intermediary formula is pursued to achieve such comprehensive enlargement, access to mandates other than those currently featuring in the Charter should be granted on democratic electoral requirements. While it might not be possible to foretell the precise outcome of the intermediary process, the process should be subject to clear review provisions, so that nations can ensure through the democratic means already available in

national settings that only those qualified take up special obligations in the future enlarged Council.

The enlargement should consolidate the confidence of all Member States that they receive fair treatment from the Organization. Equitable geographical consideration is a primary requirement in that regard. Each Member State would have to see its chances of serving on the enlarged Council increased. When embarking on the enlargement, however, we should remain realistic, and in particular accept that no formula, no matter how elaborate, no matter how sophisticated, will achieve the absolute redress of inherited imbalances.

The delegation of Romania believes that the present Security Council carries out its responsibilities under the Charter in an effective, decisive and at the same time, depending on the circumstances, self-restrained manner. Its enlargement should therefore preserve those distinctive features. Size-wise, it should be possible to achieve that aim by extrapolating the magnitude of the previous enlargement to present-day expectations.

For the next enlargement to fly, it is of paramount importance that no one should be excluded, and that no arrangements should be construed by some at the expense of others. We have already wasted precious time by overlooking the resilient nature of the present regional configuration of the United Nations.

As we will, hopefully, start working on effecting a twenty-first century enlargement of the Security Council, let us forget that it is possible to treat the Eastern Europeans like the Cinderella of the United Nations — although that should probably be a reason for optimism, in fact, since in the fairy tale Cinderella eventually had her day under the moon. What the Eastern European Group wants is to emerge from enlargement with at least one additional elected mandate.

As my delegation sees it, while, with a remarkable display of modesty, no Eastern European State has so far claimed new permanent status, the aforementioned position means that all options, starting from one additional elected seat, are open.

Let us hope that we will be able to recall this day as the day when we decisively relaunched the Security Council enlargement process.

Mr. Sen (India): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this joint debate on agenda item 9, report of the Security Council, and agenda item 122, question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

I begin where the Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement ended, by congratulating Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Croatia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Viet Nam on being elected non-permanent members of the Security Council. I also express our appreciation for the introduction of the Council's report by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia.

Before I come to the report itself, let me say that we have just heard about a fairy tale and Cinderella. There are some fairy tales that do not have any end, and this is one of them. Yesterday, I think, I was told by someone that it was Veterans Day. If it was, then indeed it was an auspicious occasion to begin this debate, because we have so many veterans of these debates, and we will continue to have many veterans in the years to come if we go on in the present manner. Ultimately, words buffalo past us.

A very interesting book has just been published by one of our former colleagues, John Bolton of the United States, called *Surrender Is Not an Option*. In it he writes that if he had been paid by the hour, as a lawyer in one of the United States legal firms is, he would have left the United Nations a very rich man. His bête noire, the man he really disliked, Lord Malloch-Brown, said in his Holmes Memorial Lecture on 7 June that there is one organization where one subject is discussed more often than sex — and that subject is Security Council reform. If Mr. Bolton and Lord Malloch-Brown agree, then quite clearly all this torrent of words has not got us very far. We have reached a point where we are no nearer to Security Council reform. Indeed, unless we move from words to action, this is likely to remain the case.

I return to the report. When it was being introduced, several issues were mentioned. I refer to one of them, not with any kind of pejorative purpose or to refer to any individual Member State, but simply to raise some of the structural problems that the Security Council faces today. I am speaking of the setting up of special tribunals.

We all know that, while the Security Council can set up subsidiary bodies, it cannot really give them legal powers. The reason is very simple and clear; it is

to be found in the old Roman principle of *nemo dat qui non habet*, which means that one cannot give what one does not have. So certain legal infirmities have crept in.

This becomes even simpler and clearer when we come to another issue that was mentioned: thematic debates, such as those on natural resources and conflict. As we know, the subject of natural resources is one that the General Assembly really ought to deal with. This is the old principle of encroachment. In other words, in spite of the balance in the Charter, there is an encroachment that non-permanent members have not been able to prevent.

Across the board, both those who support the G-4 and those who support Uniting for Consensus have criticized several other aspects of the Security Council's functioning. One example is that the reports are not analytical. I think that one of the members of Uniting for Consensus said yesterday that the reports lack any substantial detail or information, and that, in fact, they have the same deficiencies year after year. Indeed, this is true.

Since the non-permanent members have not been able to set that right, it was a little illogical then to say that the Security Council should be expanded only in the non-permanent category. Here I must say that we are very appreciative of the good work done by Singapore, which went beyond the field of possibilities in 2002 and put a lot of analytical content into the reports. But it proved to be an Indian summer, a flash in the pan. Soon the report went back to the good old days — or the bad old days. Therefore, it was a very short-lived achievement.

Similarly, we appreciate the work that was done quite a few years ago by, for instance, Argentina and New Zealand, on involving the troop-contributing countries, but that again proved to be equally short-lived. We have resolution 1353 (2001), but even this has been rarely observed — and then only in the breach. That is because when the troop-contributing countries actually get together with the Security Council, the basic draft resolution is already set, the issues are already resolved — or at least decided upon, because they are not really resolved. Therefore, there is very little that the troop-contributing countries can contribute.

And why go to that resolution? It was not even a partial implementation — and even that was a failure — of Article 44 of the Charter, which is very clear. It states that those that put their troops at the disposal of the Security Council have to take part in the decision-making: mind you, not discussions, not debates, but decisions, which even would imply the right to vote. But this has not happened. Therefore, the Charter is unable to, in any manner, decide the working methods or what the Security Council does. The Charter, the supreme constitution of this body, cannot be any kind of check on the Security Council, any more than the General Assembly can.

Therefore, we have a situation in which the Security Council demands obedience, under Article 25, and levies troops, which are contributed by troop-contributing countries without any say on their use, their politics and their mandate. It will be remembered that demanding obedience and levying troops from others was a characteristic of the old feudal and colonial systems. Those, in some manner, still continue, which is why the Security Council can feed where it has not furrowed and be warm where it has not woven.

That is the situation regarding some of these matters, and I thought it was useful to mention them.

The representative of one Member State used the word "inaccessible"; he said that the Security Council was becoming more and more inaccessible. And he is quite right. It is. But it is not simply a matter of the General Assembly's telling the members of the Council to make themselves more accessible, as the "S-5" are trying to do. This is quite clear in the Charter itself: Articles 31 and 32 are very clear that a Member State whose interests are affected has to speak in the Security Council.

Article 31 does say that the Security Council has the discretion to decide whether the interests of that Member State are affected. But once it is clear that its interests are affected — this is very important — the Security Council has absolutely no discretion to prevent it from speaking. This is the clear, legal meaning of Article 31, and yet the Charter cannot be implemented.

As we all know, the non-permanent members, both pre-1965 and post-1965, those that are elected, have not been able, and are not able, in any way to restore the balance of the Charter, to ensure that Articles 31, 32, 44 and so many others are actually implemented.

Now, the same representative who referred to the inaccessibility of the Security Council also said, again very correctly, that the General Assembly had to

provide inspiration for reform of the working methods. But the point is this: the General Assembly has been doing its best to do that, and has been doing it since the famous resolution 267 (III) of 14 April 1949, and yet to no effect over all these years.

The S-5 draft resolution does not even go as far as resolution 267 (III). The draft resolution simply invites the Security Council to do certain things. What if the Council rejects the invitation repeatedly, as it has been doing for more than half a century? Quite clearly, the non-permanent members have not been able to carry forward any improvement in working methods.

One of the leading lights of Uniting for Consensus also mentioned the problems, the double standards, the non-analytical reports, the closed-door sessions, the lack of coordination with the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, and so on. To our mind, that criticism is unfair. Members of the Assembly may ask why I am indulging in paradox. It is unfair because he is saying, on the one hand, "This is what is wrong with the Security Council", and, on the other hand, that the solution is more non-permanent members, or more non-permanent members who could be re-elected, precisely those members that have not been able to check all of this.

In other words, that representative is simply expressing, to use his own words, "great dissatisfaction". But he is quite satisfied to live with that dissatisfaction. He is quite satisfied with the euphonious sound of what the representative of another Member State said, about continuously criticizing the Security Council, year after year, making the same criticism, quite satisfied with the annual ritual of this debate, in which one has one's say and goes home.

On the other hand, there are those who argue in favour of a new principle of trying out something new, of electing members within the group of permanent members who would then be held accountable for restoring and maintaining the Charter balance, for preventing encroachment, and for improving working methods, and who would be held accountable through repeated review mechanisms. The criticism made by those who criticize the Security Council from that position is surely at least to that extent fair, because they are proposing a way forward, a way out.

The same leading light of Uniting for Consensus said that there should be representation, but no representation among the permanent members; that there should be checks and balances, but nothing to check or balance the permanent members; that there should be democracy. Here I was reminded of Lycurgus, the great lawgiver of the Spartans, who, when somebody asked him "Why do you not set up a democracy?", responded "Why do you not first set up a democracy in your own home?" Because democracy, like charity, really begins at home.

But, even if we take this principle of democracy, another member of Uniting for Consensus said that democracy did not mean leaving the winner in all perpetuity. However, he forgot address himself to this question: does democracy mean leaving the untrammelled power of a few also for all perpetuity, or should something be done about it?

Similarly, another member of Uniting for Consensus said that there must be continual elections and that, since non-permanent members are elected, that was the only way of ensuring accountability. The point is, I would be the first to agree, that elections are a necessary condition. But surely they are not an assumed condition of accountability. Are the non-permanent members accountable? And if so, to whom? Do even the regional groups, which can put forward clean slates, always find the non-permanent members accountable? Does the Non-Aligned Movement find all its members accountable? Therefore, accountability is something much more than simply elections.

Elections are necessary, of course. That is why I am saying that those who are elected to be among the permanent members have to be subjected to repeated reviews through a self-sustaining review mechanism. They also have to be subjected, possibly through some amendments to Chapter II, to the right of recall, the oldest democratic principle.

But we cannot simply say "Let us go on with some kind of short-term interim model — short-term in terms of the number of years that a member serves — or purely the expansion of non-permanent membership", and expect to change the state of affairs in any manner whatsoever. That is the entire crux of the issue, which does not mean that we are not prepared to look at all models.

One member of Uniting for Consensus said that we should not mention anything that would prejudge the final outcome, and then went on to contradict himself by saying that we should have expansion only in the non-permanent category. We are not doing that;

we are saying “Let us see how we can take elements of every model that has so far been presented and see how, on this basis, we can negotiate”. I shall come to this subsequently to explain in further detail what this would really imply.

The thing is this: we have a situation in which the Security Council truly has become not very satisfactory in what it does. It has reached a point at which certain reform of the Council becomes very necessary in itself. There used to be in the Council a time when the content went beyond the phrase, but today the phrase goes beyond the content. There was a time when its reach was beyond its grasp, but today its grasp is more than its reach. There was a time when the substance was more than style; today, the style is more than substance.

I referred earlier to Mr. John Bolton. His book, *Surrender Is Not an Option*, has a very interesting statement on page 255: “the Security Council actually does not do most of its jobs well”. Those are his words. On page 355 he says that the Security Council actually massages the problems but does not resolve them. That is not my phrase. The greatest critic of the General Assembly and its oversight, the proponent of untrammelled power of the Security Council, actually says that the Council only massages problems and does not resolve them.

The only time that the General Assembly really was able to provide some working method was in its famous resolution 11 (I) of 24 January 1946, in which it laid out a procedure for the process to select the Secretary-General. Bolton’s book is very interesting, because it has a whole chapter on the selection process. It makes it clear that that General Assembly resolution has been only partially observed, because the selection process that he describes is really almost conspiratorial. It leaves aside all the non-permanent members, and even reduces the say of several permanent members.

The picture that Bolton paints — in a long chapter — of the process to select the Secretary-General shows that the functioning of the Security Council on this vital issue has been totally dismal and dysfunctional. This is the irony, the real paradox of our time, because this picture validates the unsuccessful attempt by the General Assembly to have a greater say and oversight in this selection process. The real irony, the real paradox, is that the greatest critic of General Assembly oversight and its role provides its strongest proof; he becomes, by implication, the strongest supporter of General Assembly oversight and a General Assembly role in the process. In short, unless some radical steps are taken, I do not see how this process can be carried to a successful conclusion.

Now let me come to the details of what we would propose. I refer first to draft resolution A/61/L.69, on which so many comments have been made. It was precisely because of the opposition of a tiny minority of countries, as a result of which the mandate given to you initially, Mr. President, was supposed to be without any reference to intergovernmental negotiations, that the draft resolution became necessary. Its achievement was quite simple: it enabled the mandate to be very clear on intergovernmental negotiations, which would be concrete, result-oriented and based on the progress made at the sixty-first session and on the positions and proposals of all countries.

Let me say here that one permanent representative made two points on which we are in full agreement.

One point was that any solution that does not address Africa’s concerns is not worth the candle. That is correct, because, as the Bible also says, the first shall be last, and the last shall be first. So those who have borne more than their share of the burdens and sorrows of the world should have a place of dignity in the Security Council.

The second point that that permanent representative made was that he is prepared for the launch of intergovernmental negotiations, and that therefore we need to agree on the content on which we are to negotiate. The representative of another Member State, a former facilitator, said that we have now come to a bridge, and that therefore the practical point is how we are to cross it, because, if we do not arrive at a practical solution, it will become like the bridge too far. We need to see how to proceed.

In that regard, permanent members and members from several other regions have supported permanent membership for G-4, including India, and we express our appreciation to them. But there has been a general view that the way to arrive at an optimal solution with the widest possible support is by launching concrete intergovernmental negotiations. The question is how to do it. And here, instead of speaking on behalf of some African countries and small States, I think it is much more advisable to listen to what the representatives

actually said. Many of them — from Africa, from the small States and the small island developing States — made it very clear.

We have a blizzard of variables. Therefore, on what basis do we start intergovernmental negotiations? The representatives to whom I have referred made it very clear that, through an objective, transparent process and method, we have to find out what are the elements — or, at any rate, if I may add, the elements grouped in the different packages — that actually command wide support, because only on the basis of that legitimation can there be intergovernmental negotiations. This is crucial. Intergovernmental negotiations have to be on a basis that has a certain legitimacy, and there is no other legitimacy.

Some mentioned a questionnaire or straw poll, and I am sure there could be other ways of doing it. But there has to be an objective and transparent process. I think this is perfectly reasonable. It is without prejudice to the positions of any Member State. It does exactly what the mandate says — that is, that on the basis of the progress achieved, which is the facilitators' reports, on the basis of the positions and proposals of all States, we have to arrive at certain elements, or a package, on which we can then negotiate. And this has to be done through an objective, transparent method.

The question is this: in this case, how are we to give a certain impetus or stimulus to the process? With that in view, we thought that we could consult with Africa about something on these lines to begin with. The reason for this is that some African countries had requested of us earlier that they would like to be consulted before we proceeded further on that.

Another former facilitator also spoke and said that we needed a "text" — and I am quoting his word exactly — on which to negotiate. He also referred to the multiple identities of one of the Member States. He forgot one identity, which is that of the inquisitor. What we have is a Member State that says clearly and categorically that we must move forward at present only on consultations — there should be no negotiations at all. That representative spoke very forcefully. Actually, he reminded me a little of Colonel Pickering in the Broadway musical *My Fair Lady*, who said, "I'd rather have a new edition of the Spanish inquisition". This was really an inquisitorial approach, in which he excoriated a number of his colleagues for actually co-sponsoring draft resolution A/61/L.69, saying that that was circumventing the Ezulwini Consensus. And then, of course, he went on to actually mention — approvingly and certainly without comment — the interim model, which circumvents both permanent membership and the veto, without saying that this circumvents the Ezulwini Consensus. He was, in a sense, really circumventing his own circumvention.

The point is this: we do not wish to be drawn into a debate about whether he had proprietary rights on Africa, because that is for the African Group to determine. What we are interested in here is whether he had even less proprietary rights on logic. He then went on to actually say that there should be more than a two-thirds majority, on which the Ezulwini Consensus is entirely silent. Thereafter, he said that we — the G4 group, the African Union, the Uniting for Consensus group and the so-called small five group — should all reach what he called a collective understanding, but without, obviously, touching the Ezulwini Consensus — to which he is totally attached — and without negotiations — to which he is totally opposed — possibly though a mystical meeting of minds.

He also went on — I mean, it was really a welter of contradictions — to say that, as I said earlier, we had been asked by the African States for consultation beforehand. Here, he reminded me really of Nagaina in the short story *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi*, in Kipling's *Jungle Book*, where Nagaina said, "If you move, I strike. If you don't move, I strike". That means that if you do not consult us beforehand, that is bad, but, if you consult us beforehand, that is also bad.

The representative of that Member State also spoke of civilizational representation and values. Such matters are very important. We have the highest respect for all civilizations, including the one he comes from. But, one of the elements in that civilization, if we remember, was actually the art of embalming corpses for the long term, which are now called mummies. I hope that he does not want to propose that civilizational element, namely, that we should embalm and mummify Security Council reform for a long time to come. I do not think that would be acceptable to us, for the simple reason that the United Nations has sometimes been unfavourably compared to the Tower of Babel. The fact that it has many languages and views is a source of its strength: it is strengthening and

it is life-giving. But, on the other hand, the language of the mandate you, Mr. President, have is very clear: we must have intergovernmental negotiations, not consultations. Therefore, if it becomes a Tower of Babel, in the sense that language itself becomes babble, then we will find ourselves in a very difficult situation.

I therefore think that it is very important that we realize the difference between friction and obstruction. Friction is a positive thing. The warmth of debate is as much a part of hospitality as the warmth of the fire. We know from classical physics that friction is important for optimal forward movement. The ship requires the friction of the water as it moves forward. The train requires the friction of its sliding wheels on the rails as it moves forward. This is elementary in classical physics. But if, on the other hand, you replace friction with total obstruction, then what we will have will be the ship and the train simply rotting and rusting, and we will not get anywhere at all.

I therefore think this is a very important thing: that we actually move on to negotiations. Psychologically, I can, of course, understand that for many the prospect of negotiations is a daunting prospect. It is daunting because it means navigating through multiple tensions. But inaction is politically unacceptable and morally suspect.

I am sure that I have taken a lot of time. I think I should now conclude. But, really, the point is that we look forward to your starting a process, Mr. President. We have given many suggestions. Many Member States — especially small States, which are in the majority, and small island States — have spoken very clearly. We need really to move forward on this issue. We need to move forward. And for that, for any period of change, an increased charge of energy is required. I am confident that the Assembly and the United Nations will have precisely that increased charge of energy, which will enable us to move forward on Security Council reform.

The President: I thank Ambassador Sen, whose intervention has proved that, even if he can be extremely long, he is not boring.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Just a few hours ago, I returned from Antarctica and Chile's Patagonian glaciers, where I accompanied Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his delegation. However, despite the fact that I returned barely some hours ago, I did not want to miss this important debate — leaving behind the cold of Antarctica for the heat of the debate on the reform of the Security Council, as Ambassador Sen has referred to it with his customary warmth. I shall not refer to Bolton as much as he has. I hope that Ambassador Sen will soon refer to my book on Iraq and the Security Council, which will be published in a few months, as often as he has referred to Bolton's.

Turning to the issue that the President has convened us to debate, I would like to begin by thanking the Permanent Representative of Indonesia for introducing to the General Assembly the report (A/62/2) of the Security Council covering the period 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2007. I also wish to thank the Chinese delegation for writing the introductory chapter to the report.

Several of my colleagues here know that Chile has been a consistent promoter of a comprehensive reform of the United Nations that, in reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter, serves to increase the Organization's credibility and legitimacy. We have already taken significant steps towards that end, but they are not enough. The challenge of reforming the Security Council is key to the overall process of United Nations reform. This was stated by heads of State or Government in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (resolution 60/1).

Indeed, the current composition of the Security Council does not correspond to the international realities of the twenty-first century. Clearly, the organ responsible for safeguarding international peace and security should be more representative and democratic. It should envision an expansion in its membership that would favour developing countries, including those of Latin America and the Caribbean, and it should adopt more transparent and participatory working methods.

During the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, the discussions on Security Council reform gained fresh momentum. Thanks to the confidence vested in the work of a group of facilitators, in which I was honoured to take part, and the flexibility of delegations, there was progress concerning the idea of exploring an alternative approach that does not involve abandonment of anyone's ideal positions or proposals.

Indeed, the consultations and discussions covered by the report of the Open-ended Working Group (A/61/47), adopted by consensus by all its member States, demonstrated that the status quo is not

acceptable. For this reason, a compromise solution would be a viable way to end stagnation and to move forward on the vital enlargement and reform of the Council.

Chile believes it is time to embark on an effective process of intergovernmental negotiations and thus to test, in practice, the flexibility expressed by the whole membership and the viability of the recommendations contained in paragraphs d and e of decision 61/561. A new series of consultations would be unproductive and would distance us from the objective of reform. Without constructive, practical, results-oriented negotiations, there will be no reform, and we will then face the dilemma of acting to achieve consensus or of waiting perhaps decades to regain the current momentum of openness and goodwill demonstrated by a considerable majority of Member States during the previous session.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

That is the debate, and that is the dilemma we need to face in the coming weeks and months. Chile will always be available to make its contribution to the building of a consensus required for comprehensive and successful reform of the Organization, and of the Security Council in particular. Chile aims, in particular, at an effort of compromise and agreement. That has always been our policy when faced with complex issues that can divide us. The President of the Assembly can rely on our support.

Mr. Davide (Philippines): Allow me to begin by thanking the President of the General Assembly for convening these plenary meetings on this very important issue and welcoming his giving priority to Security Council reform as one of the key items during his stewardship of the General Assembly at its sixty-second session. I thank Ambassador Marty Natalegawa of Indonesia for introducing the annual report of the Security Council (A/62/2), and I congratulate the Indonesian presidency of the Council, which is in the midst of a successful Council leadership this month.

I would also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the efforts of Her Excellency Sheikha Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa, the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, and her facilitators, namely the Permanent Representatives of Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Liechtenstein, Tunisia and the Netherlands, for their selfless and tireless efforts to move the process of Security Council reform to where we are now. My delegation hopes that the letter and the spirit of the open and transparent consultations on this matter conducted during the previous session will continue, with renewed vigour, to pervade this session.

In the annual report of the Security Council, my delegation takes note of the ongoing efforts by the Security Council's Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions to find ways of improving the report. We still feel that the strictly factual annual report needs more substance, such as analytical content, which non-members find more valuable since official records are available to document events in the Council. We are hopeful that the Working Group, currently chaired by Slovakia, will be up to the task and will come up with future refinements along the lines just mentioned.

My delegation, just like those of other Member States, firmly believes that reform of the United Nations is in order and that such reform must be pursued now if the United Nations is to remain faithful to what its founding fathers wished it to be. Such reform would not be complete without Security Council reform. We reiterate our strong belief that Security Council reform is critically and urgently needed and that demands for it have become irresistible. We must not forget that in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, our heads of State and Government made it clear that they "support early reform of the Security Council — an essential element of the overall effort to reform the United Nations" (*resolution 60/1, para. 153*). In that regard, my delegation takes this opportunity today to highlight the following points.

First, we must build on the progress achieved thus far, particularly at the sixty-first session, by seriously considering the various proposals at hand and working doubly hard to achieve concrete positive results, including through intergovernmental negotiations, at this session. We should take advantage of the momentum. We should endeavour to reach agreement on reform issues where we can, without further delay, and later take up issues where we cannot. In short, reform proposals which can be adopted now must be approved now.

Secondly, an area where possible agreement can be reached without much debate is on the working methods of the Security Council. My delegation believes that improvement of working methods is

essential and is an integral part of Security Council reform. The issue of access, particularly relating to the provisions on, or regarding due process for, States under Security Council review, as well as issues related to consultations, transparency and coordination or cooperation with other organs of the United Nations, should be included in whatever intermediary arrangements may be agreed upon. Pragmatic changes in working methods are the best hope at the moment for meaningful change in the Security Council. We must, forthwith and without any further delay, use every opportunity to accomplish as soon as possible reform on working methods. It bears stressing that, pursuant to Article 24 of the Charter, the Security Council acts on behalf of all Member States. Hence, due process, accountability and transparency demand that its working methods serve and fulfil such elements.

Thirdly, on the issue of enlargement, my delegation fully supports the enlargement of the Security Council in both categories of membership, based on equitable geographic distribution reflecting the geopolitical realities of today. The United Nations must truly be the world's model for a fully functioning participatory democracy. It would be a contradiction in principle and in practice and a travesty of justice if the membership of the Security Council, one of the principal organs of the United Nations given the important task of maintaining peace and security, did not reflect the prevailing context of its existence. We hope that, at the very least, general agreement among Member States can be achieved on this issue during this session.

My delegation prays that the General Assembly — through political will and determined, sustained and unceasing effort — can come up with an outcome based on this practical approach before the end of the sixty-second session. We look forward to intensive discussion, consultation and negotiations on these very important issues during the sixty-second session. My delegation assures the President of an equally determined, sustained and unceasing contribution in that regard.

Mr. Bródi (Hungary): Allow me, first of all, to thank the President for convening these meetings for a joint debate on the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly (A/62/2) and on the issue of Security Council reform. I also wish to thank the Permanent Representative of Indonesia, President of the Security Council for the month of November, for his presentation of the Security Council's report yesterday morning.

We believe that the report is an important instrument in the dialogue among the general membership on the work of the Security Council. It strikingly reflects the huge workload of the Council and the wide scope of the issues it has to tackle in discharging its mandate. A number of Member States, however, have expressed the view that the report could be improved and made more relevant. In the view of our delegation, that illustrates the need to find other complementary means of interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Comprehensive reform of the Security Council constitutes one of the most important elements of the overall reform of the United Nations. Without it there cannot be meaningful reform of the Organization. On that point, I guess, Member States are overwhelmingly agreed.

During the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, many creative and useful proposals and ideas emerged with regard to Security Council reform, but substantive progress once again proved to be elusive. The consultations and deliberations in 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, which have been going on for more than a decade, have resulted in a clear picture with regard to the positions of Member States. In our view, a mere continuation of those discussions in the same format would be a waste of resources and time. We must take the process a step further.

The time has come to start structured and results-oriented intergovernmental negotiations on the basis of a flexible and creative mandate that takes into account all the views expressed by Member States. The efforts of the former President of the General Assembly and the reports that resulted from her initiatives should be followed up during the current session of the General Assembly. Member States should try to come to an agreement on an effective framework for negotiations. We have no doubt that an agreement on such a framework will require creativity, flexibility and political will on the part of Member States.

We agree with the President of the General Assembly that in identifying the negotiables we ought

to be guided by the latest report of the Open-ended Working Group (A/61/47). We also agree that that process is the primary responsibility of Member States.

In sum, Hungary believes that comprehensive intergovernmental negotiations that tackle both the issue of expansion and the improvement of the working methods of the Security Council and are based on a transparent and flexible mandate defined by the General Assembly offer the best way forward at this stage. We are sure that, under the guidance and leadership of the President of the General Assembly, the sixty-second session will produce a breakthrough in finding an acceptable way forward on Security Council reform. We pledge our support to that effort.

Mr. Cheok (Singapore): Allow me to thank the Permanent Representative of Indonesia for introducing the report of the Security Council (A/62/2). I also wish to express my gratitude to the Permanent Representative of India for his kind words about Singapore.

It was difficult to prepare for this debate, because we have been discussing this issue for so long. I think that many of us have even found ourselves repeating similar statements over the past two years. I think that it is time to try to break out of this cycle of repetition. I am not saying that the discussions over the past few years have been wasted. Ideas and opinions have been raised and debated. The positions of the African Union, the Group of Four, the Uniting for Consensus group and the so-called small five group are well known. Her Excellency Ms. Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, encouraged the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council to play an active role in exploring options. The five-facilitator and then the two-facilitator processes helped shed light on the complexities, as did draft resolution A/61/L.69/Rev.1.

Obviously, there remains a divergence in views. No position has managed to garner consensus so far. But I think that what we have established is that the status quo is unacceptable for most. In the last days of her presidency, Ms. Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa presided over the unanimous call for the General Assembly to consider how concrete results may be achieved, including through intergovernmental negotiations. The objective is clear, but the way to achieve it is not. Our challenge, therefore, is to find an acceptable way forward.

I am not advocating a specific course of action; nor am I championing any particular outcome. I am merely trying to assess the situation dispassionately. It appears to us that there are two main ways of moving the process forward. One option is for a group of countries, of whatever persuasion, to put forth a draft resolution for consideration and negotiation. That would set the parameters for discussion and allow members to calibrate their approach and express their concerns or support accordingly. With a concrete proposal, we would have the beginnings of a complex negotiation.

Given the issue, however, there may be strong resistance to any proposal coming from just one set of countries. Perhaps divisiveness could be lessened if the President of the General Assembly assumed a direct role in seeking a solution acceptable to the broader membership. I recognize that that is putting a huge responsibility on the shoulders of the President. But the reality is that the facilitators processes have led to a number of views and opinions. Taken individually, those ideas run the gamut.

Are there other impartial players here who can bring those ideas together in a coherent whole that is broadly acceptable to most? Most delegations, mine included, have already taken positions in this debate. On the other hand, a process on expansion, and perhaps on working methods, that is driven by the President of the General Assembly may have the requisite impartiality.

I stress that I am not advocating a particular approach. Obviously, Singapore is a small country with no aspirations for permanent membership. I do, however, champion the interests of small States. Small States have little opportunity to serve regularly on the Security Council. Some may never even serve at all. Therefore, reviewing and improving the Council's working methods is equally important. In short, regardless of how we decide to move ahead, discussions should not simply be geared to accommodating the interests of the larger countries and the middle Powers. The views and interests of small States, which make up the majority of the United Nations, should also be taken into account. The best way to do that is to make sure that any discussions or negotiations are open, transparent and inclusive.

Mr. Kryzhanivskyi (Ukraine): I would like to express our gratitude to Ambassador Marty Natalegawa of Indonesia, President of the Security Council for the month of November, for his presentation of the annual report (A/62/2) of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

During the period under review the international community has continued to face numerous challenges that directly relate to the Security Council's main sphere of responsibility: the maintenance of international peace and security.

The credibility of the United Nations will always be measured by the Organization's ability to adequately respond to threats in any region of the world. No organization is better equipped to deal with those issues. The United Nations should lead global efforts to address global challenges, which demand global solutions. At the same time, we need to take further steps down the path of reforming and improving the mechanisms of the United Nations, in order to make the Organization more efficient, more effective and more relevant in the twenty-first century.

We hope that the process of Security Council reform, which is the key element in the process of renewing the United Nations, will be expedited and that it will eventually yield tangible results. Making that body more representative and balanced, and its work more effective and transparent, especially with regard to decision-making, is vital in adapting the United Nations to the global realities of the twenty-first century.

With regard to the specific aspects of Security Council reform, Ukraine's position is based on the following principles. First, Security Council reform should be implemented in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Secondly, the enlargement of the Security Council is to be carried out in both categories, the permanent and the non-permanent. We support increased representation in that body for developing countries from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Thirdly, as the composition of the Group of Eastern European States has more than doubled over the past decade, it should have an additional non-permanent seat. Fourthly, the reform of the Security Council should result in the improvement of its working methods. Those countries that contribute most to the Organization — militarily, diplomatically and financially — should be more involved in the decision-making process of the Council. Fifthly, the use of veto by the permanent members of the Security Council has to be limited.

We recognize the significant progress made by 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 during previous sessions of the General Assembly. We welcome its decision to continue to work during the sixty-second session. We also support the launch of an intergovernmental negotiating process on the reform of the Security Council.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): Let me first express Norway's appreciation for the President's timely initiative to hold this debate now. We believe it is important to build on the progress made over the past year on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. The two reports by the facilitators of the President's predecessor (see A/61/47) have offered valuable ideas as to the way forward and have generated important momentum. Now is the time to take advantage of that momentum and bring the discussion on reform forward.

We have made our position clear during previous consultations, and it remains the same. Norway's main priorities are to ensure that the Council operates coherently and efficiently and that the composition of the Council reflects the current configuration of the membership of the United Nations. Consequently, we support expansion in both categories. We would, however, welcome any constructive proposals that could break the current deadlock. At this stage I would therefore like to make the following points.

First, if we are to succeed in completing the reform process initiated by our political leaders at the 2005 World Summit, we need to look for a process that can move us ahead. While we the Member States need to show flexibility and seek compromise, it is also our view that in order to succeed we need to establish a process that commands the broadest possible support in order to ensure a legitimate and credible outcome.

Secondly, we need concrete proposals in order to maintain focus and move the discussions forward. In that respect, we are open to discussions that do not prejudge any final arrangements.

Thirdly, it is our view that the President of the General Assembly should guide this transparent and inclusive process, ensuring the active participation of all Member States in an intergovernmental process.

The overarching objective for Norway is to find solutions that will secure the continued legitimacy of the Council and provide broader representation for the various regions, without at the same time compromising the efficiency of the Council. Norway is open to discuss all proposals that aim at achieving that. Reform is timely and necessary, and we appeal to all Member States to show flexibility and to be open-minded.

Mrs. Silkalna (Latvia): Allow me to begin by thanking the President of the Security Council for introducing the Council's annual report (A/62/2). While it lacks analytical content that might have stimulated more substantive debate on this item, the report is useful as a reference document.

With regard to the next agenda item, we thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this debate on an integral aspect of United Nations reform. As the position of my delegation on the substance of Security Council reform has been outlined in previous debates, I will limit myself to brief remarks on process.

Consideration of Security Council reform has taken place for well over a decade. We are all aware of the complexity and sensitivity of the issue and the need for a steady approach. At the same time, the lack of concrete results in this aspect of reform has had a corrosive effect on other ongoing processes within the United Nations.

We therefore note with appreciation the progress achieved during the sixty-first session whereby Member States were widely consulted on the question of Security Council reform. The resulting report adopted by the Open-ended Working Group (A/61/47) reveals the extent of support for renewed efforts towards Security Council reform and gives us a solid basis for carrying forward during this session. In our view, the stage has been reached where the General Assembly can and should begin preparations within the current session for intergovernmental negotiations.

My delegation has full confidence in the leadership and wisdom of the President of the Assembly to identify the most suitable format for such preparations. We pledge our support to him in this endeavour so that momentum for Security Council reform is maintained.

Mr. Palouš (Czech Republic): At the outset, let me join the previous speakers in thanking Ambassador Natalegawa, the Permanent Representative of Indonesia, for presenting the report of the Security Council (A/62/2) to the General Assembly. This document is a testament to the increasing challenges that the Security Council, the key body of the United Nations system, is facing.

Recent reports of the Security Council show clearly that the number of issues on its agenda continues to grow and that the burden on the shoulders of its members, both permanent and non-permanent, gets heavier and heavier. Those issues relate to major regional conflicts and cross-cutting challenges to our common security, including the fight against terrorism and against the proliferation of arms of mass destruction. Therefore, it is in the interest of all United Nations Member States that the Security Council be able to act in an open, transparent, effective and, last but not least, a more democratic manner.

As many speakers before me have already underlined, the Security Council has the primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security, as stipulated in the Charter. At the same time, the work of the Council would not be successful without the support of the broader membership. The real commitment of all Member States and their active involvement is in this respect crucial for the successful fulfilment of the role of the Council. The conclusion could not be clearer: a reform of the Security Council is already overdue and is essential.

The question of the involvement of Member States is first of all directly related to the question of the improvement of the Security Council's working methods. In other words, achieving the goal of the effective functioning of the Council is not possible unless this important subject is appropriately addressed.

Over the past 14 years, the Czech Republic has repeatedly expressed its view that the current challenges we are confronting can be properly addressed only through structural reforms of the Security Council. These reforms should in our view encompass all well-known elements: the expansion of membership in both categories, better representation and regional equitability.

All these issues have been debated in detail, and many useful ideas and concepts have been put forward. The Czech Republic has taken an active part in these debates and shares fully the conviction expressed by the overwhelming majority of Member States that the status quo is not an option.

With that conviction in mind, the Czech Republic has been among the sponsors of the so-called Group of Four proposal from July 2005. Without being stubborn or dogmatic, we continue to believe that the main elements of this proposal constitute a sound basis for our future deliberations. At the same time, I wish to underline our readiness to exercise the necessary flexibility in order to find common ground to serve as a new point of departure in formulating compromises acceptable to all.

We are strongly convinced that during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly we achieved some important progress thanks to the dedication and energy of the President's predecessor, Ambassador Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa, as well as the work done by two groups of facilitators. Some innovative ideas were introduced in order to bridge differences between well-known positions and to move the discussions forward, inter alia, the concept of an intermediate approach. That concept in our opinion might open a new path towards a possible solution while avoiding an impasse of repetitive and unproductive discussions.

Let me underline the position of my country: we have to do our utmost to build on the momentum that was created during the Assembly's sixty-first session. It is encouraging that the vast majority of the United Nations membership, as has been demonstrated in this debate during the last two days, is ready to engage in this endeavour.

The Czech Republic is ready to consider all concrete proposals enabling us to finally get the reform process off the ground and to start intergovernmental negotiations during the Assembly's current session. Let me conclude by assuring the Assembly President of our full support in this challenging task of steering the discussions in the coming weeks and months.

Mrs. Intelmann (Estonia): May I first join others in thanking Ambassador Marty Natalegawa, President of the Security Council, for his presentation on the work of the Council. My delegation also appreciates the efforts made by Sheikha Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, and her facilitators. We would like to thank them all for their important contributions towards moving Security Council reform forward.

We welcome the report of the Open-ended Working Group, and we support the decision to continue considering Security Council reform at the present session so that further concrete results may be achieved, including through intergovernmental negotiations. We feel that, given the comprehensive analysis of the situation carried out by the facilitators during the last session, the current session should not repeat this work and instead bring the process to a qualitatively new level.

Security Council reform remains a pressing issue in the overall United Nations reform process. The Council's reform must contribute to adding more legitimacy and credibility to its decisions and should not hamper its capability and effectiveness in adapting to the challenges of the twenty-first century. However, any reform needs the largest possible political acceptance; greater flexibility on all sides is urgently needed if we want to overcome the current stalemate.

Enlarged membership and equitable geographic representation should be the fundamental principles guiding the enlargement of the category of non-permanent members of the Security Council. As has been stated on many occasions, members of the Group of Eastern European States consider that any increase in the non-permanent membership of the Security Council should ensure an enhanced representation of that particular Group by the allocation of at least one additional non-permanent seat to the Group. Allow me to also recall that, since 1991, the Group has more than doubled its membership.

Estonia favours an increase of Security Council membership in non-permanent and permanent categories.

We also support the reform of the working methods, and we are convinced that the expansion and the reform of working methods should not be seen as inseparable. Indeed, efforts to improve the working methods should continue, irrespective of progress in other areas.

My delegation remains ready to participate actively in the results-oriented intergovernmental processes, including negotiations, in a very flexible manner. Given the fact that the reform process has

lasted for far over 10 years, it is important to create a new political momentum for possible negotiations. For that, high-level political involvement would be necessary from the very outset. The negotiations — if started — must be transparent and give all Member States equal opportunities to take part in the deliberations, building on the progress achieved and the positions of and proposals made by Member States. It is our conviction that under the able leadership of the present session, the reform process will move ahead and we will arrive at a successful outcome. The status quo is unacceptable, and we should make all attempts to move forward.

Mr. Urbina (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by welcoming the convening of this meeting to consider the report of the Security Council and the question of equitable representation on it and increase in its membership. We are also grateful to the Permanent Representative of Indonesia, Mr. Natalegawa, President of the Council, for having presented the Council's report to the Assembly.

Costa Rica agrees with the President of the Assembly that this should be an opportunity to reinforce the relationship between the Assembly and the Security Council. But that has not proved to be the case. Once again, we are taking part in a meeting that, for the vast majority of delegations, is merely another opportunity to point out the deficiencies of a document that is not the report that we would wish to receive and that, in general, lacks the information that Member States would like to discuss. In spite of the fact that the very broad majority of States, year after year, demands a report that would be in full accordance with the spirit of the Charter, in an ever-repeating rite we hear the same voices from the Council reassuring us that, contrary to our repeated demand, the report includes everything that it should include.

On earlier occasions, Costa Rica has made the point that the report should be a tool enabling the Assembly to learn about, evaluate and discuss the work of the Security Council. As was rightly pointed out by the Permanent Representative of Mexico, the functions of the Assembly and those of the Council are concurrent in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security. That was confirmed by the International Court of Justice in July 2004.

The practice of healthy interaction between the Assembly and the Security Council, far from weakening the Council, would strengthen it in the eyes of the international community and the world public opinion. The Council, and the United Nations as a whole, would thus gain greater legitimacy.

In making these comments and demands, Costa Rica is not naive. We recognize the limitations and difficulties that prevail when one is trying to report in detail on the work of the Council, even above and beyond the difficulty of finding agreement in a collegial body on the content of a report that covers that body's work. But those limitations should not prevent States that are not represented on the Council from having access to the necessary information in order to learn about and understand the decision-making process in a body that, in the last analysis, acts on behalf of the Members of this Organization, according to the provisions of article 24, paragraph 1, of the Charter.

Costa Rica, as a newly elected member of the Security Council, and any other State that will serve in that body, would be better prepared and could make better contribution to the efficiency of the Council, if we were annually apprised of its work in a clearer and more focused form.

Allow me to take this opportunity to express our thanks for the generous support received by Costa Rica in its election to the Security Council. I would also like to congratulate Burkina Faso, Croatia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Viet Nam, also elected to serve on the Council in 2008 and 2009. Costa Rica has undertaken to represent States that will not be taking part in the deliberations and decisions of the Council. We will not forget that we are only temporarily non-permanent members of the Council and that we will always be permanent Members of the Assembly.

During the previous session, in 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, we achieved important progress, partly thanks to the work of the former President of the Assembly and the distinguished facilitators that she appointed.

The position of Costa Rica on this process is clear. Security Council reform should be a means of achieving greater efficiency, transparency and legitimacy for an organ that acts on behalf of all Member States, and must never be an end in itself or a

means to gratify the particular interests or aspirations of any one Member State. We hardly feel that it is necessary to repeat the details of our position concerning Council reform, which are widely known in this Hall.

We would like to say, however, that we are firm in upholding the proposals that we have made through the "Small 5" group and that we believe that reform of the working methods is the measure that will provide the greatest benefit to the largest possible number of States represented in this Hall. I would add that the position of refusing to advance the reform of the working methods if there is no progress in the expansion of the Council is a trap that benefits just a few and denies the vast majority of States their rights and opportunities.

When it comes to the expansion of the Council, Costa Rica still harbours the hope that the membership ultimately will decide to support the enlargement of the Council by means of an increase in the number of non-permanent members. This, without question, is the most constructive solution for the great majority of States and the only one capable in the short term of achieving the broadest possible agreement among members of this Organization.

It has been two years since Costa Rica prepared a document, which has been circulated as official, under the title of the "cascade effect". In this document (A/59/856), we demonstrated in an incontestable fashion that permanent member status is the source of many privileges in this Organization; and today, as then, we remain convinced that it is not in the interests of the vast majority of the Assembly to extend to just a few the privileges that are already enjoyed by the victors of the Second World War.

Having said this, I would like to express our particular concern about the situation in Africa. For reasons known to us all, when we adopted the San Francisco Charter, the States present accepted an exception to the principle of sovereign equality of States, assigning special privileges to five Member States. On that occasion, practically the whole of Africa was excluded; only four African countries took part in that decision. Costa Rica believes that this historical injustice must be given special consideration in any model of Security Council reform, the primary objective being to restore equitable geographical representation.

Perhaps in this phase of the process, where we stand now, it might be advisable to review options that promote approaches which, like the African model, would transcend the shortsightedness of individual interests and re-establish the primacy of the concept of collective interests, which are the foundation of this Organization.

Costa Rica has never been timid in this matter. We participate actively, with the conviction that it is in our best interests and that of our peoples to have a dynamic, effective Organization that matches up to the challenges of the twenty-first century. We view the role of the presidency as one of facilitator of our debates, as well as the proponent of our consensuses. If we really wish to start a negotiating process that will ultimately enable us to have consensus-based reform of the Security Council, we must travel together along the avenues of dialogue in order to make progress in the quest for solutions reflecting our common interests and not solely the national aspirations of just a few.

The perfect is the enemy of the good. Our common objective is a more legitimate, democratic, representative and efficient Security Council, capable of responding effectively to the challenges and threats to international peace and security. This can only be achieved if we avoid falling into a pattern of confrontation or resort to force or the obsessive pursuit of national aspirations that, without question, will never be realized.

Costa Rica would appeal for us all to be idealistic in our aims and pragmatic in seeking the path that will lead us to our goals. Right now we offer our assistance, with a view to supporting actively any initiative directed to those ends.

Mr. Penjo (Bhutan): I will be very brief, as many of the issues of interest to my delegation have already been raised by previous speakers.

I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in the joint debate on agenda items 9 and 22. My delegation would like to convey its appreciation to Ambassador Natalegawa of Indonesia, current President of the Security Council, for his presentation of the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

The issue of Security Council reform has been on our agenda for nearly a decade and a half. We have deliberated at great length on why the Security Council

needs to be reformed, and various ideas and proposals have been presented in that regard, including those on improving the working methods. The sixty-first session of the General Assembly, under the leadership of Her Excellency Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa, generated good momentum and adopted an important decision on 17 September 2007. By decision 61/561, the issue of Security Council reform is to be considered during the present session, so that further concrete results may be achieved, including through intergovernmental negotiations, building on the progress achieved so far and on the positions and proposals made by Member States. My delegation welcomed the decision since, in our view, intergovernmental negotiations are the only way forward to address this sensitive and complex issue. Without such a process, the concrete ideas and proposals made over the years will remain just empty words.

My delegation would like to request the President of the General Assembly to initiate, without delay, the process of intergovernmental negotiations. We also request that he determine, through an objective and transparent method, the elements that command the widest support, so that they can serve as the basis for the intergovernmental negotiations. Only through this process, we believe, can comprehensive reform of the Security Council be achieved and its legitimacy and credibility enhanced. In this context, my delegation would like to reiterate its position that the Council should be expanded in both the permanent and non-permanent categories and allow for greater representation by developing countries, including better access for small States. We also reiterate our call for a comprehensive overhaul of the Council's working methods in order to make it more transparent and inclusive.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): Mr. President, we thank you for your timely initiative in convening this meeting to address the annual Security Council report together with the wider issue of a comprehensive reform of the Council. We are convinced that under your able leadership we will be able to achieve tangible progress on this issue during this session of the General Assembly, building on the positive results achieved during the previous session. You can count on my delegation's full support and active participation in that important endeavour.

Regarding the Security Council reform, my delegation continues to believe that both its parts are equally important, namely, first, adequate change in the composition of the Council to better reflect the geopolitical realities of today's world and, secondly, a meaningful reform of the Council's working methods. Both of these aspects should be aimed at ensuring the Council's legitimacy, authority, effectiveness and representativeness. Like other delegations, we are also of the view that one part of the comprehensive reform should not be held hostage to the other. We should do our best to achieve maximal results on each of these two tracks.

During the sixty-first session, my delegation very much welcomed and supported the work of and reports by the facilitators. We believe that the concept of the intermediate or transitional approach, with a mandatory review to take place at a predetermined date, could be a meaningful way forward. What we need now is an intergovernmental process of negotiations that would lead to a possible road map out of the current impasse. We are looking forward to hearing your recommendations, Mr. President, on how this process could be taken forward.

On the issue of increasing the Security Council's relevance, authority and effectiveness, I would like to highlight at least one crucial aspect that we feel very strongly about. I refer here to conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy. We believe that in order for the Council to play a significantly more relevant and active role with respect to the current threats and challenges to international peace and security, it must improve its performance in the area of conflict prevention. It is no longer enough just to react to emerging situations and ongoing conflicts or to come up with post-conflict remedies, such as United Nations peacekeeping operations. In this context, we sincerely welcome the recent initiative of the Secretary-General to reform the United Nations Department of Political Affairs in order to strengthen its preventive diplomacy and mediation functions.

Along the same lines, I would like to highlight the importance of constant interaction and dialogue among the various parts of the United Nations system, in particular the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. I do not mean only regular, largely formal meetings of their respective presidents. We need to strive to achieve substantial and meaningful cooperation among the main United Nations bodies in areas of mutual interest so as to ensure complementarity and synergy in their

actions. We strongly believe that, instead of blaming the Security Council for taking up certain thematic issues, the other bodies should also be actively engaged in addressing those issues within the competencies entrusted to them by the Charter of the United Nations.

Finally, I would like to convey my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Marty Natalegawa of Indonesia, the current President of the Security Council, for his comprehensive introduction of the Council's annual report to the General Assembly. We are pleased to note that this year's annual report follows an approach aimed at improving the report, both in format and in substance, an effort that we have ourselves been very actively involved in. In this context, we also wish, once again, to thank the Chinese delegation for its hard work and constructive leadership in preparing the introduction to this year's annual report.

As we have recently said in the formal meeting of the Security Council before the adoption of this year's annual report, Slovakia strongly believes that the annual Security Council report to the General Assembly is a very important document. It should by no means be just a routine exercise of administrative or statistical nature. We believe there is a need — and also room — to go further in our efforts in this regard and to concentrate more on the substance of the report and on key political messages about the important work of the Security Council. This year, we have taken an important step in the right direction. We hope that we will continue in a similar fashion in the future, too.

The issue of the annual report has been among the issues discussed in detail this year in the Security Council Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, which Slovakia has been chairing this year. Also, our efforts in the Working Group have been concentrated on full implementation of the Note by the President of the Security Council of 19 July 2006 (S/2006/507), which was prepared last year under the able Japanese chairmanship of the Working Group. Although this job is far from done, we are encouraged by the level of tangible progress in the implementation of the presidential note that has been achieved this year, including numerous practical documentation and procedural issues. We are committed to even further intensifying our efforts in this area with a clear goal in mind, namely, making the Security Council more open, more transparent and more effective, as well as enhancing the continuous interactions and dialogue between the Security Council and the United Nations Member States.

Mr. Romero-Martínez (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation, Honduras, as other delegations have done, expresses its thanks to Ambassador Natalegawa, Permanent Representative of Indonesia, for his introduction of the report of the Security Council covering the period from 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2007. We have on other occasions had an opportunity to state that our country supports any attempted change that will update the work of the Council. It is our position that all United Nations bodies have to be more democratic and more participatory and should be designed to reflect a reality that is now rather distant from the arrangements that were conceived in their time as being appropriate and innovative.

Honduras, which is one of the original signatory countries of the Charter, attaches great importance to Security Council reform. For this reason, we have shared and sympathized with some positions that seek to incorporate geographical representation for Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Africa and other countries, which we believe would make the body entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security more balanced.

In this regard, we believe that the Open-ended Working Group that functioned during the last session did excellent work that should serve as guidance for the new tasks ahead of us. We recognize the great contribution of the facilitators and we share their worries and hopes. Their inputs have enriched our work. So, as more than one delegation has said before, the mechanics of their discussion and analysis should remain valid in the upcoming discussions that we shall have on this question.

We believe that adequate coordination between the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly is indispensable and vital. It is important to maintain the balance between the functions and powers of the main bodies of the United Nations. There should be proper collaboration and coordination that includes interrelationship and interdependence. We believe that all Member States agree with the issue of Security Council reform and have invested many years working on that issue. We must make progress and address reform in greater depth. The current world

situation demands that of us, and reality has imposed new criteria and values upon us.

All of us wish to see an organization that will keep pace with the rhythm of the times in which we live, an organization that over the years refines its actions in promoting the legitimate causes of our peoples. We all wish to see a Security Council that reflects the modern world and that will incorporate important recommendations to strengthen its work. We appreciate the work done and are sure there is full agreement on the need for reform. So let us accomplish that task on behalf of our nations and our peoples and in harmony with the Charter in order to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of human beings, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.

Mrs. Dibaco (Ethiopia): My delegation wishes at the outset to associate itself with the statement made by Angola on behalf of the African Group. My delegation would also like to express its sincere appreciation to the President of the Security Council for the month of November, Ambassador Marty Natalegawa of Indonesia, for presenting to the General Assembly the annual report of the Security Council.

The report of the Security Council, as contained in document A/62/2, is comprehensive and enables the Assembly to have a full picture of the activities carried out by the Council from August to July of this year. The statistics provided in the Council's report show a growing trend in its activities. In that regard, the report is informative and beneficial, although it would be more desirable to include an analysis of the Council's activities. We hope that in the future the report will be more analytical and will better reflect the issues dealt with by the Council in a substantive manner. We also hope that the report will be available in advance, so that the Assembly will have ample time to examine the issues and make meaningful contributions. Likewise, we expect that the format of the report will be addressed by taking into consideration the views expressed during the present debate.

The issue of Security Council enlargement and the principle of equitable representation are of critical importance to the overall reform of the United Nations. This overriding fact necessitates that the issue should be accorded the necessary attention and importance it deserves.

As it is well known, during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, there were, on and off, attempts to provide momentum to the issue and keep it alive through formal and informal consultations among Member States and stakeholders. In that respect, my delegation appreciates the efforts of the Ambassadors of Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Liechtenstein, Netherlands and Tunisia for conducting continuous consultative meetings to exchange views on how to proceed with the reform process and make progress. Their reports have also been useful for building on what has been achieved and for continuing the consultations from where they left off. We expect the President of the current session to devote the necessary attention to the consultations by issuing appropriate guidance and direction, so that the issue will maintain momentum until solutions that are acceptable to all stakeholders are found.

Ethiopia firmly believes that the reform of the Security Council is vital to its capacity to act and its ability to deliver results. In that regard, improvement in the working methods of the Council is equally important. We firmly believe that, whatever consultations are intended to be conducted in the future, should be on the basis of transparency and inclusiveness. The interests of the various stakeholders in the issues should also be taken fully into account and deserve equal consideration. We hope that the Open-ended Working Group and others involved in facilitation tasks will give due recognition to that aspect of the consultation process and act accordingly.

In conclusion, we wish once again to stress the need for the reform of the Council to be accorded high priority during the current session. Ethiopia, as in the past, will continue to closely follow the issue and engage in consultations aimed at making progress and achieving tangible results through consensus.

Mr. Verbeke (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Please allow me to make a few procedural remarks. Some have described the Security Council as one of the most conservative institutions in the world, referring to its working methods, its procedures and, above all, its membership. Others have called the Security Council one of the most effective organs of the United Nations.

As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Belgium observes each day that there is a grain of truth in both assertions. It follows — and this is my first comment — that any Security Council

reform will have to take into account two basic elements — the Council must adapt while ensuring that its effectiveness is maintained. In that connection, improvement in the working methods of the Council is certainly an important objective. Initial progress has already been achieved, but there still remain considerable challenges, especially regarding access to the Council by non-member countries, in particular those countries directly concerned by Council decisions. Other speakers before me have already raised that point, so I will not dwell on it.

Improving working methods, however important that may be, is not enough. As several colleagues emphasized yesterday and today, a further-reaching reform is necessary, more than ever. Dragging our heels on the issue would be tantamount to maintaining the status quo, which is not an option. The composition of the Security Council must better reflect the current geopolitical reality. Increased representation would help to give the Council greater legitimacy. That position seems to be shared by all. The question is, how to achieve it and how to break the deadlock.

During the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, as is illustrated in the latest report of the Open-ended Working Group, the key parameters for any Security Council reform were clearly identified and I wish to commend President Al Khalifa and the five and then two facilitators for the outstanding work they have done in that regard. My delegation believes that, with the work done in recent months, the political leeway and the legal requirements are sufficiently well-known.

It is now time to go on to the next phase: a phase of genuine intergovernmental negotiations within the General Assembly itself, the natural venue for such a process. The modalities for those intergovernmental negotiations should be defined as soon as possible.

For Belgium, as was stated by our Minister for Foreign Affairs to the General Assembly on 1 October (see A/62/PV.12), it is clear that in due course, consultations at the highest level — at the level of heads of State or Government, in capitals — will be inevitable if we wish to attain tangible results. My delegation believes that such consultations should be conducted by a single individual who would enjoy our full confidence: a high-level special envoy.

For Belgium, that does not mean outsourcing the debate from New York to various capitals, but rather ensuring the ownership, the active and direct involvement of our heads of State and Government in a debate, the strategic issues of which are known to all. In that way the special envoy would be acting as a catalyst who, supported by direct contributions from capitals at the highest level, would be in a position to unjam, facilitate, promote and speed up the process of intergovernmental negotiation.

On the basis of contact and consultations conducted directly with capitals, the special envoy should be in a position to submit to us a consolidated proposal that would enjoy the broadest possible support. That proposal would constitute the basis for a new round of intergovernmental negotiations within the General Assembly. It is for the General Assembly, and to the General Assembly alone, to take the final decision, which should take place before the end of its sixty-second session.

The debate on the reform of the Security Council has already taken up a great deal of time and energy. Only an innovative procedural approach can break the deadlock in which we currently find ourselves on this issue. Belgium is prepared to play its role.

Organization of Work

The Acting President: I would like to inform members that as the first item on Thursday, 15 November, the General Assembly will take up agenda item 48, “Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social and related fields”, and agenda item 116, “Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit”, for the purpose of taking action on draft resolution A/62/L.11, entitled “Overview of United Nations activities relating to climate change”. Also, I would like to inform members that the consideration of agenda item 50, “The role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order”, which is scheduled as the fourth item for Thursday morning, 15 November, has been postponed to Monday morning, 26 November.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.